

# Some Notes About Balance



by chaotic neutral observer  
and Professor Cramulus

We all seek balance in our daily lives. Life-work balance, a balanced diet, balancing the needs of family and friends, balancing exercise and relaxation.

Balance is also needed in the world at large. Balance between order and chaos, right and left, liberal and conservative, light and dark, good and evil, peanut butter and jelly.

What a crock of crap.

"Balance" is one of those words like "Nature" that gives people a stiffy... they think it's somehow connected to "what things should be like" and want to get on board. There's this perception that there is a balancing energy in the universe, and if you align yourself with it, you can dodge harm.

It's a construct though. Look at forests... we used to believe them to be these perfect little homeostatic ecosystems. The wolves and deer have this natural "balance"-- too many deer, and the wolf population grows and brings it back down. Too many wolves, and the deer population decreases, which also caps the number of wolves. As long as they stay "in balance", this can go on forever.

But dig into the soil. You can see evidence that it hasn't been going on forever, it's just that we generalize the present conditions into infinity. The border of the forest expands and shrinks. History is chaotic. If things are "balanced", it's usually a temporary condition. Sometimes dynamic systems careen out of control. This isn't a violation of a balancing principle, it's also "what things are like".

If you're a wolf, you eat the deer. If you're a deer, you try not to be eaten. There is no law that these things balance each other, it's just how the chips land when the conditions are just right.

*Beyond just being a construct, though, balance is also a useless one in almost every context.*

Balance between good and evil? That's like asking for balance between being punched in the balls and not being punched in the balls, or a balance between being disease-free and terminal tuberculosis. Good and evil don't need to be balanced. That's a bunch of cosmic yin-yang hippie bullshit.

Star Wars said there needed to be balance between the light and dark sides of the force, but what was the real choice you were being presented with? Between a bunch of pretentious weirdos in funny robes and a guy who thought it was smarter to blow up planets than to conquer and tax them. They don't need to be balanced, they need to be institutionalized.

"Work-life balance"? That's just code for "I hope my company understands that I need to leave the premises sometimes." You're not taking time off from your job to rest, you're taking time off from your life to work. You don't need to balance the amount of work you do, you need to minimize it.

You think "smart" and "stupid" need to be balanced? You think both sides of the argument always deserve equal time? No, if you're asking for balance, you probably just mean "the other guy is winning and it's making me feel bad so please listen to me".

But if you're here looking for answers, I don't have any easy ones for you. We are wrecking the environment. You could say we're violating the balancing principle, disturbing the natural rhythms and this is causing a spiral into disorder. Beavers build a dam and it permanently alters the landscape. Humans wrecking the environment is a "natural" outcome too. But we're not going to solve any of that with calls for "balance," or somehow "balancing" our insatiable thirst for consumer goods and energy-intensive entertainment with our desire not to render the world uninhabitable for humanity. Nobody seeking balance ever achieved anything notable. You want to be somebody, you want to do something, you gotta go to the limit. Balance is for flywheels, gymnasts and chemical equations.