



BALANCE AND MODERATION

The Balancing Act

June 7, 2025

NOTE TO TEACHER: As a Sabbath School teacher, you can download free PowerPoint presentations and script for the Health Ministries program CELEBRATIONS, referred to in this lesson. Go to <https://www.healthministries.com/celebrations/>.

1 PREPARING

A. THE SOURCE

Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 (KJV) • “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. . . . He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end. I know that there is no good in them, but for a man to rejoice, and to do good in his life. And also that every man should

eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God.”

Philippians 4:8 (NIV) • “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

Proverbs 17:22 (NIV) • “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.”

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) • “For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.”

Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10 (NIV) • “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.”

Ecclesiastes 3:12, 13 (NIV) • “I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live. That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.”

Ecclesiastes 7:1 (NIV) • “A good name is better than fine perfume.”

Daniel 1:12-17 (NIV) • “ ‘Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men

who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see.’ . . . At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. So the guard took away their choice food and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables instead. To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds.”

Mind, Character, and Personality, vol. 1, p. 359 • “In the beginning God created man in His own likeness. . . . His mind was well balanced, and all the powers of his being were harmonious. . . . To bring [man] back to the perfection in which he was first created is the great object of life—the object that underlies every other.”

B. WHAT’S TO BE SAID ABOUT “BALANCE AND MODERATION”

The goal is balance. We need a balance between work and play. We need a balance between giving and receiving. We need a balance between exercise and rest. There are times when we need to climb mountains or invest intensely in some current situation. But the overall picture of our lives needs to balance.

Just as a balanced, nutritional diet takes into account the realm of our nutritional needs to stay healthy, a balanced life takes into account all our needs: our need for friends, work, love, family, play, rest, private time, and spiritual time—time with God.

It is difficult enough for those of us with a great deal of life experience to find and maintain this balance, but for the early teenager, this call to balance is even more overwhelming. Our young teens are beset by all sorts of emotional and developmental challenges. They are dealing with changing bodies, changing relationships, a new and unexplainable interest in the opposite sex, and overwhelming feelings of worthlessness.

When kids reach early adolescence, they

seem to forget what they used to value and begin to care only about what their peers—the majority—are doing. They are paying much more attention to “who’s doing it” than what they’re doing.

Balance is less about striving for some elusive state of equilibrium than it is about making an explicit series of choices in life. We have to figure out what is important to us, find a focus, and that will dictate how we spend our time and how successful we are at this “balancing act.”

God’s Word has important guidelines and plans for our success in life. He gives us not only the “what to do” but also provides the “why” and “how” to do it as well. Because of the constant struggle between good and evil, we must remain alert, armed, and balanced in our daily lifestyle choices.

C. WHERE WE’RE GOING WITH “BALANCE AND MODERATION”

As a result of this lesson we would like the students to be able to:

1. Recognize the importance of positive daily lifestyle choices.
2. Discover tools that can be used to make good lifestyle choices.
3. Commit to relying only on God’s power for making positive choices.

D. MATERIALS NEEDED

Beginning • (Activity A) masking tape, list of questions in activity; (Activity B) masking tape, 12 bowls or containers, 12 two-ounce paper cups, dried beans/Styrofoam packing peanuts, a Styrofoam/paper plate for each student.

Connecting • Bibles, student lessons, paper, pens.

Applying • Worksheet on page 105, pens.

2 BRIDGING

A. WHERE WE'VE BEEN BEFORE

Allow 10 minutes as students are arriving to:

1. Share anything that was meaningful to them in this lesson.
2. Engage in a discussion about the topic of the lesson in connection to the belief highlighted this week.
3. Say the Bible memory text either individually or in a group.

B. OTHER SABBATH SCHOOL COMPONENTS

- >> Song service
- >> Mission emphasis (find a link for Adventist *Mission* for youth and adults at www.realtimefaith.net)
- >> Service project reports

3 BEGINNING

NOTE TO TEACHER: Put together your own program with options from the categories below—Beginning, Connecting, Applying, and Closing. Please keep in mind, however, that the students need to have an opportunity to be interactive (participate actively *and* with one another) and to study from the Word.

A. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Say: Last week we discussed making choices and the things that factor into the decisions we make. This week we will focus on how to balance all those choices we have to make.

Get set • Place a length of masking tape on the floor that will be long enough so that each of your students can stand somewhere on the line at the beginning of this activity. Divide students into two groups, each spread out

along one half of the masking tape “balance beam” facing each other. Ask the following questions, instructing students to move out in either direction sideways from the “beam” in response to the following questions.

Go • Say: If you watched TV more than you exercised this week take two steps away from the balance beam. (If they are already on the beam when directed to move closer to it, they should just stay there and *not* move in the other direction.)

If you drank at least 8 cups of water each day this week, remain on the balance beam or take one step toward the beam; if not, take one step away from the beam.

Take three steps away from the balance beam if you ate more junk food than veggies this week.

Take two steps toward the balance beam if you got at least eight hours of sleep each night; if not, take two steps away from it.

Take one step toward the balance beam if you have made NO dishonest decisions this week; otherwise take one step away.

If you read your Bible five days this week, step two steps closer to the beam.

Did you choose to help a friend or family member this week? If so, take a step closer to the balance beam; if not, take a step away.

Did you pray at least two times each day this week? If not, take three steps from the beam; if so, move three steps closer to the beam.

If you spent as much time talking to friends about God as you spent talking about other subjects, take one step closer to the beam; if not, take a step away from the beam.

Debriefing • Gather everyone around you again and **ask:** How did you feel about your position of “balance” at the close of the game? How did you feel when you had to admit doing something that brought you farther from “balance”?

How is this experience like the balancing act in real life? What are some other things that get you “off balance”?

B. BEGINNING ACTIVITY

Get ready • Place several eight-foot (2.5-meter) lengths of masking tape around the room. If possible, have an eight-foot line for every three or four students in your class. Place 12 bowls/containers in the middle of the room, each labeled with the one of the following: Choices, Exercise, Liquids, Environment, Belief, Rest, Air, Temperance, Integrity, Optimism, Nutrition, Social Support. Inside the bowls place a quantity of beans or Styrofoam packing peanuts and a small two-ounce paper cup. You will also need a paper/plastic plate for each student.

Get set • Say: The Health Ministries Department of our church has identified 12 different areas of life that we need to have in balance in order to be healthy. They have attached them to an acronym, **CELEBRATIONS**, in order to help us remember them more easily. You can see what each of the letters in the acronym stands for by reading the labels on the bowls. **C—Choices, E—Exercise, L—Liquids, E—Environment, B—Belief, R—Rest, A—Air, T—Temperance, I—Integrity, O—Optimism, N—Nutrition, S—Social support.** Each of you will need to place a small amount of beans/Styrofoam packing peanuts from each bowl onto your plate before we begin.

Go • Divide the students evenly and instruct each group to stand at the end of one of the pieces of masking tape. Have the first person in line lift the plate above their head, close their eyes, and spin in a circle five times. They then should open their eyes and walk the “balance beam” tape line without spilling any of the contents of their plate. Make sure each student gets the opportunity to walk the “balance beam.”

Debriefing • Ask: Was it easy to balance without spilling the beans? Why or why not?

How did you feel when you tried to balance everything? How is trying to keep from spilling the beans like trying to balance your real life on a daily basis? What kinds of things get you “off balance”?

C. BEGINNING ILLUSTRATION

In your own words, give the following illustration:

How many times have you walked along a curb or on top of a stone wall with your arms out at your sides to help keep your balance? Even as a small child you understood that to keep your balance you had to have as much weight on one side of you as on the other.

You also discovered how easy it was to lose your balance when you walked on any wall or narrow line. Instead of stepping off the wall or falling, you bent and twisted and waved your arms a bit. When you did these things, your body was regaining its balance by getting its center of gravity right over the thing you were trying to balance on.

