

Preface	5
Introduction	7
Book One: 21 Days to Better Balance	9
Introduction	11
Chapter 1: Welcome to Awareness	13
Day 1: Thoughts	14
Day 2: Feelings	16
Day 3: Intuition	18
Day 4: Frequency	20
Day 5: Fear	22
Day 6: Time	24
Day 7: Flow	26
Chapter 2: Moving Into Alignment	31
Day 8: The Body	32
Day 9: Relationships	34
Day 10: Silence	36
Day 11: Truth	38
Day 12: Intention	40
Day 13: Purpose	42
Day 14: Abundance	44
Chapter 3: The Key is Activation	49
Day 15: Choice	50
Day 16: Boundaries	52
Day 17: Perspective	54
Day 18: Focus	56
Day 19: Empathy	58
Day 20: Allowing	60
Day 21: Gratitude	62

Book Two: 21 Steps to Better Relationships	65
Introduction	67
Chapter 4: Welcome to Awareness	69
Step 1: Know Thyself	70
Step 2: Communication	72
Step 3: Boundaries	74
Step 4: Frequency	76
Step 5: Love	78
Step 6: Power	80
Step 7: Freedom	82
Chapter 5: Moving Into Alignment	87
Step 8: Trust	88
Step 9: Intention	90
Step 10: Purpose	92
Step 11: Allowing	94
Step 12: Listening	96
Step 13: Appreciation	98
Step 14: Timing	100
Chapter 6: The Key is Activation	105
Step 15: Begin Within	106
Step 16: Walk in Their Shoes	108
Step 17: Choose For Yourself	110
Step 18: Befriend Your Family, Befamily Your Friends	112
Step 19: Soften Your Stance	114
Step 20: Go With the Flow	116
Step 21: Enact Love	118

Book Three: 21 Keys to Work/Life Balance	121
Introduction	123
Chapter 7: Welcome to Awareness	125
Key 1: The Balance Myth	126
Key 2: Choice	128
Key 3: Intention	130
Key 4: Frequency	132
Key 5: Strengths	134
Key 6: Power	136
Key 7: Know Thyself	138
Chapter 8: Moving Into Alignment	141
Key 8: Communication	142
Key 9: Boundaries	144
Key 10: Environment	146
Key 11: Purpose	148
Key 12: Relationships	150
Key 13: Trust	152
Key 14: Appreciation	154
Chapter 9: The Key is Activation	157
Key 15: Begin Within	158
Key 16: Human Being, Human Doing	160
Key 17: Live Your Passion on Purpose	162
Key 18: Manage the Leader Within	164
Key 19: Soften Your Stance	166
Key 20: Work Smarter, Not Harder	168
Key 21: Go With the Flow	170
Closing	173

Preface

*Life isn't about finding yourself.
Life is about creating yourself.*
George Bernard Shaw

My search for better balance began while I was living in Honolulu, Hawaii, in the 1990s. A good friend and I were making observations about how the mind, body, and spirit are connected. We discussed how our life experience reflected our state of balance; the more balanced we were, the more serenity and peace we felt. As time passed, I began to document the observations and insights I was experiencing, and 15 years later the books began to appear.

In my first book, *21 Days to Better Balance*, I introduced 21 themes to help readers connect with themselves and find more balance in their mind, body, and spirit. Book two, *21 Steps to Better Relationships*, helped readers strengthen their relationships and find more balance with others. The third book, *21 Keys to Work/Life Balance*, brought the concept of integration—rather than separation—to understanding the delicate balance between our lives and careers. This book contains the entire text of all three books.

Balance is a natural state. Returning to better balance means removing the barriers to balance within us, many of them created by our own thoughts and behaviors. My books, blogs, coaching and speaking engagements highlight the guiding principles that have had the largest impact on my ability to find more balance and harmony in my life. Sometimes the best teacher is our own experience.

My hope is that the personal observations, insights, and stories I've used to help find better balance in my life will help you find better balance in yours.

To your best balanced life!

Michael Thomas Sunnarborg

June 2016

Introduction

The human brain naturally searches for patterns. A common theme in all three of the books is the number 21. This number was derived from the premise for the first book, which is based on the notion that it takes 21 days to make or break a habit. Rather than writing in a typical narrative style, I chose to divide the guiding principles into 21 bite-sized portions—this felt more palatable and easier for my brain to digest. Subsequently, the theme of 21 resonated as the foundation for books two and three.

The human brain also tends to retain more information that's been divided in two or three parts, but becomes less effective with memory as the number grows. Since my process for finding better balance naturally unfolded through three simple steps of awareness, alignment, and activation, I chose to apply those steps to each of the books as the main chapters, allowing for a consistent pattern to become familiar and easily integrated by the reader.

Within each of the three chapters are seven themes outlining the balance process. Along with the themes, some chapters contain exercises to help reinforce that stage of development. At the end of each theme are questions for a Balance Plan and either an Affirmation, Call to Action, or Key Actuator:



Balance Plan questions



Daily Affirmation



Call to Action



Key Actuator

You might find it useful to journal about the Balance Plan questions, or simply mull them over during your day. They can also serve as a useful meditation focus; simply bring the question into your mind during your regular meditation practice and notice the thoughts that float up in response.

Repeating the Daily Affirmations can help you internalize the lessons from each day. You might post them on your bathroom mirror or computer monitor. I know one person who posts each day's affirmation in the middle of her car's steering wheel so that she remembers it on the way to work and on her way home.

