

A QUESTION OF BALANCE  
OUTLINE & MENTALITY

AUDIENCE: Any (Can be modified for those who have not made a WWME Weekend by modifying dialogue and sharing)

TIME: 40 Min.

THEME: To be Fully Alive people, we have to maintain balance in our lives.

PURPOSE: To help in attaining and maintaining balance. In evaluating our life's values, it helps to look at the major forces that pull us in many different directions and can be barriers to our being fully alive. With a clear picture of the major forces in our lives, we can see more clearly our life's goals and develop a Growth Plan to help us achieve those goals. But maintaining balance in our lives continues to be a daily struggle as we live with the modern world pressure that pull and push us out of balance. When we achieve a balance in the major areas of our life, our relationships can grow, thrive, and prosper. We also become more fully alive when we balance our energy across all of these major areas of growth. As couples, we achieve the greatest balance when we can achieve our individual balance within our couple relationship.

READING: Luke 10:38-42

HANDOUT: "Wheel of Life" Exercise Sheet  
Individual Growth Plan

REFERENCE: Stephen R. Covey: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

OTHER: Requires lead time to report outcome of a personal Growth Plan.

OUTLINE

I. Introduction (1 team Member, 2 min.)

Share your experience as Martha or Mary and how you sometimes see your life "out of balance". When you achieve balance in your life, you are able to experience growth in relationship with others.

II. There are six major forces in our lives pulling us in different directions

A. Evaluating Life's Values – the "Wheel of Life" (IIA H or W, 3 min.)

Explain how you can look at your life as a wheel. Unmet needs, like an unbalanced wheel, leave you feeling "unbalanced" in those areas. Focus on the six major forces in your life when seeking balance in your life. Share personal examples of feeling unbalanced when you focus on several areas but leave other unsatisfied.

- B. Explain six major dimensions in our lives. (IIB. H/W/P, 6 min. total)
1. Relationship & Family
  2. Spiritual Life
  3. Ministry / Social Service (being in service to others)
  4. Career, Job, Hobbies – (our creativeness)
  5. Financial
  6. Health & Well Being - (including recreation and our physical condition)
- C. Exercise: Diagram your own personal “Wheel of Life” (1 Team Member, 5 min.)
- III. Creating a Development (Growth) Plan – To Achieve Greater Balance.
- A. Focus on Areas of “Un-Balance”. (1 Team Member, 2 min.)
- Share how you can concentrate on certain areas to create a greater focus of attention.
- B. What am I willing to do to add balance to My Wheel of Life?  
(B.1 One Team Member, 2 min. B.2 Other Team Member, 2 min.)
1. It is a choice to add balance back into your “Wheel of Life”. A Personal Development or Growth Plan helps identify goals and make a commitment for adding balance to areas of need.
  2. Share personal experience of choosing to develop a Personal Development Plan and the effect on your relationship.
- C. Exercise – Fill Out Personal Development Plan
1. Explanation of Exercise (1 Team Member, 1 min.)
  2. Write Personal Development Plan (5 min.)
  3. Share with spouse (3 min.)
- IV. Balancing One’s Activities to Support Development Plan.
- A. Our Encountered Lifestyle is a call to Live as Radical Lovers.  
(1 Team Member, 2-3 min.)
- Share how living the radical Encountered Lifestyle can add balance to your life. Share the struggles and difficulties you encounter.
- B. Decide what you will do – and then do it with “passion”. (1 Team Member, 2-3 min.)
- Personal sharing of your commitment made with passion and how that gives you a sense of balance.
- V. Motivation to Live the Radical Lifestyle. (1 Team Member, 2-3 min.)
- A. We can live our Encountered Lifestyle with Passion and Compassion.

- VI. Dialogue Question:  
What am I willing to do to add balance to my “Wheel of Life”? WAMFAT?
- VII. Sharing Question:  
We cannot just ADD to our “Wheel of Life”. What do I need to adjust so I can achieve balance in my life?

## MENTALITY

### I. Introduction:

Luke 10:38-42

Martha was concerned because she was busy serving while Mary was not picking up her share of the load. We need to be both Martha and Mary at times, tending to our needs to serve as well as to be fed.