Everyone knows how gravity works. Gravity is that invisible force that keeps us from flying off into space. The laws of gravity are consistent and predictable. But what is the center of gravity? And what does it have to do with keeping your balance?

The center of gravity is that point in an object where there is as much weight on one side as the other. When you’re walking along a curb or a crack in the concrete, the center of gravity is right on the line where you place your feet.

Debriefing • Ask: How do you think this idea of balance can apply to our everyday lives? What are some things that you try to “balance” each day? What is or can be our center of gravity? How does finding that center help us better balance all our daily choices?

4 CONNECTING

A. CONNECTING TO THE KINGDOM

Present the following ideas in your own words:

God's Word is clear on the only two choices we have. We can either serve God or Satan! The results of that choice could be called our center of gravity. Once we make a decision about who we want to have in control of our lives, that is the center that we begin to "balance" around. Naturally the choices that we make then will have to do with keeping our life in balance around our chosen center of gravity!

Scripture reminds us that we are in the middle of a war. You might say it is a war for our loyalties. Each side of the battle wants to be our center of gravity. We are free to choose either side, and the small daily choices that we make determine our center of gravity.

Ask: What do your daily choices say about your center of gravity? What would you do differently if you looked at many decisions as a "balance" choice?

B. CONNECTING TO THE LESSON ILLUSTRATION

Ask someone beforehand to read or tell the story from Sabbath's section of the lesson.

Ask: Balance beams, tightropes, walking along curbs . . . How do those examples relate to this week's topic? (We have lots of things pulling us in different directions; it is not always easy to find our center of gravity; it is not easy to stay balanced in our life choices.) **How difficult is it to balance the things that you enjoy doing with the things that you believe God has designed for you to do? What are things that you spend most of your time doing or talking about or planning for?** (In large classes, have students share in pairs or small groups with an adult facilitator.) **What do those choices say**

about the balance in your life?

C. CONNECTING TO LIFE

Pose the following scenario:

Say: Life today is not easy for kids. You have lots of opportunities each day to choose the direction and balance of your life. Often it is tempting to make choices based on what your friends are doing, instead of what you really believe will "balance" your life the best.

Say: Choose a partner and make a list of three things that you think kids today have a difficult time keeping in balance. (Give students enough time to make their lists.) Ask volunteers to read the following texts: **Philippians 4:13; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Romans 8:37; Isaiah 26:3; Jeremiah 29:11; Psalm 27:1; Daniel 11:32.**

Ask: What power is available to help keep you in balance? How does it feel knowing that you can rely on that kind of resource when trying to keep your balance?

Ask: God says that He came so that we can have an abundant life; we can only enjoy that abundance when our lives are balanced and centered. He loves us so much that He always leaves the decision up to us. So, what do you say? Do you want to keep your balance or not?

5 APPLYING

A. APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Say: There are many things that threaten to throw our lives out of balance. Let's take a look at a few of them.

Hand out pens and copies of the Things That Throw Me Off Balance worksheet from page 105 to each group of three or four stu-

dents. Ask each team to come up with three answers per question.

Debriefing • Ask: How do you feel as you look over the list you just made? What Bible characters can you think of who got thrown off balance? What stories from Scripture contain people who kept their balance? What made the difference?

B. APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. How important to you is keeping your balance?
2. What are some suggestions from the Bible that might help us keep our balance?
3. Who do you know personally that seems to be a person of balance?
4. How can you become a more balanced person?

6 CLOSING

SUMMARY

In your own words, conclude with the following ideas:

Equilibrium, or sense of balance, is one of the physiological senses. It allows humans and animals to walk, etc., without falling. It is determined by the level of fluid, called endolymph, in the tubes of your middle ear. When the sense of balance is disturbed, it causes dizziness, disorientation, and nausea. Balance can be thrown off by infections, colds, or any number of other medical conditions.

Just as we need a physical equilibrium, so we need balance in each area of life. You might say that our life's balance is also directly owing to a level of fluid in our souls. **John 4:10** tells us that Jesus can give us living water! How about asking for a "fill-up" right now? You can be better balanced in no time!

