

Embracing balance

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In life, finding balance is essential, especially when we recognize that things aren't always easy. Even in the most difficult times, there is always a spark of good fortune, however small it may seem in comparison to our struggles. It's this recognition, this inclination toward noticing the blessings in our lives, that sustains us. Whether it's the support of loved ones, the presence of spiritual friends, or simply the fact that we have a practice to turn to—these are the elements that bring balance and make the challenges more bearable.

Our practice and our lives require patience, courage, and endless kindness. When we can connect with gratitude for even the small things, such as a conversation with a loved one or the support we receive from others, it helps us navigate through the difficulties. Often, our minds are naturally inclined to focus on what's challenging. This tendency is biologically ingrained in us for survival, but it can overshadow the good in our lives. By adjusting our perspective just slightly, we can begin to see the good fortune that exists alongside our challenges.

Reflecting on stories of others' good fortune, or even our own, uplifts us. It's important to remember that even in the midst of great suffering, there are heartwarming stories of support, of people coming together to help one another. These moments of human connection and kindness are not to be underestimated—they are what keep us sane and balanced in the face of adversity.

The Buddha's teachings guide us on this path of balance. The First Noble Truth acknowledges the reality of suffering (Dukkha), but it is through recognizing and embracing this truth that we find our way to wisdom and compassion. Alongside suffering, there is always good fortune, spiritual friendship, and the ability to connect with others who share our path. This connection, this ability to practice together, even across distances, is a profound blessing.

Life asks us to open ourselves to all of it—the joys and the sorrows, the blessings and the challenges. This openness allows us to find balance, to stay grounded, and to continue walking the path with an open heart. The end goal isn't to escape suffering entirely, as the world will always have its difficulties, but to learn to respond to these challenges with wisdom, compassion, and kindness.

As we walk this path, let's remember to notice the blue sky, the flowers at our feet, and the blessings of companionship along the way. This is our assignment in life: to find balance in all of it, to keep going, and to stay connected with what is. The path isn't easy, but it's a blessing that we have it to walk, step by step, together.