In evaluating our life's values, it helps to look at the major forces that pull us in many different directions. Those major forces can be barriers to being fully alive people. But maintaining balance in our lives continues to be a daily struggle as we live with the modern world pressures that pull and push us to become more "individual centered", out of balance people. When we achieve a balance in the major areas of our life, our relationships can grow, thrive, and prosper. As Sacraments, we achieve the greatest balance when we can achieve our individual balance within our relationships.

### II. There are Six Major Forces in our lives pulling us in different directions

#### A. Evaluating Life's Values – the "Wheel of Life".

In "beginning with the end in mind", it is important to know where we are going and what our goals are. But our goals should be consistent with, and supportive of, our life's values. When we look at the major areas in our life where we spend our time, we get a clue about what "real" values are. Our Ideals are those areas or things we might be striving for but have not yet incorporated them into our life as a value; "some day I'll \_\_\_\_". Values, on the other hand, are those areas or things that we chose for our life; they are those things that we spend our time, money, and effort on, those areas where we are willing to make sacrifices. Our values are integrated into our life, they are a part of us, and we make them a priority.

When we focus a disproportionate amount of effort, money, time in one area at the expense of other areas, our needs often aren't met, and we feel "un-balanced", out of sorts.

Fully alive people we know are those who have achieved balance in their lives, achieving personal satisfaction and fulfillment in each of the major areas in one's "Wheel of Life". Our life can be looked at as a wheel with spokes radiating out. Each segment or area between the spokes represents a major focus area in our life where we spend our time and effort seeking personal satisfaction.

The "Wheel of Life" helps us to look at and to get a picture of six major dimensions in our lives. We can look at the diagram and see which of those areas leave us feeling un-balanced.

- B. Explain Six Major Dimensions in our lives.
1. Relationships & Family: We seek fulfillment in relationship with others, and our primary relationship is with our spouse. This area of our life we seek nourishment in the love we give as well as the need to be loved.
  2. Spiritual Life: In this area of our life we seek nourishment in our relationship with God. Our growth and development, and our fulfillment, comes in knowing the love of God.
  3. Ministry / Social Service – (being in service to others) We have God given gifts and we should seek to use them through being active in our own parish or civic organizations. “Love isn’t love until you give it away” is more than a catchy phrase it can be a way of life
  4. Career, Job, Hobbies (our creativeness): This area of our life is the area for expression of our need to create, to bring forth something new as a result of our effort. Made in the image of God, the Almighty Creator, we, too, have a need to create and produce something new which is a reflection of ourselves. It may be our job, a hobby that we use as an outlet for our creativity, but it is an area that we devote ourselves for the purpose of bringing forth our personal creative touch, to accomplish something that is uniquely and personally “us”.
  5. Financial: Our financial well-being is the means through which we are able to live in the modern world. Without financial means, our other needs may not be met. Our effort for financial satisfaction should be evaluated in terms of whether the financial needs are goals in and of themselves or whether they are goals to assist in meeting the needs and goals in the other five areas of our life.
  7. Health and Well Being (including recreation, and our physical and mental condition): Our health and well being are important aspects of our life if we are to “feel good”. Recreation and having fun is sometimes as important as what we accomplish, and certainly helps us keep a positive outlook on life. We cannot be fully alive if we do not take care of ourselves physically. Attending to our physical condition is an important aspect necessary in maintaining a balanced lifestyle, and it’s something we need to spend time on with a regular regimen of exercise, recreation, and rest. Getting adequate sleep is one form of rest, and health through reading and mental contemplation. Exercising ones mental state with good, challenging reading provides balance to the physical condition and to one’s overall condition and lifestyle.
- C. Exercise: Diagram your Own Personal “Wheel of Life”.
1. In each of the areas of the Wheel, ask yourself “How satisfied am I feeling in the area of my \_\_\_\_\_?”
  2. Rate your level of satisfaction on a scale of 1-10.  
“1” is “Highly unsatisfied – I want a great deal of improvement in this area”

“5” would be “Somewhat satisfied, but I’m also experiencing a desire for further improvement in this area”.

“10” is “My needs are met, I’m highly satisfied”.