FOR LESSON TEN:

THIS HANDOUT IS FOR THE APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Things That Throw Me Off Balance

> > Excuses for making poor food choices.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Reasons I don't get enough exercise.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Reasons I don't drink eight glasses of water each day.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Excuses for not taking care of the environment.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Why I don't get eight hours of sleep each night.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Excuses for choosing a bad attitude instead of a positive one.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Reasons I don't always choose to be a person of integrity.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____

> > Things that interfere with my spending time with God.

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____



STUDENT LESSON

BALANCE AND MODERATION The Balancing Act

June 7, 2025

Sabbath FOR STUDY

- » **Memory Text:** “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, NKJV).
- » **Our Beliefs, no. 22, Christian Behavior:** “We are called to be a godly people who think, feel, and act in harmony with biblical principles in all aspects of personal and social life. . . . It also means that because our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, we are to care for them intelligently.”
- » Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, pp. 141-143

THE BALANCING ACT

Imagine a girl on a balance beam. The balance beam is straight and narrow and placed several feet off the ground. Her goal is to maintain her balance while moving back and forth across the beam doing handstands, cartwheels, backflips, etc. She has to use every part of her body, often leaning a little to the left or a little to the right to keep perfect balance. She has to maintain her center of gravity at all times by focusing on the narrow beam.

Matthew 7:14 says, “But small is the gate

and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (NIV). Staying on God’s balance beam requires keeping Jesus as our center of gravity, or we cannot stay balanced on that small, narrow road. Proverbs 3:6 also reminds us to “in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight” (NIV). Once again, in order to stay on the straight beam, or path, I must keep the center of my focus always on Him.

Do you think this anonymous poem sums it up?
tightrope

without You, I walk a tightrope,
i extend my hands for balance, staring at my
feet.
my body trembles with uncertainty
of what’s to come;
my knees feel weak. will my steps be sure?
my nerves unstable, feelings insecure,
my body trembles at the prospect of a fall.
all the focus on me, my hands, my feet, my
knees,
all the focus on me, my fear.
You, You have set my feet on a firm place.
You, You have stood me firm.
You, You have set my feet on a firm place,
And i will not fear, i will trust.
i have no cause for worry, no,
i have no need to look down at my feet
when i can focus on the one who made me,
healed my soul, and gave me everlasting peace.
with my eyes fixed on You, secure, assured, and
free.
my hope is in You. there is harmony
and perfect rhythm in my soul today.

Sunday RESPONDING

- » Read Colossians 1:10.
- » “If we ever attain unto holiness, it will be through the renunciation of self and the reception of the mind of Christ” (Ellen G. White, *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 143).
- » How seriously do you take each day, each choice? How will those little choices of balance affect who you are, who you become?

Monday BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

- » Read Romans 12:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 10:5; 3 John 2.
- » God created us, and He knows what is best for our minds and bodies. In following God’s plan for us, we can live healthy and balanced lives.
- » List the things you are doing that will help you be healthy—mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

- » What are some things you can do to improve the areas you feel are weak?

- » Fill in the blanks. Texts are from the New King James Version.

“For the _____ of God that brings _____ has appeared to all men, _____ us that, _____ ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should _____, _____, and _____ in the present age” (Titus 2:11, 12).

Tuesday REFLECTING

- » Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.
- » So, you’re young. Isn’t there enough time later to worry about what you eat, drink, how much you sleep, how positive your attitude is, and all that stuff? Isn’t that for old people who just want to live a little bit longer?
- » Well, the God who made you knows best how to help you maintain a healthful balance—in other words, an abundant life—at any age. He has the guidelines for a life you can celebrate and not regret. He offers guidance and power to help you make wise and balanced choices in every area of your lives.
- » In fact, think of CELEBRATIONS when you think of the abundant, balanced life God wants for you. C—Choices, E—Exercise, L—Liquids, E—Environment, B—Belief, R—Rest, A—Air, T—Temperance, I—Integrity, O—Optimism, N—Nutrition, S—Social Support.
- » Life and all its abundance and excess make it really difficult for us to keep our balance in these areas. And that is why we all need help. Jesus promises to give us His wisdom, courage, and strength to ensure that we are always able to strike a balance in our daily choices.

