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### SANE Peer Group Chat

Date: 23/06/2022

**Title:** Finding Balance

**Description:** Have you ever felt like there's too many things in your life to try to juggle? Have you longed for a stronger sense of calm? Join us to share ideas on finding more balance in our lives.

Sirius (PSW)	<p>Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight.</p> <p>Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about (Finding Balance). We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now: <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW</a></p>
Meggle	Hi guys @TideisTurning (PSW) @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) @Sirius (PSW)
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey @Meggle! Good to be here with you!
Meggle	Where is everyone

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Sirius (PSW)	Hi @Meggle ! :blush:
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	We'll just wait a few moments for others to find their way in, sometimes it can take a bit until folks trickle in. Looking forward to chatting about this topic with you 😊
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi Everyone 😊
Sirius (PSW)	<p><b>Tonight, Peer Support Workers @Sirius and @TidelsTurning will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Finding Balance. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, finding balance is important and beneficial to us all. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles. @Oshun Blu who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faq#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support</a>) or message @Oshun Blu.</b></p> <p><b>We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Finding Balance.</b></p>
Sirius (PSW)	<b>We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join 😊</b>
Meggle	I hope more people are coming lol
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	We can kick things off by chatting amongst ourselves once the questions begin rolling in, and @TideisTurning (PSW) is working hard behind the scenes to remind some folks in forum posts :)

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Meggle	Good job @TideisTurning (PSW)
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	How's your day been @Meggle?
Meggle	Great actually! I went to Michelangelo's Sistene Chapel exhibition
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	oooo that sounds awesome!!
Meggle	Yes it was really good
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	oh, wow! That sounds awe-inspiring!
Meggle	and I bought the programme to keep
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	I love keeping a little memento from different art exhibitions I've been too. :heart:
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Wonderful mementos :)
Meggle	I went to the Monet exhibition a few years ago and I got the book from that too. I usually buy the programme to keep when I go to shows
Meggle	What did you guys get up to today?
Meggle	I did manage to go for my daily walk just before. I was worried I wasn't going to be able to fit it in today
Meggle	looks like rain here

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Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Just work today, but seeing your art exhibition outings has got me itching to take some in soon for myself, @Meggle !
Sirius (PSW)	Okay well we might kick it off for this evening! :blush:  <b>Question 1: What does balance look like for you?</b>
Meggle	Well it looks like not overdoing any one thing. I tend to be all or nothing type of person. I am not very balanced. At the moment I would say I need to include more activities in my life. I tend to get bored and just go to bed at the moment
TideisTurning (PSW)	Balance for me is having the right amount of different things. A little like Goldilocks; not too little, or too much, but just right . I also have that in quotes because what right is will be different for every person.
TideisTurning (PSW)	That's a great observation @Meggle Do you have any ids on the kinds of activities you might like to do more of?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Balance for me can look quite different at times, depending on what my needs are and the context of my life/current circumstances. But I always try to come back to my basic self care needs, tend to those first, and then try to expand outward from there.
Sirius (PSW)	Balance for me means making sure I have enough spoons to get through my daily activities.
Meggle	Great question @TideisTurning (PSW) I actually have a folder containing activities that I enjoy that I put together with my psychologist but I just don't have the motivation to do any of it
TideisTurning (PSW)	That cn be really hard @meggle, though I know the feeling
Sirius (PSW)	<b>Q2: What might you need to balance between?</b>

