



Work/Life Balance: The Secret Revealed

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When we conceptualize work/life balance, most of us imagine an ideal scenario where we finally have our acts fully together. Where everything is in perfect balance. We're killing it at work. Our home-life is happy. We're jamming at the gym. And our social life is smooth as silk.

But for most of us, that's something we strive for, not something we maintain. Instead, we long to discover the system that will empower us to achieve the proper distribution of our time and energy across all these areas. Why? So we can finally let go of the guilt that looms like a little grey cloud over our heads when we feel like we're giving more of ourselves to certain areas than to others.

Guess what. I'm about to reveal the magic 4-step system that will keep the guilt away and keep us feeling on top of our game. Are you ready?

Step 1: Redefine Balance.

On those rare but lovely days when our work/life balance is perfectly balanced, our little clouds float away. But as soon as we lean more in one direction than the other, the cloud returns.

But this little golden nugget should help us keep that cloud at bay. When used as a verb, balance actually means to keep something steady so that it does not fall.

Imagine a tightrope walker. She's keenly aware of when she's off center. So she gracefully shifts her weight, leaning first to one side and then the other to steady herself. And through her process of fluidly responding in a back and forth motion, she maintains her balance and continues moving forward.

Rather than maintaining our rigid definition and continuing to strive for an equal distribution of our attention across all the areas of our life, let's broaden the scope to something more achievable and blow that cloud of guilt away once and for all. After all, if the tightrope walker tried to maintain her balance by walking rigidly and didn't allow for ebb and flow, she'd fall.

I want to invite you to adopt this new definition: the act of responding in a back and forth rhythm that keeps our work and life progressing forward.

Step 2: Change your Language from Criticism to Courage

Do you criticize the tightrope walker when she looks unsteady? Or do you cheer her on and admire her courage? What if she fell? Would you berate her, or would you respect her? Think about how you respond when things in your own life feel like they're off kilter. Do you look at the big picture and offer yourself some

words of encouragement, or are you quick to criticize? Just like her, you conquer your fears, overcome obstacles, and keep things moving every day. Offer yourself the same kindness as you would another.

Step 3: Stay grounded.

The lower the tightrope walker keeps her center of gravity, the less likely it is that she'll topple over. The same holds true for us. When we feel aligned, we feel more in control. When we feel out of alignment, we can become stressed and overwhelmed, and balls start dropping.

Give yourself a few moments each morning, before the world awakens, before you plug in, to do something that will align your body, mind, and spirit. Maybe it's doing a short meditation, saying a prayer and setting an intention, reading a passage from an inspirational book, doing a morning yoga stretch routine, drinking your favorite morning beverage on your porch and writing in a gratitude journal, or going for an energizing 10-minute walk or run. Those 10 minutes can be recouped in no time when you start your day feeling inspired and ready to rock your day.

Step 4: Don't Disregard Your Net

There will be times when things fall completely out of balance. Fortunately,

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