

Finding Balance

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We often face a multitude of conflicting emotions, expectations, thoughts, and feelings. How do we balance them?

Skills to Consider: "Both-And" Thinking and the Two Screen Method

"Both-And" vs. "Either-Or" Thinking



- For moral issues, we should engage in "either-or" thinking.
- For non-moral issues, we need to realize the possibility of "both-and" situations.

Examples in Scripture

- Jesus was divine AND human.
- Nehemiah was sad / scared AND courageously traveled to his homeland.
- Self-focus AND other-focus.
- Declared righteous AND in need of restoration.

Philippians 4:12 "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

Application of "Both-And" Thinking

Examples in Elder's Wife Role

- Doing your best AND deepening your faith.
- Being (Mary) AND doing (Martha).
- Setting limits AND learning to delegate.
- Elder's wife AND daughter of the King.
- Husband's needs AND my individual needs.
- Family needs AND church needs.

Benefit of "Both-And" Thinking

- Brings conflict into awareness.
- Helps you make conscious decisions, challenges the practice of acting just out of habit.
- Helps us to effectively compromise and balance.
- Moves us away from "always/never" thinking.

Getting Stuck in Our Thoughts

- **Fusion** – When we get entangled in our thoughts, feelings, or sensations and fight with what we are experiencing.
 - We are "up in our head" and wrapped up in trying to avoid painful feelings, stuck in analyzing and trying to figure it out.
 - As a result, we don't focus on the present moment and on what is actually important to us.
- **Three Common Types of Fusion:**
 - **Fighting with what "Should" or "Shouldn't Be"** – replaying conversations, ruminating on "if they would just..." scenarios, etc.
 - **Future Tripping** - A "What if..." mindset that mentally plays out possible future scenarios about what could go wrong.
 - **Dredging** – An "If only..." mindset that over-focuses on the negative or painful aspects of the past.

Mindset Shift – Miry Clay to on a Rock

- We gain the ability to pay attention to the present moment, without fighting our thoughts, emotions, or sensations.
- We refocus onto what is within our control and move toward the things which we most value.

Psalm 40:1-3

"I waited patiently for the Lord ; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord."

- Notice the "settling effect" of being on a rock with the Lord. It allows the Psalmist to then shift toward moving forward with the Lord.

The Two Screen Method: Which One Will You Focus On?

Front Screen

- Represents the life you value and want to live.
- Examples: your relationship with God, playing with your grandchildren, spending time with your family, enjoying the outdoors, pursuing your interests, etc.

Side Screen

- Represents the thoughts, emotions, memories, sensations, etc. that pull us away from moving toward the front screen.
- Examples: temptations, intrusive thoughts, addictive urges, depressive thoughts, insecurity, anxious worry, etc.

Loving Action/Committed Action

- The goal is to move toward our values and let our emotions catch up instead of waiting for our emotions to feel right before taking any steps.
- The size of the step isn't as important as the direction.
- We can choose to move toward these things even when our thoughts, emotions, sensations, etc. don't feel good.
 - **Hebrew 12:2**, *"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."*
- Notice how Christ's vision for the future (us in Heaven with Him!) served as one aspect of motivation to go through His great suffering.

Story from Recovery: What Will You Focus On?

17. *And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.*
18. *And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.*
19. *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*
20. *Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.*

Luke 10:17-20