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<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	I feel like balance is important in and between most different aspects of life; in work and relationships for example, and between things like personal and professional.
Meggle	Well when I was studying it was how to balance my study load with my home life. However I dumped the study for now. I have reapplied but I am waiting to hear if they will take me back
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	hmmm, lately I've had to take a really honest look at some different areas of life: work, relationships, health, etc. to take an inventory of what might be feeling out of balance at the moment. This meant also taking a hiatus from study, as you said, @Meggle so that I can focus my energy on other areas for now such as health
Meggle	For sure relationships need to be balanced. Family vs friendships
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I've started using a visual model called the 'healthy mind platter' when I need to look at areas that may be out of balance. I'm a very visual person, and so having areas of life laid out in front of me to examine, explore and work on has been really helpful
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	@Meggle I hear you on balancing studying and home life. It can be really tricky to find the space for the two. Studying can very easily take over things, especially when it's assessment time.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	healthy mind platter: <a href="https://drdansiegel.com/healthy-mind-platter/">https://drdansiegel.com/healthy-mind-platter/</a>
Meggle	yeah when I stayed at Neami they had a wheel that showed different areas like social, religious, occupation etc there were about 8 different segments. Then you drew a line where you felt that area of your life was at, at the time
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	oh, that's excellent @Meggle ! Sometimes it can help to see these things in front of us in a way that is accessible, love that wheel idea too!
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	That sounds really cool @Meggle & also the tool you've shared @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) 😊

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<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	<b>Q3: Is balance equal parts of everything or a sliding scale and sum of all parts? How so?</b>
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	I haven't given this a great deal of consideration, but feel balance might be a bit of a sliding scale, because of the many different things to find balance both in and between.
Meggle	I think balance is a sum of all parts. Fitting everything you need to in but not overdoing things
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	What an excellent way of putting it, and thinking about it @Meggle
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Definitely a sliding scale for me! I find it challenging to maintain equal aspects of energy and attention to well, pretty much anything, over a long period of time. I can switch from having all the energy to all of the fatigue very quickly. So, having a sliding scale helps me to also take the pressure off of feeling like balance has to be done perfectly at all times
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Love that perspective @Meggle
Meggle	ooh @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I hear that perfectionist coming out! I am one of those too. Difficult to work with
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	ohhh yeah, @Meggle! Recovering perfectionists unite! Solidarity with you. It can creep into so many areas of life, including the ways we may seek/need balance
Meggle	it's a real challenge for me @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) my perfectionistic tendencies is where my all or nothing thing comes from. If I can't do a thing perfectly I don't do it at all
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	<b>Q4: What might be the impact of a lack of balance?</b>
Meggle	Burn out

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<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	I feel that, big time @Meggle . Unlearning perfectionism for me has looked like including lots of time for playfulness and doing things 'just cause' without an expectation of them leading to anything. It's hard work, and I see you out there doing the work!
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	Definitely burn out for me too @Meggle
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	I totally feel you on that @Meggle. Burn out can definitely creep in if we're not careful!
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Definitely burn out, and feeling overwhelmed as to how to start untangling the burnout to recover from it
Meggle	I think if my life is very unbalanced I am not finding time for the important things/people in my life
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	such deep insight there, @meggle. I feel that too. If I start to feel like I'm beholden to 'obligations', it can be a sign that I need to pause and refocus. Very good point there
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	I wonder if that's an important thing to start restoring balance @meggle- figuring out what the most important priorities are?
Meggle	I think I tend to put too much effort in to other people, maybe because I want them to love me? And then I feel resentful that they just wanted me to do whatever it is for them.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Great point, @TideisTurning (PSW) . Restoring balance can create important opportunities for learning about/returning to the things we value most in life
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Yes! I feel that too @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) Balance between need to dos (which might be necessary) & want to dos (which are fulfilling) 😊
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Hi @gong! We're just talking about what impact a lack of balance may have on our lives 😊

