

Me!

Real women.

Real life. Real world.

new
inspirations
MAGAZINE

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leigh matthews' mother
talks, laughs, cries...

declutter
your life
(it works—try it!)

the 5
friends
you gotta have

keeping
love alive
make a weekend feel
like a honeymoon

the power of
passion!



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“dump
your baby
here”
and other
life-changing
storie

inspired living

live a happier life love your looks
feel your best transform your home



A black and white photograph of a woman sitting on a beach, laughing joyfully. She is wearing a striped tank top and shorts. The background shows the ocean and a bright sky.

CONSCIOUSLY

balanced!

Balance: how to find it, how to use it and how to get it back into your life

b

alance is one of the most powerful components of life and it's essential for maintaining the quality of our lives both at home and at work – but it isn't something we can take for granted. By the time we've met the demands of our job, dropped the kids off at school, paid the bills and squeezed in a gym workout, we're running around so frenetically that it's not surprising we wonder where the balance in our lives has gone!

Research shows that struggling for balance in our lives is a common problem. A recent study by the Discovery Group, a management consulting firm in Massachusetts, of more than 50,000 employees from a variety of manufacturing and service organisations, found that two out of every five employees are dissatisfied with the balance between their work and their personal lives. The lack of balance is due to long work hours, changing demographics, more time in the car, the deterioration of boundaries between work

and home, and increased work pressure', says the study's author, Bruce Katcher.

A CONSCIOUSNESS COACH ON FINDING BALANCE

Michèle Hinds, a Cape Town-based Consciousness Coach® and single mother, has often struggled with creating a balanced lifestyle where all aspects of her being "have space and time to come out and play". It's easy to relate to her desire for "more time and energy to do the things I love". She says Consciousness Coaching® has had a huge impact on creating balance in her own life and through coaching clients and training coaches she gets to pass these valuable gifts on to others.

Michèle focuses on "transforming the way people perceive their lives so that they experience freedom, power and full self-expression in all aspects of their lives." She asks her clients powerful questions that support them in discovering their own insights.

"This causes shifts in their consciousness so that they are empowered to move from living their lives in reaction to their circumstances to choosing to create their reality from moment to moment."

4 AREAS WE CAN FOCUS ON TO ACHIEVE GREATER BALANCE.

- 1. COACHING FOR CLARITY:** Free up time and energy by creating clarity in your life. When it's clear you are free to be in action you will no longer need be bogged down with decision-making and indecision.
- 2. COACHING FOR PASSION:** What really inspires, moves and touches you? We always have time and energy to do what we are passionate about. Check all aspects of your life – what can you drop that is not inspiring, moving and touching you? What can you add that does inspire, move and touch you?
- 3. COACHING FOR POWER:** Get back in the driving seat of your life, your career and your relationship. Shift from being in reaction to your circumstances to being the creator of your reality. Identify what you really want and develop the skills to achieve anything you choose.
- 4. COACHING FOR BALANCE:** With clarity, passion and power, design the lifestyle of your choice. Commit to what you will have in place by when and get into action.

5 INSPIRING WOMEN SHARE THEIR SECRETS ON BALANCE

CANDICE SMITH (32) LIFE COACH AND FACILITATOR

"For me, balance is about setting boundaries between work, time with loved ones and 'me time'. The boundaries between coaching and the rest of my life can easily become blurred if I don't consciously separate them.

"I'm learning to know when to insist on 'me time' to go inward: meditate, do a few yoga stretches or ground

myself in whatever way I need to. Anyone who wants to find greater balance in their lives should sit down and draw up a balance wheel, dividing it into the different components of their life such as work, play, family, 'me time' and graphically map out where they are out of kilter and what they can do to bring about greater balance. Another useful approach is to make a list of all the different roles we play such as friend, lover, colleague, spiritual seeker, family member or community member, and assess how many of our diverse roles we are playing every day and how we can access more of these."

TERESA TYACKE (43) RECRUITMENT AGENCY MANAGER AND MOTHER TO RUTH (6) AND JAMES (8)

"I make a conscious effort to find balance. Since my children were born, I've worked part-time and flex-time but I often squeeze a whole day's worth of work into five hours. The next cornerstone of my striving for balance is a daily yoga and meditation routine.

"My family wake up at 7am so I get up an hour earlier to do some yoga, breathing and meditation and that's a crucial to having a balanced day and attempting to stay present in the moment throughout the rest of my day. I also believe cardiovascular exercise is vital so I do spinning and NIA (neuromuscular integration activity), which is a combination of dance, martial arts and healing therapies, and it helps with emotional expression as well as being a physical workout. A critical part of being in balance and doing all these activities is actually to do nothing. To literally take 20 minutes and just do nothing. I think doing nothing is really under recognised."

