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ON BEING MIDDLE OF THE ROAD

Moderation is not identical with the mathematical mean. Adhering to the Golden Mean does not require the services of an ideological accountant. One who practices moderation by always locating himself equidistantly from both existing extremes, is not being middle of the road -- he is being muddle of the road...

Moderation or middle of the road implies a respect for all rational and reasonable opinions; a consideration of conflicting factors in every situation; an acceptance that theoretical consistency must yield to what William James called the stubborn and irreducible facts; and the humility to acknowledge that most of one's opinions and ideas are provisional and open to further exploration.

Moreover, as the Rav pointed out many years ago in a famous lecture given to the Rabbinical Council of America in Detroit, the "middle way" of Maimonides is a dynamic and not a static state, by which he means, that the sum total of one's decisions, dispositions, and ideas are fairly equidistant from the extremes, but each individual choice or idea must be judged on its own merits rather than on the mathematical model.