

The Legal Professional and The Universal Law of Balance

Public perception of the practice of law has changed a lot over the past forty years. We can see the changes played out in popular television shows - from *Perry Mason* in the early 60s, to *LA Law* in the mid 80s and early 90s, and to *Law and Order* and its spin-offs in recent years. The practice of law has gone from being a “gentleman’s profession” to being “legal guns for hire”, from “defenders of the law and justice” to “advocates” for our clients’ interests. Some of us now define our success by how much money we win for our clients, or how much money they didn’t lose. We wield the law as a sword or a shield to defend or advance the interests of our clients, sometimes to the detriment of society and ourselves.

Law and the legal profession have always been directly aligned with the *Universal Law of Balance*. It has always been about balancing the needs of one party against the needs of another, and at the same time balancing these needs against the needs of society as a whole. Whether we are litigating a tort or negotiating a contract, we are engaged in the act of balancing the divergent interests of all parties involved. It is therefore unfortunate that while we are balancing the needs and interests of our clients, many of us forget to balance our personal needs as well.

In our drive to become more successful lawyers, we pour all our energies into our practice, usually to the detriment to everything else that we hold dear. We consciously or unconsciously give up our health and our intimate relationships with our spouse, children, loved ones, and friends because our practice takes up so much of our time and energies. Our lives become imbalanced because we focus all our energies on only one or two things, and we don’t replenish the energies that we have taken from ourselves.

Contrary to popular belief, lawyers are human too. We also need emotional, mental and physical nourishment to keep our bodies healthy

and in balance. Imbalance causes us pain. We may drink or take drugs to try and make the pain go away, but the pain never goes away. Drugs and alcohol are poor substitutes for the balancing that we really need.

To have the fulfilling experiences that we desire in our lives, we must remember to balance the needs of our clients, business and family with our own emotional, mental and physical needs. If we truly wish to have balance in our lives, we must give an energetic equivalent to ourselves that we are giving to others. This includes giving time to ourselves for self introspection, eating regularly, eating the proper foods, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep and rest, and developing, maintaining and cultivating our personal relationships, to name a few. If we are not in balance and are running on empty, then what do we have left to give?

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