

Solutions

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The Work / Life Peace Pact



Everyone is talking about “Work-life Balance”. You need to take care of yourself - laugh more, sleep more, spend more time with friends and family, get going with that personal dream of yours to learn to speak Mandarin. At the same time though, don’t forget to work harder, make more money, buy a bigger house, and send your kids to a nice private school. Can you spot the disconnect?! I’m waiting to see if my petition to move to a 30 hour day is successful. But until then, we seemed doomed to fail...at both work and life!

Here’s my idea. Maybe we could end this tug-of-war between work and life once and for all by realizing that really there is no meaningful difference between the two. In fact, I would like to know when we stopped calling “work” “life”. Since we spend the majority of our waking moments at work I think they should count for something, don’t you?!

So here’s what I propose: Wipe your game board clean of the old teams and their clashing strategies and ideals. Start over with just one new team, your “fulfilling life” team - all united by a singular, all-encompassing game plan...success in every corner - in your family, at work, and in your life as an individual.

Your next step then is to answer that little question... “What is success in life?” Okay, maybe it’s not so little. In fact, the question is often so daunting it easily overwhelms us to the extent that we may want to just sweep it under the rug and pretend there is no question. The problem with the “let sleeping dogs lie” approach is part of us already knows what “success” means to us and if we don’t measure up to this standard we will never feel completely satisfied.

Fortunately, we don't have to track down Dr. Oz, Dr. Phil and the rest of Oprah's gurus for guidance or inspiration; we simply have to ask ourselves: "Who is it that I need to be to feel good about myself?" And then trust the answer that we get - it may scare us a little but that doesn't make the answer wrong.

I would encourage you to write out your answer in the form of a "principles list". You can start each principle with a variation of "I need to be..." You might write "I need to be kind", or "I need to share my laughter with others".

Once you've finished writing down all of your principles you will have a clear and meaningful standard for success against which you can objectively measure yourself. And this standard can be applied to every corner of your life. The person you need to be at home can be the same as the person you need to be at work, or in your bowling league. "Being committed to excellence" (if that's one of your principles) may look different in your office than it does in your home, but the principle stays the same.

My prediction is that the closer you get to living by your principles in all areas of your life, the more fulfilled and balanced you will feel. And that is my ultimate wish for all of you. No more "work" or "life"... just LIFE, and best of all, a life that you are proud of!

Other helpful links:

View the following websites for more information about Work/Life Balance in your area:

<http://healthyworkplacemonth.ca/en/>

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-new-resilience/201307/work-life-balance-is-impossible-and-why-thats-good>

<http://www.cmha.ca/mental-health/your-mental-health/worklife-balance/>

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/small-business/sb-tools/ten-sensible-tips-to-achieve-work-life-balance/article553212/>

<http://alleer.com/articles/work-life-balance/>

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