

Balance is the Key to Life
Symbria Wellness Services -July 2019
Contributing Author- Dr. Thomas P. Sattler

Just a few statistics paint a grim picture for some. According to the Centers for Disease Control, each year one of every three people older than 65 will fall. Of those, two-thirds will fall again. And of those who fall again, 60 percent will die in the same year as the second fall.

The glass-half-full version of these statistics asks: What is different about the two-thirds of people who *aren't* falling? It's likely that those people are dealing well with balance in not just one area, but in most areas of their lives. In fact, balance is just one of four physical capabilities that predict better health as people age. The others are the ability to change body positions, the ability to push and pull with the upper body and the functional ability to perform the activities of daily living.

Balance is really the integration of all the senses. It is physical of course, but seniors also need to balance their daily schedule of chores and responsibilities with their need for personal time and renewal. There is also a need to incorporate relationships with others of all ages as well as working spirituality into their lives.

Albert Einstein was quoted as saying, "Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving. The best way to keep moving and put balance into your life is by getting active and getting involved. You can also volunteer to help others, reach out to old friends and continuously try new things.

One especially debilitating condition that many seniors suffer from is "burnout." Seniors get burned out when they find themselves committed to achieving goals that they can no longer define. The kind of stress that burnout causes often contributes to a myriad of chronic physical conditions. One of the best ways to avoid burnout is through "planned neglect." The phrase according to one internet blogger, came from a violin virtuoso who was asked about the key to the mastery of her instrument. She answered that every day, with unswerving commitment, she planned to neglect anything that distracted her from the priority of practice on the violin.

In our SeniorFITness wellness program, you can reduce your chances of falling by strengthening your core muscles that will keep you balanced on all opposite sides. However, SeniorFITness addresses more than just physical strengthening. It also promotes your intellectual capacity and fosters lively social interaction. Seniors who stay balanced in all aspects of their lives are healthier, happier, stronger and maintain functional capacity better and longer. That is the key.