GERMAINE GRAMMAR (32) WEB CONTENT SPECIALIST, RECENTLY SINGLE AND MOTHER OF TWO CATS

"My day is very pressurised. I balance it out by:

Going back to school. After 17 years, I restarted piano lessons. Playing music is definitely meditative for me, but I feel sorry for my neighbours!

Flamenco classes. Nothing could be better for me than stamping and wrist circling my way around a beginner's Flamenco class. It's great for creating a positive mood and heaps of fun.

Singing in the car. With the windows down and the volume up, I make a *Pop Kicks* episode on the move, together with all the actions. As Neo Muyanga says: 'Singing is practical medicine'.

Swimming. With in full swing, it's time to get a season ticket for the Sea Point Pool where I can rip down for a post-work, sea-like swirl as I look out to the horizon towards South America.

Breathe in, breathe out. A meditation course has helped me learn breathing techniques and Buddhism helps with the everyday ABCs, even being nicer to trucks who drive at 40kph in the fast lane."

MAXINE SEPTEMBER (35) MANUFACTURER OF EROTIC TOYS FOR WOMEN

"There's no such thing as 'a typical day' in my life. My only 'constant' is the first hour of my day, when I take time to breathe deeply, stretch with my cats, do a 'Salute to the Sun', and prioritise the rest of my day. Laughter is the best stress relief, so I make a special effort to spend as much time as possible with friends who make me laugh.

My weekends are filled with good music and dancing whether it's out in public or in my living room and I make sure I have 'solo time', reading and spending time on my own is vital to me. A sense of something completely new no matter how simple, keeps me motivated.

I always have a 'not too serious' creative endeavour going. My last was knitting and now that I've made some winter woolies, it's time to move onto the next one... I've never tried cocoupage.

To maintain sanity during PMS, I take plenty of vitamin B complex, don a wig and pretend I'm someone else. Last but definitely not least, I think being in touch with myself sexually and feeling connected with myself sensually and spiritually, whether I am with a partner or on my own, helps to balance all the areas of my life."

ANNIE BRADSHAW (48) BUSINESS ANALYST

"I was involved in the corporate world for many years but I have left to start my own journey. My biggest balancing element is Tai Chi – if I didn't do it, I think I would be the most irritable person on earth! I've been doing it for six and a half years now and I do about eight hours a week.

When I walk into a class, I empty my mind and get into a meditative mood but I also incorporate it into the rest of my lifestyle. The frantic pace of our lives clutters our heads and the Tai Chi allows me to feel calm and to focus and concentrate. I think that if everyone was able to find more balance, we would have a much better world because being in balance impacts on everyone around you, not just yourself."

A BALANCED CONCLUSION

Work pressures and family pressures are a reality for us all, but we can actively choose to find the balance in our lives and bring it back into harmony. Creating balance is a continuous process and one that evolves as our life, priorities and needs change.

To live a balanced life, we need to make choices about what and who has to come first and what has to be sacrificed, because nobody can do everything and be everything all the time. The inspiring women we interviewed have very different lives and lifestyles but all of them agreed that making time for themselves and doing something that they really enjoyed was essential to balancing the pressures of the rest of their lives. **T**

By Melissa Green

HOW LIFE SKILLS COACH MICHELE CHANGED THREE WOMEN'S LIVES

Three readers who experienced Michele Hinds' Consciousness Coaching® first hand talked to us about how it has changed their lives.

Greer Blizzard (31) Consciousness Coach®

"I was involved in the corporate world for ten years, but it didn't allow for much of a spiritual connection. I did an NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) course and Consciousness Coaching® with Michele, which changed my life. Michele inspired me to start drumming again.

I have now connected with my passion, which is to empower people (not help them!) and I am starting my own Consciousness Coaching® Company so I can pass these skills on to others. I see life as having seven areas: mental, physical, social, spiritual, financial, familial and vocational. If you are aware of all these areas, you can look at each one and see where you are out of balance and do something to change your life!"



Brenda van Straaten (38) TV producer, Consciousness Coach® and mother to Jonathan (7)

"The coaching helped me to view things from a different perspective. I realised how I was preventing myself from achieving what it was I really wanted. I learnt the difference between understanding and 'getting' something. It's only when we get something that we are able to utilise it to empower us. It proved to me that we hold the answers to our questions inside ourselves. I have achieved greater balance, which has enabled me to live my life with more joy and less fear. I feel that I am now a creator, no longer a victim of circumstances and conditioning. I have achieved greater balance from coaching than I could ever have imagined."



Ingrid Awerbuch (43) Independent human resources management consultant

"The consciousness coaching showed me how not being in my personal power prevented me from achieving balance. I have become conscious of when I give my personal power away and how that impacts my ability to achieve balance. It has helped me to realise that my personal power is the greatest leverage in achieving balance in my life. I have gained clarity on what I want and now take full responsibility for creating what I want so I am able to make conscious choices rather than just reacting to things. I now make conscious commitments to myself and others and treat my commitments with integrity!"

