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THE OFFICE

People are always talking about the precarious balance between work and home life. Work-life balance, the catchall phrase, ultimately asks, can you give equal attention to both a career and a family? I prefer to approach it as work-life harmony, where ...

Amy Vetter • Dec. 18, 2017

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People are always talking about the precarious balance between work and home life. Work-life balance, the catchall phrase, ultimately asks, can you give equal attention to both a career and a family? I prefer to approach it as work-life harmony, where you can choose the rhythm of your work and home life, rather than striking strict boundaries between the two. It's a method I detail in my new book, [Business, Balance and Bliss](#).

The importance of work-life harmony really crystallized for me when I attended the funeral of the brother of a colleague. As the eulogies unfolded, every single person who spoke considered him to be their best friend. But why? The common theme throughout their speeches was simply that he was truly present in every interaction.

One person encapsulated it saying, “when he was with you, he was completely

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and switch off when you're at home.

Solutions to help you focus at work

1. Use tools to limit your exposure to distracting sites and social media

With constant access to a dizzying array of entertaining videos, funny pictures and messages it's remarkable that we get any work done at all. Online tools like [RescueTime.com](#) can help you track your time spent on applications and websites, emails, and social media. With this information in hand, you can identify how you spend most of your time, where you waste it and better prioritize your day.

2. Divide your day into two halves

Your energy and discipline levels are often at their peak in the morning, so reserve that time for larger tasks that require more mental effort. For example, block your calendar to get your own work done in the morning and schedule conference calls and meetings in the afternoon. If you accomplish your most important tasks first, but still have some minor tasks to finish, you will be to leave the office knowing that those tasks can be done at a later date.

3. Always take your lunch break.

Lunch time has become a lost tradition. We eat more often at our desk because we think we don't have the time. But you need that brief time off whether it is a full hour or just thirty minutes. You can use your lunch time to divide your day in half. But you have to take it in order to re-energize.

4. Work in ninety-minute segments.

According to research conducted by Florida State University, [work is best conducted in 90-minute periods](#). The research studied elite performers, including athletes,

actors, musicians, and even chess players, and found that their best performances

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However, we need to give ourselves a break and remember that it can always be done tomorrow. You have control over what is truly urgent and whether it's really worth missing another family meal for.

2. Block out time daily

Block out a certain period of time daily that is work-free time. Whether this is a period in the early morning that you spend with your children, or exercising, it is important to make sure that there is some part of the day that you're not working. Schedule it into your calendar so that your colleagues are aware you are unavailable during this time.

3. Unplug Sundays

Sometimes we become so immersed in technology that even virtual people can become more important than the people we're with. Pick a day to have a little me time or spend time with your family. Unplug laptops, phones or anything with a screen and get back to the basics. Disengage from work and re-engage with the people you are with. Go for a walk, read an actual book or play catch in the yard. I can guarantee that being physically and virtually disconnected from work will give you the time to properly recharge and refresh for the week ahead.

We live and work in fast-paced environments and it is more important than ever to be able to work without distraction, as well as dedicate time to ourselves and our families outside of work. These are just some of the methods you can employ in both situations, in order to be all-round more present in life, and based on what is right for you. By being more aware, it is easier to take notice of when we are out of balance and then deploy the right strategy to achieve the bliss, or truth and self awareness, that can help us at both work and home.

Amy Vetter is an accomplished business executive, serial entrepreneur, keynote

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