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<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	Hey there @Gong, welcome! :blush:
Meggle	Hi @Gong 😊
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	hey @Gong! Good to be here with you!
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	At the simplest level, for me, I feel like a lack of balance equals an increase of stress and in many ways, decrease of wellbeing because there may be too much of certain things and not enough of others. It s also important to note though that at times, lack of balance can be as a result of factors and other things outside our control.
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	<b>Q5: What barriers might there be to having a stronger sense of balance in your life? How could those barriers be overcome, or otherwise worked around? What could you improve?</b>
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	really feeling ya there @TideisTurning (PSW) . So true
Meggle	I really need to improve my motivation to do just about anything.
Meggle	I went from studying all the time to having very little to do
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Those really stark contrasts (from one extreme to tther) can be super difficult to adjust to @meggle
Meggle	that's true @TideisTurning (PSW)
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	One of my biggest barriers often comes from having a PDA profile (pathological demand avoidance) as part of my neurodivergence. It means that sometimes I have to use really compassionate self talk and

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	breaking steps down to REALLY teeny steps in order to engage with the things that I know will bring me balance - despite my brain fighting against me the whole time haha
Meggle	Oh that sounds very familiar @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I tend to avoid things too
Meggle	I mean there is plenty of housework here for me to do but I don't do it. I avoid it completely
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	<b>Q6: Do you have any boundaries in place to ensure balance in your life?</b>
Meggle	no
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	That's amazing @Oshun_blu. Breaking it down & keeping it simple can go a long way! 😊
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Can you think of boundaries you might be able to put in place to restore or promote balance @Meggle? 😊
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Boundaries can be a really difficult, life long practice. Particularly for recovering perfectionists who may be used to putting others first. Really hearing you there, @Meggle. Are there any areas you feel you might like to create some boundaries?
Meggle	Well maybe limiting my time spent in bed.
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	That sounds like it could be a supportive next step, @Meggle. Awesome awareness there! Sometimes when the need for rest is high, it can be hard to get out of bed. But even just moving from the bed to another spot of the house is a great way to make that goal accessible
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	Good on you for considering that boundary as a possible next step

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Meggle	I need to find a way to fill my time in the evenings. I tend to get bored and go to bed because I don't know what I want to do with my time
TideisTurning (PSW)	Slow & steady wins the race as they say 😊
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I'm loving seeing you become curious about some ways to explore more balance in the evenings, @Meggle. Is there a particular activity you might like to introduce to your evenings to support that balance?
Meggle	I do crochet and I was learning to knit. I could do some of that. Or I am reading a series of books but I haven't done much reading lately.
TideisTurning (PSW)	They sound like wonderful ideas @Meggle. I'm a reader too. I wonder if you could start compiling a list of things you might be interested in reading as a starting point?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	oh, that's so cool! Crochet and knitting is a hobby that I could never quite get the hang of so I am sitting here in adoration of your skills haha
TideisTurning (PSW)	Or re-reading as the case may be 😊
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Crochet and knitting and doing things with hands can be a good way to keep the mind engaged when the body is tired, but maybe the mind is asking for a little extra bit of stimulation. Love that idea of spending some time on crafts in the evening for you @meggle
Sirius (PSW)	<b>Q7: How do you think practicing balance will positively impact your life? How might you be able to cultivate more balance in your life?</b>
Meggle	Maybe by writing down a plan
Meggle	I think if I could have more balance in my life then my life would be more productive

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Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Love that idea of a plan, Meggle. Plans can be great ways to brainstorm ideas and ways to make those ideas accessible as well
TideisTurning (PSW)	Writing things down can definitely help @Meggle 😊
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I have been trying to set aside one day a week that is just for me. It is not a day for productivity, but rather is a day that I can just kinda float around doing what I feel like, or doing nothing at all. Having that time to do with as I please has been helpful in cultivating balance, because it's centred around my needs/wants and fills my cup to support others in their needs/wants too
TideisTurning (PSW)	I love that idea @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) 😊
Sirius (PSW)	Definitely @Meggle , in my experience when I've been feeling more balanced in my various facets of my life, I've definitely been able to "juggle more balls". @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) completely agree, this is so important!
Sirius (PSW)	<b>Q: Have you learned anything helpful from others experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?</b>
Sirius (PSW)	I definitely will be looking into the healthier mind platter! Thanks for sharing @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) :revolving_hearts:
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I like Meggles idea of creating a bit of a plan for balance and activities which support balance. Kinda takes the idea of the 'healthy mind' platter/wheel and builds acessibility/action into it too
TideisTurning (PSW)	I feel like I picked up a whole lot of new ideas to try out, like having a day to myself & the wheel of balance/ domains 😊
Meggle	I think I am taking away that while balance is important, perfectionism needs to be kept at bay

