



## EXECUTIVE VITALITY™: BALANCING ACT DURING EXTRAORDINARY TIMES

We are all hearing a lot these days about “using this time wisely.” Get rid of clutter. Exercise more. Read that book. Take that online course... On top of getting work done, we are handling children, dealing with always-around-spouses, figuring out how to get groceries we are accustomed to, and let us not forget: cutting our own hair!

What we are hearing a lot less about is taking a break. Giving ourselves a break.

We always talk about surviving (enduring, living, persisting) as foundational, and thriving (flourishing, booming, prospering) as aspirational. Think about where it is important for you to be on that continuum now. And do not discount the stress. There are so many things putting stress on us now. Just walking around looking at people in masks is eerie and gives many people a sense that we need to be afraid of something – and that “something” is invisible and very small.

Quick tip: Apply the type of “stress test” standard that some athletes use. Consider, for example, if it is really too hard to go on your walk. Ask yourself if you are in too much physical pain, or if it is simply that you feel so tired today, you know that giving energy to a workout would be less than beneficial to your overall well-being.

Now is the time to be super honest with yourself and to not overstress. Esteem yourself by both pushing hard to do the best you can—and even reaching higher (thriving)—and by also easing back and relaxing (surviving). This is a time to heartily embrace that paradox.

So how do you decide if you are pushing yourself enough, not enough, or too much? Who is the judge and what is the success measure? You are the judge. That much is easy. As to the “success measure” – it is not whatever it used to be. Right now, since you are the judge, that means you have to listen to yourself. At the end of the day, do you feel:

Column A	Column B
Rested and renewed	In pain from taking the walk despite the pain
Proud of a job well-done	Harried, like you spun your wheels
Satisfied	Empty
Self-esteemed	Troubled
Energized	Tired
Happy that you kept your boundaries intact	Mad at yourself for breaching your own limits
Pleased - I did the best I could	Disappointed – today deserves a D-

Whether you chose from Column A or Column B today, do not worry. Tomorrow is another day and this new normal is all about learning how best to cope with it. If whatever you did or did not do today does not measure up to your expectations of yourself, that is a learning. Do it differently tomorrow. This is iterative like most learning.

Column A and Column B can be your calibration to determine how you can better manage your tomorrow. You can use a chart like this as your personal barometer.

*Are you doing your best to balance thrive and survive? Do you need to rethink the balance and rebalance?*