

BALANCING TOMORROW, TODAY™

by Stacie L. L. Morgan, Ph.D.



Welcome to a brand new column designed to help you balance all of the things you have to do with what you really want to do! This column will rotate its focus on what our community members are trying to balance at home, at work, and in our businesses. I want to hear from you, so feel free to email me and let me know what you find difficult to balance and I'll take a crack at it.

Do you ever feel like your entire life is spent at work? Do you long for some personal time (when you are actually awake)? Balancing your work life with your personal life is not just a desire; it is a necessity for your long-term health and overall productivity at home as well as on the job.

We so often focus on what will bring us short-term income and neglect that which can provide long-term wealth. It is important to do your job well, to be as professional as possible, and to earn a living. It is just as important, however, to enjoy your family and friends, cultivate a hobby, and engage in other personally enriching activities.

Our bodies and our minds require *varied* stimulation to be creative and remain productive on the job. It doesn't matter what your job is, your human needs are the same. This varied stimulation is now reported to stave off mind debilitating diseases such as Alzheimer's and early onset dementia.

Employers in many organizations have discerned the benefits of well-rounded and independently active employees and offer reimbursement programs for those pursuing activities outside the work environment.

The real responsibility, I am sure you've realized, lies in your personal ownership of your life today *and* your life tomorrow. You cannot begin to experience balance in your life until you acknowledge that you, not your employer, are responsible for the choices you make. What you do and what you don't do are in your control.

To begin balancing your work life with your home life, think about the following:

- Take another look at your job responsibilities and your performance at work.
- Are you focusing your energy on fulfilling those responsibilities to the best of your ability?
- Now take another look at your responsibilities to yourself (exercise, nutrition, rest, relaxation, exploring other interests) and your performance in your personal time.
- Are you focusing your energy on fulfilling those responsibilities to the best of your ability?
- Be honest!

Of course we're not taking the best care of ourselves as we could and perhaps should. Why? Because we're too tired from working all day. **The trick to starting the balancing process is to just jump in.** If you can do *one thing, one day* to rejuvenate your personal life, you will not only be extending your life, but you will be increasing your energy and productivity in your work life and your personal life as well.

Here's how I started. One day after work, while my children were playing and my husband was surfing the Internet, I sat down and started reading a novel. For me, this was huge. I hadn't read for pleasure in ten years! I gradually allowed myself to do this for half an hour or so on a regular basis and I was in such a better mood. I felt rejuvenated. Since then I have graduated to an occasional trip to a day spa and to taking a course here and there, etc. The important point is that you need to think about your long-term health and well being *as part of* your productivity at work. The two are intertwined.

Take that first step today, and remember that balance is a process...not a destination.

Dr. Stacie L. L. Morgan is a strategy consultant, international speaker, media personality, and author. For more information visit her website at www.balancedmanagement.com or e-mail her at stacie@balancedmanagement.com.