

Achieving Work-Life Balance Teleseminar

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Your goal is to live a long, happy life, full of joy and satisfaction, to realize your potential, and to become everything you are capable of becoming.

Aristotle, perhaps the greatest philosopher of all time, had determined that the ultimate aim of all human life and behavior is to achieve the happiness of the individual. This is the primary purpose of all human activity.

The great question is then, “How shall we live in order to be happy?”

The starting point of achieving balance in your life is for you to set your own happiness as the primary goal of your life, and then organize everything you do to achieve that happiness.

You know that if you accomplish everything but you are not happy, you have actually failed in life.

Fully 85% of your happiness comes from your relationships with other people – at home, at work, and in every area of your life.

You require a balance between your work and your personal life in order to be happy.

There are four key areas of life that you need to balance against each other;

1. Health, energy and personal fitness – you need to take sufficient time for health and fitness, eating the right foods, exercising and getting enough rest;
2. Family and relationships – You need to spend ample time with the most important people in your life, doing the things that give you the greatest amount of joy and satisfaction;

3. Work and career – You need to be doing work that you enjoy, that gives you a sense of personal fulfillment, that pays you well, and which you do in an excellent fashion;

4. Financial independence – You need to get control of your finances, save and invest on a regular basis, and feel that you are moving step by step toward financial independence.

In addition, you need to be learning and growing, making a contribution to your community, and developing spiritually.

If you are lacking in any one of these areas, your life quickly gets out of balance.

Stress occurs when what you are doing on the outside is not consistent with what is really important to you on the inside.

One of the most important questions you can ask, in every part of your life, especially in making decisions, is the question: “What is important here?”

Remember the 80/20 Rule. Fully 80% of all of your happiness and satisfaction will come from 20% or less of the things that you do.

Your most important ability is your ability to think. The better you think, the better decisions you make. The better decisions you make, the better actions you take. The better actions you take the better results you get, in every area.

Begin with your values: What is most important to you?

What do you stand for and believe in? What do you love, respect and care about? What would you not stand for?

If they were to do a survey amongst your friends, people who know you, and ask them about what they thought your values were, what would other people say, based on their experience with you?

Top people are very clear about their values, and refuse to compromise them for any reason.

Average people are unclear about their values, often confused, and compromise them easily for a short-term advantage.

Here are some questions to help you determine what you value most in life:

1. What are your five most important values in life today? What people, virtues and qualities are most important to you?
2. What would you do, how would you spend your time, if you learned today that you only had six months left to live? Your answers to this question would tell you what is most important to you in life.
3. Imagine that you suddenly found that you had 20 million dollars cash, in the bank, tax free. But at the same time, you learned that you only had ten years left to live. What would you do? How would you spend your time?

Key question: What is really working in your life? What parts of your life give you your greatest feelings of pleasure and satisfaction? What people and activities make you happy?

What is not working in your life? What is causing you stress, frustration or unhappiness?

The greater clarity you have in answering these two questions, “What’s working?” “What’s not working?” the faster you can achieve balance in your life.

There are only four ways to change your life and get back into balance.

1. You can do more of certain things. What should you be doing more of? The things that are working the best for you.
2. You can do less of other things. What should you be doing less of? The things that are not working, the things that are causing you unhappiness, stress and frustration.
3. You can start doing something new altogether. In many cases, to get back into balance, you have to make fundamental changes in your life.

4. You can stop doing certain things altogether. Human beings are creatures of habit. They often get into a routine or a comfort zone where they do certain things over and over, even though these things no longer work or make them happy.

Practice Zero Based Thinking in everything you do. Ask yourself this question, “Is there anything that I am doing today that, knowing what I now know, I wouldn’t start up again, if I had to do it over.”

I call this a KWINK Analysis “Knowing What I Now Know” is there anything that I wouldn’t get into again today, if I had to do it over.

Practice Zero Based Thinking in three areas:

1. Relationships: Is there any relationship, personal or business, which you wouldn’t get into today, if you had to do it over?
2. Is there any part of your work or business that, knowing what you now know, you wouldn’t start up again today if you had to do it over?
3. Investments – of time, money or emotion. Are there any investments or commitments that, knowing what you now know, you wouldn’t get into today if you had to do it over?

A major source of stress in adult life is “denial.” Denial arises when we refuse to face the truth of an important part of our lives. Perhaps we are dissatisfied with our job. Perhaps a relationship that we are in is no longer right for us. Perhaps we have made a bad decision or life-choice.

Every act of denial puts your life out of balance, increases stress and opens you up to psychosomatic illnesses of all kinds.

Rule: Reality is. Practice the “Reality Principle.” Insist upon seeing the world as it really is, rather than the way that you would like it to be.

Rule: Never get upset about something that you can’t change. And you can’t change people and you can’t change past events.

The opposite of denial is acceptance. When you accept that people and situations are the way they are, and are not likely to change, all of the stress involved in denial begins to disappear.