The Call to Action and Key Actuator are “to-do” activities designed to help you apply the lessons from each theme. Putting theory into practice helps integrate the concepts into your experience.

Each of the themes is progressive and will be best understood if read in order—at least the first time through. Then after you've completed the books you can return to any of the themes or exercises to refresh yourself as needed. Also, some of the themes and stories have been repeated in more than one book. This was done intentionally to reinforce the strongest guiding principles.

The content in this book is very direct. If any of the introductory text feels overwhelming, try skipping down and reading the analogy or story before re-reading the larger messages. This may help you set the appropriate context for the daily theme.

These books will help you create a Balance Plan. The plans are meant to help you apply the insights contained in the books. Start by thinking of a current problem or situation in your life where you'd like to create better balance—for example, your job, your finances, or a relationship—and use your answers from the Balance Plan questions at the end of each theme to build your plan. Your plan can help shed light on the situation and support you in brainstorming potential solutions.

Let's get started!

Book One

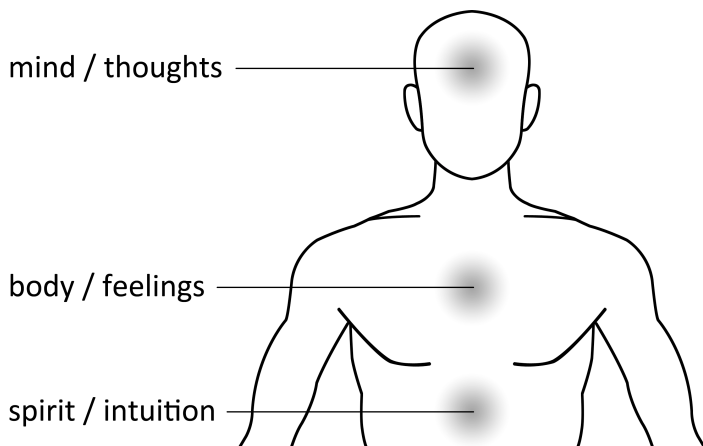
21 Days to Better Balance

Find More Balance in a Busy World

Introduction

It takes 21 days to make or break a habit. Over the next 21 days, I'm going to lead you through a three-step process of awareness, alignment, and activation designed to gently shift your perspective, remove barriers, and help you find better balance in your mind, body, and spirit. At the end of the process, you will have established new habits that will help to keep you moving in the direction of a balanced life.

Throughout this book I will be associating the mind with *thoughts*, the body with *feelings*, and the spirit with *intuition*. These associations help to identify how you might experience your mind, body, and spirit in more tangible ways.



Remember: The power to make changes in your life is *always* in your hands. Make a commitment to start paying closer attention to your thoughts, feelings, and intuition and create the momentum for better balance in your life today.

Chapter 1: Welcome to Awareness

*Let us not look back in anger, nor forward
in fear, but around in awareness.*

James Thurber

Humans are multi-sensory beings. Our powerful consciousness is absorbing and processing everything in our environment—sights, sounds, and smells—whether we realize it or not. In order to find better balance in our lives, we must first become aware of the factors that influence our balance.

The next seven days will be spent taking a closer look at awareness. Raising our awareness helps us reconnect with our natural state of balance and reminds us that the power to change our lives is always in our hands.

Day 1: Thoughts

Awareness

The ancestor of every action is a thought.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Thoughts are most often associated with logic, cognition, reasoning, and the mind. The mind is the source of our thoughts. Although the mind is a complex and vast resource of knowledge, memories, and perceptions—a metaphorical scrapbook of our life experiences—it is not our thoughts. Thoughts are only energetic vibrations created in the mind. But in the process of creating, thoughts are powerful tools.

All thoughts contain energy. When you think a thought, you send out an energetic signal, and that signal produces an effect. As the thought process continues, the energy around the thought will grow and begin to manifest in your experience. Whatever you pay attention to will expand. Have you ever thought about someone and then seen or heard from them shortly afterward? Have you gone to sleep with a problem and woken up with a solution? These are examples of how powerful our thoughts can be.

Our thoughts are affected by everything that we encounter, and we have the power to sort, prioritize, and control our thoughts. When we take control of our thoughts, we can choose which thoughts to focus on—we can literally *change our minds*. When we change our thoughts, we will change our experiences. We are in control.

*Being aware of your thoughts allows
you to choose them and control their power.*

Thoughts are like advertisements. Each day we are bombarded by a variety of messages designed to bring us information and persuade us to take some sort of action. But most of us only take action on a small percentage of advertisements.

We have the ability to tune out advertisements by turning off the radio or TV, putting down the newspaper, or simply choosing to ignore the message. We are in control.

Similarly, each day we entertain thoughts bringing us information and persuading us to believe something or take some sort of action. But for the most part, we only take action upon a small percentage of the thoughts we think. Just as with advertisements, we can decide how to respond to our thoughts. We have the option to accept or dismiss a thought, choose a new thought, or slow down our thoughts through relaxation activities such as deep breathing or meditation. Again, we are in control.



How do your thoughts help you today? Where do your thoughts get in your way? How have your thoughts been helpful or harmful in your current situation?



How could a shift in your thinking help you to support yourself in a healthier way?



I am able to control my thoughts and choose to focus only on those thoughts that serve me.