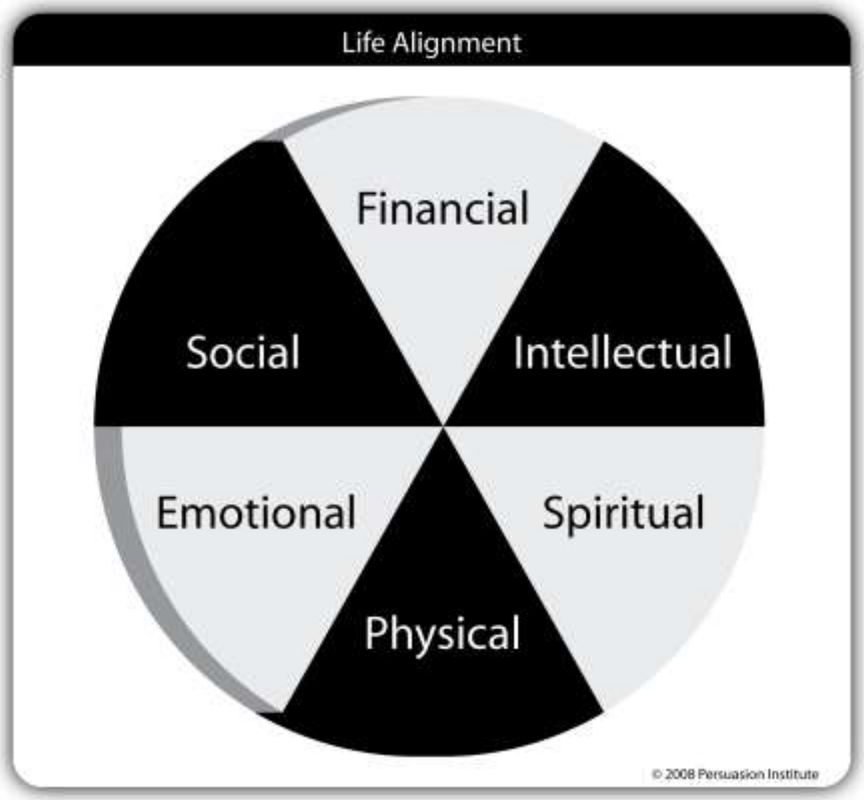
Life Alignment

Another way to enhance your ability to motivate yourself and others is to make sure all things are balanced in your life. Great persuaders lead a balanced life and keep everything in perspective. I call this delicate balance "life alignment." Make sure there is balance in every aspect of your life. Imbalance can undermine motivation and cause inaction and unhappiness. Many times, we quit early because of imbalance, even when we don't realize an imbalance exists. It may be only one area of our life that is out of whack, but it can still have a direct effect on other areas of our life. Just as in a mutual fund, where one bad stock can pull down the fund's overall value, one bad area in your life can also have a disproportionate negative effect.

Ask yourself these questions: Would I invest in my own mutual fund of myself? Would I suggest that my family or friends invest in me? These are hard questions to ask, but the answers to them are necessary as you get your life on track. Take a look at the stocks in which you have invested in your own life. What stock is pulling the rest of your portfolio down? Are you a growing mutual fund or is your mutual fund losing money? Is your fund stagnant? If you won't invest in your personal mutual fund (yourself), who will?

When we look at life, we have to realize that it is not lived in segments, but rather, it is part of a greater whole. Every aspect of your life will either help or hurt the rest of your life. Our aim is to get all aspects working together to create a high-performing fund. Realize, however, that you can invest too much in one aspect of your life. When you do, you can get unbalanced just like a tire on a car. Even too much of a good thing can lead to disaster.

As you invest in yourself, you must make sure you are diversifying in the following six areas:



Financial

If you can't take care of your financial needs, then you can't take care of your basic needs. If you neglect your finances, imbalance will ensue. We all know that an inability to pay the bills affects every aspect of our lives. Financial freedom enables us to find true balance in our lives.

Physical

If you don't feel well, you can't even begin to think about the other aspects of your life. You need to have a health plan in place. Do you understand nutrition and exercise? If you don't, your lack of health or energy will drop the value on your own personal mutual fund.

Emotional

By our very nature, we are emotional creatures. Our emotions are like a thermostat or gauges in a car; they tell us when and where to make changes in our lives. You cannot allow emotions like anger, resentment, frustration, hate, and envy to control your life.

You are in control. If you are not able to control your emotions, you will be unable to control your actions. Emotional mastery is essential to a balanced personal mutual fund.

Intellectual

Personal development is what keeps you excited, motivated, and enthusiastic. We are at our best when we are continually learning and growing. Personal edification is something we need to achieve every day. That's because a lack of personal development causes us to become negative, cynical, and pessimistic.

Spiritual

You have to be in tune with yourself, with who you are, and with where you are going. We are spiritual beings; we all have a spiritual side. We all define spirituality differently. It could be serving others, religion, meditation, or getting back to nature. You need to take the time to listen to your inner voice and to tap into your spirituality.

Social

We are also social creatures. Our greatest strength and well-being stems from our relationships. As such, relationships are an integral part of your happiness and balance. You have to have a sense of meaning and purpose to lead a fulfilled life. No man is an island in and of himself.

We often spend too much of our time spinning our wheels and investing in stock that has no value or that is diminishing the value of our mutual fund. We get so busy buying the stock society recommends that we forget to examine whether this stock is helping or hurting us. There may also be times when you need to sell a stock (change a habit or belief) because it is not performing. We always need to make sure that we are a growth fund and that we are continually investing the right things in ourselves. If we neglect any one of the life-alignment areas, our overall happiness and success will diminish.