



Vishen Lakhiani's 12 Areas of Balance Exercise

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Success means different things to different people; some may be financially well off but lacking in relationships satisfaction. Others may be physically fit and healthy but in debt. Others may have extraordinary careers, but lonely. Quality of life is measured in different ways, and this exercise can help you assess the major categories of your life and where you might need to take some action.

Exercise 1.

For each category below, rate your life on a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being “very weak” and 10 being “extraordinary”). Don't think too long, let your gut instinct quickly give you the answer.

AREA	Score (1-10)
Your Love Relationship: This is the measure of how happy you are in your current state of relationship – whether you're single and loving it, in a relationship, or desiring one	
Your Friendships: This is a measure of how strong a support network you have. Do you have at least five people who you know have your back and whom you love being around?	
Your Adventures: How much time do you get to travel, experience the world, and do things that open you to new experiences and excitement?	
Your Environment: This is the quality of your home, your car, your work and in general the spaces where you spend your time – even when travelling	
Your Health and Fitness: How would you rate your health; given your age, and any physical conditions?	
Your Intellectual Life: How much and how fast are you growing and learning? How many books do you read? How many seminars or courses do you take yearly?	
Your Skills: How fast are you improving the skills you have that make you unique and help you build a successful career? Are you growing toward mastery or are you stagnating?	
Your Spiritual Life: How much time do you devote to spiritual, meditative, or contemplative practices that keep you feeling connected, balanced and peaceful?	
Your Career: Are you growing, climbing the ladder and excelling? Or do you feel you're stuck in a rut? If you have a business, is it thriving or stagnating?	
Your Creative Life: Do you paint, write, play musical instruments, or engage in any other activity that helps you channel your creativity? Or are you more of a consumer than a creator?	
Your Family Life: Do you love coming home to your family after a hard day's work? If you're not married or a parent, define your family as your parents and siblings	
Your Community Life: Are you giving, volunteering, contributing and playing a definite role in your community?	



Exercise 2.

For each of the categories we have just explored, let's examine our Models of reality that may have influenced those outcomes. Some examples are listed, but add others that come to mind

AREA	What Models of reality do I hold about these areas that affect where I am?
<p>Your Love Relationship: How do you define love? What do you expect from a love relationship, both to receive and to give? Do you believe that love brings hurt? Do you believe love can endure? Do you believe you have the capacity to love greatly? Do you believe you deserve to be loved and treasured? Do you believe that there is only "the One" great love and no other is possible?</p>	
<p>Your Friendships: How do you define friendships? Do you believe friendships should be long lasting? Do you believe your friends take more from you than they give? Do you believe making friends is easy or hard?</p>	
<p>Your Adventures: What's your idea of an adventure? Is it about travel? Physical activity? Art and culture? Urban or rural sights and sounds? Seeing how people live in places totally different from yours? Are you making time and space for adventure in your life? Do you believe you need to save for retirement before taking a long trip? Would you feel guilty if you left your job or your family to take a holiday by yourself? Do you think that spending money on experiences is frivolous?</p>	
<p>Your Environment: Where do you feel happiest? Are you content with where and how you live? How do you define "home"? What aspects of your environment are most important to you (colours, sounds, type of furniture, proximity to nature or culture, neatness, level of convenience/luxury items, etc)? Do you believe you deserve a gorgeous home, to stay in 5 star hotels when you travel, and work in great environments?</p>	
<p>Your Health and Fitness: How do you define physical health? How do you define healthy eating? Do you believe you're genetically inclined toward obesity or any other health issues? Do you believe you'll live as long or longer than your parents? Do you believe you're aging well or poorly?</p>	
<p>Your Intellectual Life: How much are you learning? How much are you growing? How much control do you have over your mind and your daily thoughts? Do you believe you have adequate intelligence to accomplish your goals?</p>	
<p>Your Skills: What do you consider something you're "good at"? And what not so much? Where did those perceptions come from? What holds you back from learning new things? Are there some skills you're ready to let go of? What keeps you from making the change? What special skills or character traits do you have that you consider are most valuable? What do you "suck" at?</p>	
<p>Your Spiritual Life: What type of spiritual values do you believe in? How do you practice them and how often? Is spirituality a social or individual experience for you? Are you stuck in models culture and religion that hold little appeal but that you're afraid to abandon for fear of hurting others?</p>	



<p>Your Career: What is your definition of work? How do you define a career? How much do you enjoy your career? Do you feel you are being noticed and appreciated in your career? Do you feel you have what it takes to succeed?</p>	
<p>Your Creative Life: Do you believe that you are creative? Is there a creative person you admire? What do you admire about him / her? What creative pursuits are you not expressing? Do you believe you have a talent for a specific creative project?</p>	
<p>Your Family Life: What do you believe is your main role as a life partner? How about as a son or daughter? Is your family life satisfying to you? What were your values about family growing up? Do you believe family is a burden or an asset to your happiness?</p>	
<p>Your Community Life: Do you share the values of the communities you are a part of? What do you believe is the highest purpose of a community? Do you believe you're able to contribute? Do you feel like contributing?</p>	

Exercise 3. Refresh your knowledge in areas you have identified you need to improve the most.