3. Mark each segment of the “wheel” with zero being the center of the wheel and 10 being the outer ring. Mark your satisfaction level from the center of the wheel for each of the six dimensions. Shade the area below that point to the center of the wheel. As you create this “wheel”, it gives you a picture of what areas of your life you might be feeling the greatest imbalance.

**\*\*NOTE:** Satisfaction is NOT necessarily the amount of time you spend in an area – e.g. you might spend ever increasing amount of time on your career, or in achieving financial satisfaction and it might be because your satisfaction level is LOW. Then mark that area with a low number.

### III. Creating a Development (Growth) Plan - To Achieve Greater Balance.

#### A. Focus on Areas of “Un-Balance”.

When we look at our Wheel of Life, there are some areas where we are satisfied, but other areas where our needs and expectations may be unmet and leaving us feeling dissatisfied. We also realize that we can’t do everything, that we will eventually run out of time, money, effort. We have to draw the line somewhere, yet still keep our sights set on becoming more fully alive. Our development plan, or growth plan, can help us identify the areas where we want to put more focus in our life, and thus achieve greater balance in what we want for ourselves versus what we are achieving.

#### B. What am I willing to do to add balance to my Wheel of Life?

Where do I want to put my time and effort. If I find myself dissatisfied in some areas, then I can choose to add to my life certain actions or activities that will enhance that area and give me greater satisfaction, thus greater balance. But it takes a choice on my part, and as with any plan, it helps by writing it down. When it is written, it becomes more of a commitment on our part to actually do something about it, and is easy to look back at the plan and measure one’s progress.

#### C. Exercise – Fill out Personal Development Plan.

### IV. Balancing One’s Activities to Support Development Plans.

- A. Our Encountered Lifestyle calls us to Live as Radical Lovers. To be dissatisfied with living the World’s Plan, to choose to live God’s Plan in our marriage and in a love relationship with others. This different, radical lifestyle is more than just standing on the corner, proclaiming a radical message. It sometimes requires making difficult decisions in order to enhance our relationships. Sometimes it requires us to choose those things that will take time away from other areas of our life for the sake of relationships. Like Mary and Martha, being “in service to others” is not a bad thing, nor is it