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Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	deep insight there, @Meggle When perfectionism can worm its way into self-care, it stops being self-care. Wise words
TideisTurning (PSW)	There was a perfectionism peer group chat a little while back @Meggle. You read it here- <a href="https://www.sane.org/images/peer-support/chat-transcripts/22020310-the-pressure-of-perfectionism.pdf">https://www.sane.org/images/peer-support/chat-transcripts/22020310-the-pressure-of-perfectionism.pdf</a>
Sirius (PSW)	<b>Q: Tonight s topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about (areas of our lives that we may be neglecting). Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?</b>
TideisTurning (PSW)	I will probably take some time to wind down. Maybe read a little 😊
Meggle	I am going to share dinner with my son. Hubby has been busy cooking for us
TideisTurning (PSW)	That sounds wonderful @Meggle 😊
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I have been making my way back through a beloved video game series of mine while it's cold and wintery, and so I'm gonna get all cosy and dive into some gaming later :)
Sirius (PSW)	I will eat an ice cream and play a video game I really enjoy playing. :blush:
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	That sounds beautiful, @Meggle!
Meggle	Oh my @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) I used to play WoW
Meggle	I gave it up because I couldn't find balance with it

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Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	oh nice!
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	hah! I feel that, I take some breaks from gaming sometimes too cuz they can sometimes create unbalance lol
Meggle	gaming is a great distraction though
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	but they can also be a great tool for letting go of perfectionism and having some fun! Love that you took time to create boundaries for yourself there
Sirius (PSW)	<b>We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. We'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: <a href="https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW">https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUFOsHJRKQ6wyW</a></b>
Meggle	ok - thanks for the chat tonight! Sorry it wasn't more popular
Sirius (PSW)	<b>Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. <b>On signs to look for that may indicate lack of balance, and ideas for what to do when lack of balance occurs</b> <a href="https://www.verywellmind.com/maintaining-balance-in-your-lifestyle-3144738">https://www.verywellmind.com/maintaining-balance-in-your-lifestyle-3144738</a></li><li>2. <b>On achieving a whole life balance</b> <a href="https://yourahalife.com/moving-from-work-life-balance-to-whole-life-balance/">https://yourahalife.com/moving-from-work-life-balance-to-whole-life-balance/</a></li><li>3. <b>On the implications of saying 'yes' and 'no'</b> <a href="https://ideas.ted.com/reminder-when-ever-you-say-yes-to-something-youre-saying-no-to-something-else/">https://ideas.ted.com/reminder-when-ever-you-say-yes-to-something-youre-saying-no-to-something-else/</a> <a href="https://ideas.ted.com/reminder-when-ever-you-say-yes-to-something-youre-saying-no-to-something-else/%20">https://ideas.ted.com/reminder-when-ever-you-say-yes-to-something-youre-saying-no-to-something-else/%20</a></li></ol>

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<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	So not your fault, Meggle! We often can't quite predict the chats and some nights they really go off! Other nights are more chilled. But it was wonderful to chat with you, and we're so grateful for your insights here <3
<b>Oshun_Blu (Moderator)</b>	And thanks for being brave and hanging out with us despite it being a small, intimate group tonight too!
<b>TideisTurning (PSW)</b>	Absolutely! Thanks so much for sharing this space with us & for your perspectives & insights 😊
<b>Sirius (PSW)</b>	<b>Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊</b> <b>If you'd like to be informed when our next Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here: <a href="https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat">https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat</a>. You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!</b>