

FINDING BALANCE

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Finding Balance

I recently read an article about finding balance in exercising and family, and during my run tonight I thought to myself "what can I do to help other women who struggle with this balance just the same as I do?"

I work sometimes 50+ hours per week, I try to go to my karate studio 3 days per week which is 25 miles in LA/Orange County traffic away during rush hour, TRY is the operative word here. I am a mother of 3, grandmother of 2. Though my kids are older, I still struggle to make it into the studio based on the fact that I'm utterly beat after work, I want to go home and snuggle with my husband, drink a glass of wine and just relax. This is every day for me. The guilt involved with not doing what I set out to do is enormous, but what can I do about it? How can I manage my need to do something for myself, my body my my sanity, without jeopardizing the responsibilities I have as a parent and wife?

I asked this question on Facebook and had a couple of good responses. The one that stuck out the most was from Ali Thomas, she wrote:

"Taking ME time actually makes me a better Mum. The time you do have with your loved ones is then of greater quality and appreciated much more. When taking time out to do kenpo, borrow housework time that will always be there waiting for you, your kids won't they grow so fast but they need a break away from their Mums too so give it to them. Stop thinking that you are taking away from your children, you are actually giving them more, a very happy and healthy Mum they can look up to be proud of and have total respect for. Finally I'd like to add, where there a will there's a way."

What great advice.

Both of my sisters had babies in the last 10 months, one is training and working hard towards her ideal weight and body for her wedding, the other had twins at the same time who misses her karate and misses the soreness of working out and really struggles to find the time to "come back".

Alia wrote:

"Having 9 month old twins, I already feel the guilt that is involved with doing things for myself. As their first birthday approaches, I plan to adjust back into the studio. I miss my time there, my students and most importantly my sanity"

What I find interesting is this is just the beginning for both of these ladies, who have always been very active in their lifestyles, yet now everything has changed, life as they know it has come to an gradual halt, it's all about babies, family and adjustment. Like any life change, adjustment is key, HABIT is key and getting yourself into a routine whether it be stay

at home with family or head to the karate studio or gym and even go for a run it's all about choice. Once it's realized that setting aside time for themselves can potentially give them a positive new habit, that HABIT will flourish and grow, this will determine the success of their goal.

I had another very good response in my inquiry from Barb White, she's been a student of karate for 20 years, this is what she wrote:

"Both my children have never seen me NOT in kenpo. I struggled to make sure that I always made dinner, scheduled in quality time where we would do crafts and little trips together, be home in time to put them to sleep, etc. Because I did not want to have my wants and needs come above my children/family, I made it a point to balance time as much as possible. That meant taking more time to get through belt levels, not attending as many seminars, camps, tournaments. I do not regret the decision to balance my family over Kenpo. Don't be in a huge hurry. It's not a race and kids grow up so quickly. On a side note, when everyone was in bed, I read as much as I could about Martial Arts, Kenpo, and fitness. This kept the fire burning."

Finding balance for "myself" in life is a hard task. For the last 5 years I've had a daughter in high school, worked full time, suffered from two debilitating injuries yet I always had the prize in site. It's still in sight now, even though I've achieved the level of Black Belt, I continue to strive to better myself through continued physical fitness and continuous learning, I have the constant desire to succeed and aspire to be..... better. With that comes commitment, you have to make the time and commit to YOU, this will make you better, and once you do that you will be a better co-worker, better mom, better wife, and help you succeed at being a BETTER YOU.