

CAREER HEALTH

Life Balance: Career & Personal Success

By Nina Atwood

When I think of “life balance”, I often visualize those plate-spinners on the Ed Sullivan show. At times, I have felt that was me - running over to the plate called “business and career” and spinning it, then rushing over to the plate called “family and friends” and spinning it, then careening over to the one labeled “health and exercise” and so on. The whole time, I felt ineffective in them all and fearful that at any moment one of them might spin out of control.

I made a decision early in my career to do all that I can to make a positive difference in other’s lives; this led to taking on more and more projects and more hats to wear. Today, as a business owner for over 15 years, I wear four hats: author, professional speaker, executive coach, and private practice psychotherapist. With so many hats/plates, I am extremely challenged to stay in balance. Therefore, I have taken on the mission to discover and practice the secrets of life balance. I view this as a journey with no destination - growing to greater levels of balance and inner peace. I have made a few discoveries along the way.

First, take a moment and consider what is meant by “life balance”. Typically, an executive who feels out of balance is someone who is putting too much emphasis on career at the cost of personal enrichment. The result? STRESS! The habits that lead to this state include:

- Taking work home mentally
- Not carving out family/recreational time or Carving it out but feeling guilty or preoccupied
- Not having good boundaries: not saying “no” and not delegating
- Ineffective systems for managing day-to-day work flow

One discovery I have made is that always looking at things from a micro-perspective does not foster happiness and success! Now, I love focusing on the details of life and I believe that there are times

when it is essential to do so. However, to master life balance requires that we step back from the day-to-day grind and take a larger view of where we are and where we want to go. Thus, I make it my practice and encourage my clients to engage in the creation of a Vision for life and career success, one that is personal, meaningful, inspirational, and motivational. Having a personal and professional Vision Statement provides a guide, a compass, and a center to return to when life pulls us off balance.

Another discovery that I have made is that working smarter is more important than working harder. Working smarter means having systems in place that allow me to handle the details of life and work quickly, easily, and with as few steps as possible. Having a powerful Vision Statement and re-vamping personal effective systems are critical steps in attaining life balance. Cultivating these two habits alone can reduce stress, infuse life with more positive energy, and maximize productivity.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. When was the last time I stepped back and took a larger view of where I am and where I want to go in my life and career?
2. What is my Vision? What do I want in my life and for my life?
3. What does my workspace look like and how does it function? Is it cluttered, filled with stacks of files and papers that represent incomplete tasks? Or, is it visually appealing and inspiring.
4. How energized am I at the beginning of each workday? At the end? How available am I in the evenings and on the weekends to focus on family, friends, and personal/spiritual growth?

Getting in balance in life takes effort, but the result is greater peace of mind, better health and well being and, ultimately, a higher level of success!

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Breathing for Perfect Health

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allowing in only the correct amount of oxygen into the body at one time.

- 2.) The anatomy of the nose has ridges which create a stream of air perfect for oxygen exchange.
- 3.) Mucous membranes keep air warm or cold and moist, adapting to the body’s temperature in it’s environment.
- 4.) Cilia (tiny hairs) clean and filter the air to prevent the body from disease and infection.
- 5.) New evidence suggests nasal passages produce nitric oxide. This not only kills bacteria and viruses but cancer cells. It is also thought to regulate blood pressure and boost immunity.
- 6.) Nose breathing increases the blood supply to cells, this coordinates the body by improving muscle balance.

As a bonus: Easterners believe that the mind/body connection cycle is completed by the breath. Used as a catalyst in meditation, breath-work is used as a signal to higher consciousness. Easterners also have noted that breathing engages a feeling of euphoria, engaging the chakra at the solar plexus, connecting mind and body. Sound good? Why not give it a try?

Breathing Exercises:

Here are some breathing exercises to help you retrain your body to intake oxygen and exhale carbon dioxide more effectively:

First, take in three maximum breaths inhaling from mouth. Next take three maximum breaths through the nose and notice the difference. Now, inhale through the nose and exhale only through the nose. As you breathe contract stomach muscles and increase the size of breath with each inspiration. Breathe until you have reached your lungs full capacity. Try this both at rest then practice during your walking or exercise program. If you have a difficult time nasal breathing or want to stimulate an involuntary response, place one drop of Peppermint essential oil into the hands, then touch your upper lip just below the nose.