Your life often gets out of balance because you feel you have too much to do and too little time.

How do you get your time under control? The first thing to realize is that you will never have enough time. You will never get everything done.

The only way you can get your time under control is by stopping doing the things of low value so that you have more time left to do the things that are really important to you, your life, your work and your family.

Great question: What are you going to stop doing?

Human beings are “choosing organisms.” Every minute of every day, you make a choice between what is more important and what is less important.

The combination of your choices and decisions determines the entire quality of your life.

The only way you can get your life back into balance is by making different choices and different decisions.

The Law of the Excluded Alternative: This law says that doing one thing means not doing something else. Every choice you make to engage in a particular activity implies a rejection of all other choices and activities that you could do at the same time.

Before you commit your time, you must think about what you will not be doing, if you do something else.

The average person feels that he or she has too much work to do and that this is the major reason that his or her life is out of balance. This is seldom true.

The fact is that most working people waste fully 50% of their time. They waste their time in idle chit-chat with co-workers, reading a newspaper,

surfing the internet, personal business, long coffee breaks and lunches, coming in late and leaving early.

The average person only works about 50% of the time, and then, because they are under pressure, they work on low-value activities.

The secret to success at work is simple: “Work all the time you work!”

When you go to work, put your head down, and immediately start work. If someone wants to interrupt you to talk, you excuse yourself by saying that you have to get “back to work!”

Organize your time for maximum accomplishment:

1. Plan every day and week in advance. Think on paper.
2. Make a list before you start each day, preferably the night before. Every minute spent in planning saves ten minutes in work or execution.
3. Set priorities on your work list by using the A, B, C, D, E Method:
 - a. Go over your list and put an A next to each of your most important tasks;
 - b. Go over your list and put a B next to tasks that are not as important;
 - c. Go over your list and place a C next to those tasks that are hardly important at all.
4. When you begin work, start on your A-1, most important tasks first thing.
5. Practice single-handling; concentrate single-mindedly on one thing, the most important thing, and discipline yourself to stay on that task until it is 100% complete.

By developing the habit of single-minded concentration on your most important task, you will increase your productivity 50%, get your entire work life under control, double your productivity, performance and output, and reassert balance in your work life.

When you are with your family, “Be there” 100% of the time.

Leave things off! Resist the temptation to walk in the house at the end of the day and immediately turn on the television. As soon as the television goes on, all communication stops and the entire focus of the family becomes the television screen. Don’t let this happen to you.

When you are with members of your family, take the time to give them what they need for emotional nourishment and support:

1. Men: At the end of the day, men need acknowledgement for their work, appreciation for their efforts, an opportunity to explain what they have done during the day, and time to decompress.
2. Women: Women need attention, respect, affection and listening at the end of the day. They need to talk and feel that the important person in their life is listening to them respectfully. This is why the man must leave things off.

Men can only process one sensory input at a time. If the television is on, they cannot pay attention to or listen to someone else who is talking.

Children: Need unconditional positive regard, acceptance, respect, attention, and especially time.

How does a child spell the word “love?” T-I-M-E!

The Law of Time says, “It is quality of time at work that counts, and quantity of time at home.”

Organize your personal life so that you spend ample time with the most important people in your life.

Take at least one full day off each week during which you do no work at all. You only spend time with the members of your family or the important person in your life.

If you are married, take 1-3 day weekends off every three months where you go away and spend time with the person.

Take one or two week vacations twice each year during which you do no work at all. This will help you get back into balance faster than almost anything else you can do.

To get your life back into balance, you need plenty of rest, at least 7-8 hours each night.

When you get too little sleep, you build up a “sleep deficit” which causes you to go through the day in a form of “fog.”

Because you are not thoroughly rested, you find it difficult to concentrate on the high-value activities that account for your success. Instead, you work on low priority, easier tasks, that contribute very little to your career.

The very act of going to bed one hour early each night, or getting one to two hours of extra sleep each night, can transform your life completely, and put your entire life back into balance.

Eat the right foods, and eat fewer of them.

Exercise 200-300 minutes per week, even if all you do is to go for a 30-40 walk every day. This will increase your energy, improve your fitness, calm your mind, enable you to sleep better, and help bring your life back into balance.

The wonderful result of getting your life into balance is that you will feel terrific about yourself, get much more done at work and at home, experience greater joy and satisfaction, and be more successful in every part of your life.

Sometimes people ask me the “secret” to living a balanced life. I ask them, “How often does a tightrope walker balance when he is on the wire?”

The person always answers, “All the time.”

This is the same for you. Balance is not something that you achieve quickly and easily. It is something that you have to work at, every single day. But the good news is that, whatever you do repeatedly eventually becomes a habit.

You can develop the habit of living a high performance, happy, well balanced life by simply practicing these ideas over and over until they become a regular part of your life.

Good luck!