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- *Balance your needs with needs of others*
- *For every experience give thanks*
- *Recognize the value of others while they are living*
- *You are the enabler of God's power*

The warmth of God's light is very much a part of your lives at this moment. We know there are many concerns you have, those which have been expressed and those which are known only to God. What joins you together is your common search, a search for understanding, a search for growth, a search for inner peace, providing strength and confidence to meet life head-on with sureness and an absolute sense of direction. Much of what we, your guides, provide you with could be described as furnishing a means of such direction.

Your lives do not proceed in a straight line. Indeed they proceed in many lines simultaneously. The trick is to keep a sense of perspective on where your activities are leading you. You're involved in efforts which both promote yourselves and are directed toward the betterment of others. Both of these polarities are necessary. You are well aware of the need for serving others, for love directed outward is a response of the soul, but so too is love directed inward. You cannot neglect the needs you feel as individuals. You must, in fact, balance your perceived needs with the needs of others.

Life, then, is very much a balancing act. The two directions which pull you do not occur always at the same time. There are moments in your lives when your needs are oriented toward yourselves with little capability of responding to the needs of others. There are other points in your lives where the needs of self are relatively unimportant, and you are motivated towards ways of serving another. There is no need to feel guilt when the needs of self become important, nor is there basis for pride when your activities are oriented primarily toward others. What is important is that your lives swing back and forth and do not remain locked in only one position.

You cannot serve another without feeling in some way whole in yourself. If the charge in the battery is low, it cannot provide a bright light to illuminate a path. There are times in your lives when you must recharge yourselves. The purpose for such fulfillment is to enable you to meet the needs of others. That is its goal. Self-fulfillment is a means; enhancing the lives of others is the goal. Your spiritual growth is more dependent upon your response to others than upon your service to yourself, and yet that development cannot take place without the secure realization that you and God are indeed one. It is through prayer that such a realization is finally actualized.

You can think all you wish about what it means to have inner peace, but unless you have it, you are unable to provide the maximum help to others. This sense of inner peace we speak of is cyclic in nature. There are times when you feel great peace, and there are

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others when you feel tremendous turmoil and upheaval. That is normal. Without experiencing such inner frustration, you cannot appreciate the ecstasy of peace. Without the presence of noise, you cannot appreciate the beauty of silence. Without experiencing silence, you cannot appreciate the grace of another human voice. One needs another. The contrast is essential. Without suffering, you cannot appreciate the joy of health. Without health, you cannot appreciate the hope of what may come after the suffering. This is a vital balance in life which you must all be aware of.

There is a bumper sticker you have seen which says "life's a beach." What a tragedy, we say, if that were all there was to life. A life of perpetual comfort, internally and externally, is a life which soon becomes meaningless and directionless. It can also be said that a life of pain and suffering soon becomes a life without hope, and without hope there is no faith. Without faith, there is no growth. Without growth, there is no meaning to life.

All that you experience in life is important. There is no event, whether pleasurable or difficult, that is void of meaning, of benefit. You may grow and develop through all activities. It is the variety of each which provides perspective to the whole. Such perspective is essential as you reach outward to establish a meaningful relationship with God.

Prayer is the means by which you establish a sense of balance in life. When things go well, when things are falling your way, that is the time for providing thanks to God, for it is by God's grace that you were given life, and it is that life which provides the environment for such satisfaction. When events in life run contrary to your hopes and aspirations, that is also a time to give thanks to God, not just to ask God to change what is, but also to thank God for being given a life providing so much opportunity for development.

If you are ill, give thanks to God for health, for illness provides a glimpse of God's grace in the form of health and an appreciation of the meaning of life. When one is ill, life does not cease. Life changes, life takes on deeper meaning. Small events become significant events. One experiences life at whatever level is possible more intensely. If one is ill, one is more appreciative of the sacrifices of others. One is more appreciative of friendship. One is more appreciative of love. One is more appreciative of closeness. There is much to be gained. What we are saying here is that every experience you encounter holds within it grounds for your giving thanks to God.

Your experience with the loss of a friend has given you reason to pause and give thanks and acknowledge the recognition of the value that another's life had for you. When anyone passes to the next stage of spiritual life, it provides an opportunity for many to recognize the value in life of that person. There is something to be learned here, and that is that you must focus more frequently on recognizing the value of others in your life who remain yet with you. It is one thing to recognize such things as one passes. It is something else entirely to recognize those qualities in another when one is still with you. The person doesn't change. That person is the same. It is your recognition of the value of that human being which is enhanced. When you view another with gratitude, even those with whom you

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have great differences, they, too, are valuable in your life, for you learn many lessons by observing others.

You must search for sincere evidence supporting the value of all those who surround you. It serves no benefit to be neutral, and to let others just exist. It is far better to seek out something in all people that you value and that provides depth to your own lives.

You relate to others on many different planes. What you value in another may be their courage or fortitude, their moral strength, their faith, their love, generosity, their enthusiasm, their peace, their restlessness, searching for greater truth, greater awareness. There are many reasons that you can find for valuing the presence of all people with whom you are in contact.

If you find difficulty in finding such positive points, imagine if that person were removed from your life through death, what would you remember that is positive? What would be important about that person? Hold on to those positive perceptions about others, for they are all manifestations of love.

Even the mere thought of something positive is an act of love. The joy that someone may radiate through a simple smile, when recognized is an act of love. If it brings joy to you or makes you think of joyful events in your past, then that is also grounds for loving thoughts toward another. Such relationships are vital in your lives. They help to provide meaning to all human life, and they provide a kind of basis for your interactions with others.

Such attitudes are God's response through your spiritual beings. When you recognize the benefit of another, it is God recognizing such benefit. When you value a person's contribution to life, that is God's valuing of their contribution. You are the arms of God. You are the enablers of God's power. You are the means by which God's influence is felt. It comes by no other means. There are many who sense God through nature's beauty, but it is you who help to sensitize others to nature's beauty. The relationship between you and God is a very close and essential one, not just one through prayer. You really do act as the hands and arms of God.

You have been created in human form to grow spiritually, but you are also thereby a part of God's design for all of creation. You are a part of God's presence in the evolution of all of creation, and you share that divine spark which is your spiritual selves. It is true, and we assert it so often, that as God is divine, you are divine. You may not be perfect, but you are divine. You have within you the potential for divine action in life. We urge you to seek out those opportunities that are given to you. We urge you to seek out opportunities for divine thought. We urge you to recognize God's divine presence in every aspect of your lives.

We bless each of your lives with God's peace, with God's love, and with the recognition of God's continued presence throughout eternity.

Amen.

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