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“True
prosperity is
the result of
well-placed
confidence
in ourselves
and our fellow
man.”

-Benjamin Burt

VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life

Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money.

These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.

We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Breathing for Perfect Health

By Laura Turner

Did you know, how you breathe could affect your health? It’s true. In can also affect the success of your exercise program, your mood, blood pressure, even your quality of life. Consider this: As nursing infants we were born to inspire and expire through the nose. Prior to this, back in the comforting watery environment of the womb, mouth breathing wasn’t an option (Douillard, 2001, p. 147). How did we learn then to breathe through our mouth? Frankly, stress. When blood pressure rises, we involuntarily open our mouths to obtain large gulps of air. This stimulates the “fight or flight” response and we begin to panic. Is there a better way to breathe for perfect health, you ask? Read on to discover the answer.

The Two Forms of Breathing:

Before we discuss how you can learn to breathe more efficiently, it’s best to note that there are two ways our body has become accustomed to breathing: in the chest/clavicle area and from the diaphragm. It makes sense that chest breathing is shallow and requires more work to supply oxygen to the body. Chest breathing requires a higher heart rate and when used alone, doesn’t efficiently engage the lower lobes of the lungs (where the oxygen is taken into the blood). This is easy to do. And, if we don’t know any better we may never graduate beyond shallow breathing.

What’s the alternative? Enter the diaphragm. The diaphragm is a flat “parachute” muscle at the bottom of the

lungs (Douillard, 2001, p. 148). It contracts as we inspire drawing air into the lower portion of the lungs, more efficiently transferring oxygen to the blood. It is also in the lower lungs where carbon dioxide and other gasses are prepared for release. Give it a try: place your hand on your abdomen just below the ribcage. You should feel the diaphragm shrink as you inhale, expand as you exhale. Now alternate between mouth and nose breathing - can you tell which one more effectively engages the diaphragm?

While thinking about changing your habits: consider the nose is created for breathing and the mouth for eating (except in extreme circumstances when the airway is obstructed, of course). If nose breathing is efficient, it engages both chest/clavicle and diaphragm involuntarily getting them to work together in a seamless system. The key is to make this happen both during exercise and at rest. Ever felt dizzy? Then you know what it’s like not to be breathing effectively. Mouth breathing allows too much oxygen to enter the system. This abundance of oxygen cannot be exchanged with carbon dioxide fast enough causing its build up in the blood. This can cause dizziness, even fainting.

Benefits Of Nose Breathing:

Why is the nose a more effective tool for breathing? Here’s just a few benefits:

- 1.) Nose breathing happens in a controlled environment

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

Three Steps to Strengthen Trust in Your Relationships

By Susie & Otto Collins

When it comes to intimate relationships, trust is too often taken for granted. We often make agreements with the ones we love which may include “being there” for each other no matter what, staying faithful to one another, and always trying to deepen our relationship. We trust, or don’t trust, that these agreements will be honored.

However, if you take a clear look at your everyday life with your love, you might begin to wonder if your relationship is really based on a strong sense of trust.

Trust might be limited in subtle ways or perhaps more intense ones. It could be that you doubt that your partner will love you if you let your true self be seen. Maybe—with no proof of it—you fear that your partner is cheating on you. Or perhaps you regularly expect that your love will not follow through on his or her promises. Regardless of how subtle or intense, weakened or lacking trust will interfere with your relationship being as intimate as it could be.

See the similarities with this example.....

Wall climbing is a popular sport in which the climber ascends a wall which may be 50 ft. up in the air with nothing holding him or her up there except a harness, rope and your climbing partner, or belayer, who stands on the ground holding that rope. Let’s name our pretend climber, Lori. From the top of the wall she gazes down at the ground and might begin to wonder: How sturdy is this rope that is holding me up? Will my belayer prevent me from falling and get me down safely? Despite her love of wall climbing, Lori begins to experience some nervousness and trepidation.

Her belayer—we’ll call him Neal—has to pay

attention to what Lori is doing on the wall and adjust the climbing rope accordingly. For her part, Lori has the choice to trust that Neal will gently ease her down the wall to the ground once she’s reached the top. If Neal is distracted, it could mean not only a bumpy ride down but also Lori’s safety could be in jeopardy. But Lori could also choose to allow her fears to take over, mistrust Neal, and end up hanging indefinitely on the wall refusing to move! It is literally a leap of faith when she lets go of the holds and allows herself to be lowered down.

