

Overcome an Overloaded Life: Establish Rhythm

We're all busy in the same sorts of ways. Our lives are consumed with the crushing weight of family, work, and church activities. Our lives are bombarded with requests, demands, and desires. Individual situations may be quantitatively less busy than others, and some more so, but as a society we are living a shared experience of an overwhelmed life.

Where does it all stop? When will things slow down? How can we recapture time lost?

Technology has delivered time-saving devices that actually consume more time. Progress moves our lives faster and faster, yet we seem incapable of enjoying little if any benefit. We desire and often achieve more. We have bought into a full-life timeshare to only find ourselves bankrupt in emptiness.

Are you asking this question?

I don't have enough time to do the things I need to do, let alone the things I want to do.

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [Your Life in Rhythm](#) by Bruce B. Miller

Your Life in Rhythm offers a realistic solution to our crazy, overly busy, stressed lives. Miller exposes the myth of living a "balanced" life, and offers "rhythmic living" as a new paradigm for relieving guilt and stress, while accomplishing more of what matters most in life.

Rhythmic living details six practical strategies for living a more fulfilling life. Instead of managing time, Miller suggests that we flow with life, living in tune with the natural rhythms of nature. By applying the rhythm strategies, we can reduce stress, frustration, and guilt while increasing fulfillment and inner peace. The point is not to balance all of our responsibilities at one time, but to focus attention on what matters most at different times.

Although this sounds easy enough, the six strategies he outlines are crucial to helping the reader to achieve this goal. Miller helps us to understand the stages and seasons of life we all experience over a lifetime. This new understanding, when applied, will solve time-management problems and help readers to let go of misplaced priorities and relieve their overbooked lifestyle. The rhythm solution, in short, brings freedom.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION

Do you ever feel overwhelmed? Do you find yourself working longer and longer hours at the office or running a taxi service to deliver your kids to all their activities? Are you juggling multiple responsibilities at home, work, and church? Does it always seem as if you have at least one too many things pulling you in different directions?

If any (or all!) of the above is true, no doubt you've been told or read somewhere that you need

to get your life in balance.

The problem is the concept of “balance” is part of the problem!

It’s time to shift your paradigm of a well-lived life from **balance** to **rhythm**. Life is not static, linear, or uniform. It moves, oscillates, vibrates, and pulsates. A rhythm model honors time and movement; it celebrates variety and diversity; it highlights uniqueness and recognizes common patterns. Rhythm honors excellence and the sacrifice required for achievements while also providing time for renewal.

The very concept of balance that is designed to free us from the frenzy of modern life has actually subjected us to idealistic notions of a perfectly proportioned life. Balance is what one does to chemical equations and columns of numbers, not to life.

I am using the concepts of chronos and kairos to label the two basic kinds of rhythm: cycles and seasons. We live rhythmically by following the sky’s patterns, which form our chronos rhythms (cycles), and by riding the sea waves of our kairos rhythms (seasons).

We all live in the same world, structured by five fundamental chronos cycles: solar, seasonal, lunar, sabbatical, and rotational; in other words, the year, quarter, month, week, and day. We also live in kairos seasons: unique times such as the birth of a child, the college years, rehabilitation after an injury, retirement, or moving to a new city. We ride the waves of life as they come. Chronos cycles describe the temporal context of our environment on planet Earth, whereas kairos seasons describe the patterns in the flow of our human lives.

Kairos seasons are not tied to clock time. They are flows rather than cycles, the movement of a story rather than the meter of a tune. Kairos is an opportune time, the right time to say or do something.

The chronos cycles describe cyclical, recurring rhythms built into the fabric of the created order, environmental rhythms established by astronomical phenomena and embedded in our biology. In contrast, kairos seasons are linear, noncyclical, human rhythms.

Kairos Rhythm Strategies

1. **Release expectations** – Be at peace with the stage God has you in right now. Release your expectations of other times, and stop envying others who are older or younger.
2. **Seize opportunities** – We do not get to relive most stages of our lives. We get one shot. When we live our lives in rhythm, we make the most of every season and stage of life.
3. **Anticipate what’s next** – If you really don’t like the stage of life you’re in right now, use the power of anticipation to give yourself hope.

Chronos Rhythm Strategies

1.

Pace yourself – We will find more peaceful, enjoyable, and fulfilled lives if we can identify appropriate frequencies for our regular activities.

2.

Build rituals – By building rituals in an annual cycle, you are achieving your mission in harmony with the way our world actually works.

3.

Oscillate work and rest – Think in advance how you will stay healthy through the year by oscillating between intensity and renewal.

Bruce B. Miller, [*Your Life in Rhythm*](#)

A NEXT STEP

Author Bruce Miller has a series of exercises sprinkled throughout his book. Here is a sampling of each, following the list of strategies listed above.

Set aside time each day this week and practice the exercise. Where called for, create a chart tablet and leave it up all week long.

Release expectations – Create a chart tablet headed with the following phrase: “I will release the following expectations...” Take 10 minutes and complete the phrase with as many actions as you can.

Seize opportunities – Create a chart tablet headed with the following phrase: “I will seize these unique opportunities in this kairos season...” Take 10 minutes and complete the phrase with as many actions as you can.

Anticipate what’s next - Create a chart tablet headed with the following phrase: “I can anticipate the following personal seasons and life stages coming...” Take 10 minutes and complete the phrase with as many actions as you can.

Pace yourself – Try the following steps to help you get started on pacing yourself:

1. Change the frequency of one activity in your life to a more appropriate pace.
2. Take one aspect of your life and consider paces that follow the flow of natural chronos cycles.
3. Talk about your pace with those you live with.

Build rituals – Identify a life-enhancing ritual that you can build for at least one chronos cycle.

Oscillate work and rest – Identify an oscillation between work and rest that you can introduce in at least one chronos cycle. Put it into practice, and note positive changes in your physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Excerpt taken from SUMS Remix 87-2, released February 2018.

*This is part of a weekly series posting excerpts from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** book excerpts for church leaders.*

SUMS Remix takes a practical problem in the church and looks at it with three solutions; each solution is taken from a different book. Additionally, a practical action step is included with each solution.

As a church leader you get to scan relevant books based on practical tools and solutions to real ministry problems, not just by the cover of the book. Each post will have the edition number which shows the year and what number it is in the overall sequence. (SUMS Remix provides 26 issues per year, delivered every other week to your inbox).

> > [Subscribe to SUMS Remix](#)