

## **The Avenue to Balance is a Crooked Road** **by Chuc Barnes**

The more successful you become in today's fast-paced, ever changing world, the more vulnerable you become in having a truly balanced life.

What is balance?

Is balance being a Super Executive to the point that we say that our earnings are for our families that we never see? Is balance being Super Mom to the point that you're a failure if your kids aren't perfect? Does balance mean your career must be perfectly satisfying? Is balance skipping an important marketing step that needs to be done because you feel like you ought to be with your kids? Does balance mean keeping your job and personal life in a 50-50 ratio? Does balance mean using Saturday to recover from a tiring week on the road?

Balance isn't black or white – a good parent or a bad parent. And balance isn't a perfect family and perfect speaking career.

Effective balance comes from *juggling* what stems from our values, beliefs, and deepest priorities. And, when we're thrown off track, getting back to those priorities is like traveling a crooked road, isn't a straight line. It's a challenge. After all, if great accomplishments were easy, they'd be commonplace.

I asked Paul Newman, the actor, about balance, and he told me that it's crucial to him and his wife, JoAnne Woodward. We were at a convention of motion picture theatre owners. He and JoAnne both have received the Academy Award. Both love to act.

Paul Newman also developed several food products (i.e. Newman's Own Popcorn, Salad Dressing, Salsa, Cookies, etc.) and gives the proceeds to various charitable groups. JoAnne sits on the boards for those groups.

Even with those challenges, Paul Newman (who died a year ago) went to Brainerd, Minnesota every summer and raced his personal racecar around the International Speedway with his fun meter turned up to maximum.

I asked Paul, "How do you get all this done when you and JoAnne have full filming schedules?" He told me that he and JoAnne purposely live away from Hollywood so they can have a personal life. He surprised me by telling that, even when traveling, they try to avoid airplanes in favor of trains ("private time for us"). He said it takes

serious planning to do this, but that he and JoAnne want to slow things down and enjoy each other's company. "It's a matter of planning time for what's most important to us," he said.

Effective executives with balanced lives know that true success comes not just from expertise in their work (very important), but also in productive relationships with family and friends. They know that the rewards and challenges of today's work tempt them to work longer and longer hours, yet – if they want true success – they need not just to accomplish their on-the-job goals, but to maintain solid relationships with their families and friends too. Without that, what's life all about?

My suggestion is this: Think about what matters most to you and set aside time for those things that are important to you. That's the avenue to balance.

***Chuc Barnes. CSP, is a public speaker who talks about ways to "Get Your Ducks in A Row!", "The Power of Making Your Minutes Count", and ways to "Capture the Moment!" when presenting. You can reach Chuc at [MinutesCount.Com](http://MinutesCount.Com).***