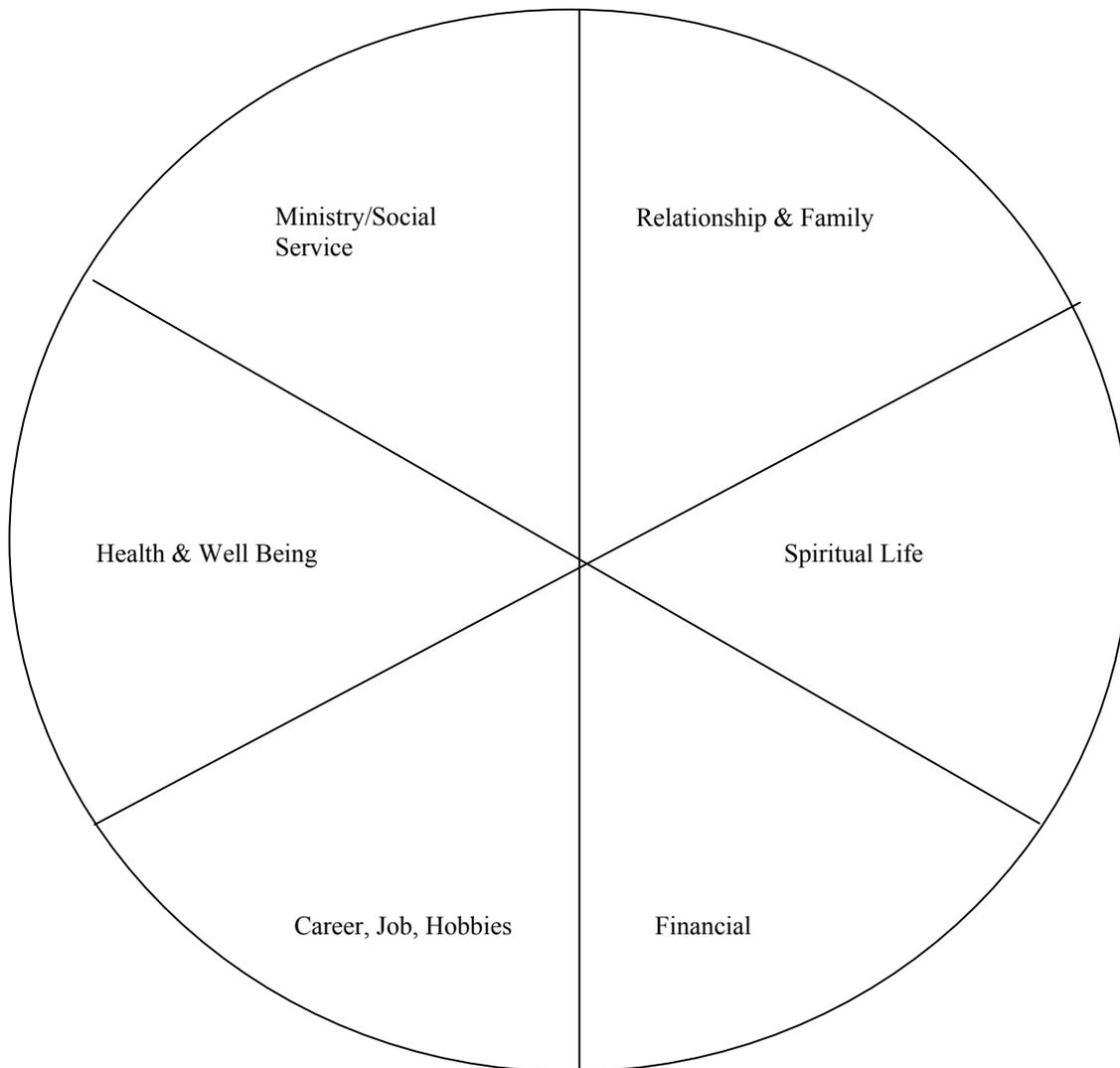
“lesser” than listening to the word of God. We need both. Sometimes we need to concentrate on our spiritual development and our relationships, and at other times it’s important for us to recreate decisions and choose between several “good things”. We can’t do everything, we just don’t have enough time or energy to do all that is good. So we have to say “yes” to some things, and that necessarily means saying “no” to other areas in our life. Make sure you are not saying “no” to those areas that you consider most important in your development plan.

- B. Decide what you will do – and then do it with “passion”. Our Development Plan is designed to help us identify the areas in our life to focus our energy for growth and improvement. Choose those areas with purpose in mind, and then approach those areas with passion, with enthusiasm, with vigor for what you are doing. For example, if an area of need is in the recreational and physical conditioning, then set out the improvement plan for that area. Put your attention and energy into achieving your goals, and don’t look back. Rather, do it with a passion for what you are doing.

V. Motivation to Live the Radical Lifestyle.

- A. We can live our Encountered Lifestyle with Passion and Compassion. We all have the same 24 hours in a day, so what we do with our own 24 hours is what really matters in trying to live a balanced lifestyle. The Radical Lifestyle of Marriage Encountered couples and priests calls for living our life with passion, particularly for the relationships with our spouse and with others. As our lives will probably not get less busy, we have to make the most of the limited time, be satisfied with what we can do, and don’t worry about what we aren’t able to do. If we accept that we will not be able to accomplish everything and therefore do what we do without complaints, then we will feel freedom to live as though we may never pass this way again. When we live with a passion for understanding one another, as we strive in our dialogue, it’s as if we walk ten miles in another person’s shoes. It is then that we experience compassion for those with whom we have taken time to develop and foster relationships. We begin to understand and to love as Christ has taught us. We experience the balance in coming to know life, in balance with ourselves and with others.

## WHEEL OF LIFE



## Development / Growth Plan

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

What areas am I feeling the greatest need for balance in my life? (refer to the “Wheel”)

What specifically can I do in two of the areas which are showing need for greater balance in my “Wheel of Life”?

What can you do to assist me in achieving and being successful with my development / growth plans?

When will I / we review our development / growth plans?

How do I feel about my development / growth plan?