Wednesday BIBLE INSIGHTS

- » Match the verse with the text. All verses are taken from the New King James Version.

1.	Proverbs 15:13	
2.	Matthew 11:28	
3.	Ecclesiastes 4:9	
4.	Colossians 3:9, 10	
5.	1 Thessalonians 5:16-18	
6.	Luke 12:22-24	

7.	Colossians 3:23	
8.	1 Timothy 4:8	
9.	Romans 8:6	
10.	Colossians 1:10	

A.	"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden."
B.	"A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance."
C.	"The new man who is renewed in knowledge . . ."
D.	"Two are better than one."
E.	"To be spiritually minded is life and peace."
F.	"Do not worry about your life."
G.	"This is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."
H.	"Godliness is profitable for all things."
I.	"Do it heartily, as to the Lord."
J.	"Being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Thursday CONNECTING

- » Read Philippians 4:8.
- » Review the memory text.
- » God created you, but He has left the daily management choices up to you to be made through the guidance and power of His Holy Spirit. Think encouraging and positive thoughts. Learn what God's plan is for your life to find true fulfillment, happiness, and a good life balance.
- » In order to be really effective at balancing your life, you must identify who you want your center of focus to be. And then ask for God's wisdom to make each of your choices in balance.

- » The life you are managing is one that God has redeemed and given back to you to manage. The emotional life, the social life, the spiritual life, the physical life—all are entrusted to you, and you have the choice to seek balance or experience the consequences of a life out of balance. Jesus says in John 10:10 that He came to this earth so that we might have a more abundant life. That is an awesome gift! All you have to do is keep your focus on Him and move forward one step at a time on the balance beam.
- » "All the powers of the mind should be called into use and developed, in order for men and women to have well-balanced minds" (Ellen G. White, *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 37).

Friday APPLYING

- » Read Colossians 3:2.
- » When our imagined gymnast is learning to balance, the first thing they have to do is to climb up on that skinny little beam and keep their eye on it as they practice walking back and forth. Each time they fall off, their coach encourages them to get back up immediately and try again. The more they practice, the better their balance becomes, and they get to the place where they don't even have to watch each step (each little choice), but can keep their primary focus on their center of gravity (Jesus).
- » Just how balanced are you? One step toward finding balance in life is to take a look at what might be out of balance. Decide where you are between the two statements in each set to the right. The top statement in each pair is 1 on a scale of 1 to 10, and the bottom statement is a 10. In the box beside each set of statements, write the number between those two numbers that best describes you. When you are finished, you can find out your overall balance by adding all

your numbers together and dividing by 12. How close are you to 5? Choose one area and get started “practicing” balance. Don’t forget the first and most important step. Ask

Jesus to become the center of gravity (your focus) and help you find more and more balance every day.

C	Choices		I don't even think before making choices. I worry about the choices I am making all the time.
E	Exercise		I don't get any exercise. I exercise 20 hours a week.
L	Liquids		I don't drink any water. I drink 100 glasses of water a week.
E	Environment		Littering is practically my hobby. I can't sleep for worrying whether I recycled enough.
B	Belief in God		I don't spend any time with God. I read my Bible 20 hours a week.
R	Rest		I sleep about an hour a night. I sleep 20 hours a night.
A	Air		I never breathe fresh air. I never come inside.
T	Temperance		I don't have any control over myself. I don't do anything for fear I will do something wrong.
I	Integrity		I never keep a promise if it's inconvenient. I do everything everyone expects even if it's unhealthful for them or me.
O	Optimism		I am depressed about everything. Everything is a joke.
N	Nutrition		I eat anything I please, anytime. I eat only broccoli and soybeans.
S	Social Support		I spend all my time taking care of others. I don't need or help anyone.
Total:			÷ 12 = _____ Your overall balance score.