Go back to Exercise one and pick two or three areas that you scored the lowest in, where you want to make some serious changes. Make a couple of notes about what you can do, easily and without too much pain, that would begin to shift you higher in your score. Vishen always recommends reading books on the subject, so in the category column is his recommended reading list.

AREA	Ideas to implement for change
<p>Your Love Relationship: <i>Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus</i> by John Gray.</p>	
<p>Your Friendships: <i>How to win friends and influence people</i> by Dale Carnegie</p>	
<p>Your Adventures: <i>Losing my virginity</i> by Richard Branson</p>	
<p>Your Environment: <i>The magic of thinking big</i> by David J Schwartz</p>	
<p>Your Health and Fitness: For men- <i>The bulletproof diet</i> by Dave Asprey. For women- <i>The virgin diet</i> by JJ Virgin</p>	
<p>Your Intellectual Life: Courses by Jim Kwik</p>	



Your Skills: <i>The 4 hour work week</i> by Tim Ferriss	
Your Spiritual Life: <i>Conversations with God</i> by Neale Diamond Walsch and <i>Autobiography of a Yogi</i> by Paramahansa Yogananda	
Your Career: <i>Originals</i> by Adam Grant	
Your Creative Life: <i>The war of art</i> by Steven Pressfield	
Your Family Life: <i>The mastery of love</i> by Don Miguel Ruiz	
Your Community Life: <i>Delivering happiness</i> by Tony Hsieh	

Exercise 4. Set Points

Now it is time to establish non-negotiable thresholds of achievement in each area that Vishen calls “Set Points”. These are different from goals, in that goals pull you forward, while a set point helps you maintain what you have. Both are important. Set points help to prevent your slipping below what is important to you. Make set points not too difficult to achieve and measurable if possible: e.g. aim for X amount of push-ups, or plank time; deposit X\$ into a bank account per week; spend 1 hour reading per day to improve my job skills; etc.

If you slip below your set point, immediately initiate a remedial overcompensation. For example, if your set point is 50 push-ups, and you fall below in any week – alter your diet, invest an extra hour to exercise; go to bed an hour earlier each night and raise your set point to 51 push-ups from then on. This way, the failure is turned into a challenge, which is psychologically much more motivating

AREA	Measurable Setpoint
Your Love Relationship: e.g. How much time to spend together; number of date nights; lovemaking; compliments given per day	
Your Friendships: Keeping in touch: number of phone calls/texts per week; inviting friends over to dinner 1/month; writing to someone going through a tough time	



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<p>Your Adventures: Set a holiday timetable you will commit to. A new restaurant each month; a new gallery or experience per month</p>	
<p>Your Environment: making your home more tidy – make the bed each day; clear the sink after each meal; pampering yourself with a massage per week</p>	
<p>Your Health and Fitness: Waist measurement, push-ups; classes per week of yoga, etc; 1 coffee only per day; or 1 dessert per week; monitor blood pressure weekly etc.</p>	
<p>Your Intellectual Life: read a few pages per night of enriching subjects; visit a gallery per month; attend a play or concert per month; Read a book a fortnight</p>	
<p>Your Skills: Set X hours per week or 1 day per month reading or studying to improve your expertise in any field</p>	
<p>Your Spiritual Life: Set 15 minutes of meditation per day; read a page per day of a spiritual work</p>	
<p>Your Career: Join a professional group and go to a set number of meetings per year; Read 1 book per month on career subject matter; Read X number of online articles per month.</p>	
<p>Your Creative Life: Choose a creative outlet and set a reachable set point for making it a regular part of your life; 20 minutes of journaling per day; learn a musical instrument or language; draw for an hour per week</p>	
<p>Your Family Life: Set X hours of family-oriented activities per week, with kids; parents; family. Call parents each week at a set time; Going to Breakfast regularly; playtime with kids.</p>	
<p>Your Community Life: Set an amount to donate regularly to worthy causes; volunteer for a group you support</p>	