“No soul is desolate as long as there is a human being for whom it can feel trust and reverence.”

-T.S. Eliot

Climber and belayer must work together, stay present, and communicate clearly so that the climbing experience will be enjoyable and not end up an emergency room visit!

There are many parallels with intimate relationships. One or both people may feel vulnerable from time to time and wonder whether or not the other person will be there when needed. The unfortunate result of a lack of trust is that intimacy cannot grow and relationships can become stuck.

These 3 steps can help strengthen trust and intimacy....

1. Allow yourself to let go of the past.

It is not uncommon for the hurt of painful past relationships to leave us resistant to loving or trusting others. Become aware of

your present situation and allow yourself to let go of those old hurts. This might mean that you see the ways that the past comes up for you in the present. Breathe and remind yourself to allow the past to go and shift your attention to what’s currently going on.

2. Let your true colors show.

No matter what habits, tendencies, or desires we think we need to hide from our partner, find the courage to let every part of yourself show. Intimacy is undercut when we don’t trust our partner to love us as we are. Deep down we may not feel lovable as our true selves. Chances are your love will be more accepting than you think. So set the intention to appreciate yourself completely and then allow every part of you to be seen by your partner.

3. Practice Listening from the Heart and Find Understanding.

Just as we saw in the example of the wall climber and belayer, listening to one another is vital to strong intimacy and trust in a love relationship. When a situation comes up that challenges your trust, stop your thoughts and ask your love questions to clarify what seems to be happening. It is highly likely that what you think you are seeing is just not accurate. Open your heart, listen, and really try to understand what is going on for your partner.

These 3 steps can help you strengthen trust in your intimate relationship. It starts with letting go, loving yourself, and listening with an open heart.

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INNER HEALTH

Eleven Ways to Expand Your Life this Year

By Jim Cathcart

Define your future. Describe the life you’d like to live. The future you see defines the person you’ll need to be. Identify the traits and qualities you’d like to acquire. Think bigger than yourself. An acorn that only thinks as an acorn will never become a mighty oak. Stretch yourself. You are undoubtedly capable of more than you ever dreamed is possible for you.

Become the person who would achieve your goals. As you develop the skills, knowledge, relationships and demeanor of the “future you”, your goals will be the natural by-product of your growth. Spend an extra hour each day in the study of your chosen field.

Give more than you must. Nothing advances until somebody does more than they are paid to do. Always deliver more value than others expect. Don’t require others to acknowledge your generosity. Give with “class”.

Make time for what you love. If you don’t live fully, you deny the world your potential contributions. Your “play” sometimes contributes as much as your “work.” What you love reveals the value you bring to the world.

Refine your Inner Circle. We define ourselves through our key relationships. Explore the mix and depth of those with whom you spend most of your time. Release those who limit you and connect with those who can help you live more fully.

Resolve your unfinished business. Either deal with it or discard it. Say your apologies, face your fears, pay your debts, express your gratitude and get on with living. Don’t let yesterday drain value from today and tomorrow. Break out of the limited world of your past and start to grow.

Rethink exiting habits and routines. Describe your typical day and then reconsider every aspect of it. Change or expand the places you go, people

“Yesterday’s just a memory, tomorrow is never what it’s supposed to be.”

-Bob Dylan

you see, things you do, and the time you devote to each. Try new things. Learn a new language, go someplace different, do some things you’d typically pass by. Find out what your possibilities really are.

Lighten up. Stop stressing over things that only matter to you emotionally. When life isn’t fair to you, get over it quickly. Take your misfortunes as “course corrections” rather than “catastrophes”. Let go so you can grow.

Tighten up. Sloppiness in life allows more variables to creep in and spoil your plans. Stay on target, increase your self-discipline, master the art of self-motivation. Sometimes details matter a lot.

Profile yourself. Keep a journal of your goals, concerns, fears, and dreams. Review it at least once a year. Look for patterns that reveal your core values, natural velocity, natural intelligence and recurring situations. Realize how life ebbs and flows for you. Notice the natural cycles of life. Know yourself.

Invest in yourself. Set aside a portion of each year’s income to acquire new tools and teachers to increase your potential. Refine your systems, get expert coaching, attend special conferences, cultivate a study group, appoint a board of advisors. You are your only true asset. Send part of today ahead to the person you’ll be in the future.

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