

How to Stay Balanced

Author: [Freelancers Union](#)
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Finding focus and balance is important for all independent workers, especially when you're glued to your computer or hunched over a pile of papers...or hunched over a pile of

Downward Dogs all day. Many yogis are independent contractors and entrepreneurs themselves, building their own practice and navigating the waters of self-employment.

After many years of teaching yoga, [April Cantor](#) started a completely new kind of yoga program that brings families together in unexpected ways – for example, [outside in Prospect Park on October 20th for a FREE event](#) to get to know [Freelancers Medical](#).

April shares her wisdom for how to stay centered and thrive when striking out on your own.

What's your #1 rule of work?

You gotta walk the talk. If I'm teaching yoga I have a responsibility to model how a person can integrate kindness and mindfulness. Now, I'm human so I'll make mistakes



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I Am Freelance (And So Can You!)



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and not everyday is going to be a sunny one. But I can make an effort to try and live by the concepts that I'm teaching – and that can start with how I treat the people come in contact with when I work.

This is a practice I was reminded of by Dr. Jean Houston. Every morning, before I leave the house to teach I ask myself: "How can I serve today?"

In that way any action I do will be in the spirit of service – it's working from the INSIDE out. Starting from that place I can send ripples outward: to how I speak to the children, how I interact with the teachers, even how I negotiate with a new client. We have the power to spread love & understanding, so why not start with how we work together?

What advice do you have for others striking out on their own?

Starting my own business was a scary step. There were lots of unknowns—which I now know to be a necessary step in growing: taking risks and having faith. Something that was very helpful in the early steps of setting up the business was **interviewing friends and colleagues** who had already walked that path. There are also lots of **great services available for new entrepreneurs**. I actually hired a success coach (Joanna Lindenbaum a great facilitator who combines life coaching with business guidance and support). For me this was instrumental in helping me define the "heart" of my business and lay the groundwork for all the administrative systems. There are many others who found great help through small-business counseling (some of which may be free) like SCORE and Baruch College and In Good Company. My advice: make good use of these!

How do you stay balanced?

This is an on-going practice for me. Something I hope to have gained some mastery over by the time my kids are teenagers! I have found that I need these things in place: **fitness, family and fun**. Twice a week I schedule in an hour for fitness (if I get more in during the week I'm golden!). My goal is to keep most weekends and evenings free for family time. And once a week I try to do something completely for myself: like making crafts, museum wandering or river-paddling, or free-dancing in my living room.

And lastly, I practice gratitude. Every morning and each night I take time to send a quiet, joyful thanks for all the abundance, love and success that are present in my life – no matter how small or insignificant it may seem. It's so easy to get fixated on what's missing, lacking or not working. But once I take that important moment to list what I'm thankful for it sets all things right.

April Cantor is director and founder of [SoulShine Life](#), a yoga practice for kids and families.

Photo credit: [Whitney Kidder](#)

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