Balance

The cake that followed our in-flight "snack" was vanilla with coconut icing. The pieces were absolutely identical, not particularly appetizing in their perfectness, but for the $250 plane ticket, I'd have eaten mine with a bug in it.

The fellow next to me ate his without proper discernment, to my way of thinking. My taste, I concluded, was a bit more sophisticated and I took secret pride in my self-discipline: I ate the cake, **THEN** I ate the icing.

But by the end of the eating, I noticed something quite profound. The cake was dry, fairly tasteless and aroused little sensual pleasure. The icing, on the other hand, was sweet and exciting at first, but quickly tasted thick and heavy, almost galling.

My neighbor, while exercising less discernment, but better judgment, had eaten his as it was intended, enjoying every bite. And in a stroke of philosophical insight that only comes to one while dancing 33,000 ft. above the earth, I realized that he, and not I, had discovered the secret of life.

For proper living, there must be both plain and sweet, tears and laughter, joy and sorrow. They must never be taken alone and never in large quantities. Instead, they are to be taken together, moderately, with each enhancing and diluting its partner as they maintain a proper balance.

To be practical: No day of toil should end without a warm embrace, a knowing touch and, especially, giggling—work must be followed with play. No school day should be considered complete without recess, stomping in puddles on the way home or cookies and milk before bed—growth and digression are not necessarily incompatible. And no Saturday should end with the last pile of raked leaves or dusted and polished end-table, but with an hour with a good book, a rendezvous with Beethoven, the Beatles, or Benny Goodman (it's your choice) and a game of "go-fish" with the kids—responsi-

Balance

bility has many faces, some of them very familiar.

It's called balance, or in biblical language: moderation. And that has always been God's advice, though we have seldom taken it, but its good—very good. If followed, life would never be too sweet, not too plain, but just as it was intended and we should enjoy it, yes we would, every bite.



Keith Cain
Georgetown, TX