

Balancing Work and Life: 8 Tips to Help Women Entrepreneurs Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle

Written by Karel Murray

Tuesday, 29 December 2009 23:49 -

As a woman entrepreneur who travels a lot for work, I know it's hard to balance work and life. Because I travel so much, I constantly find myself watching the behavior of other people. The variety of personalities always astounds me.

During a recent two week stint where I spoke at five different engagements in 4 different states, I couldn't help but zero in on individuals who couldn't sit still.

Cell phone and impassioned discussions with work counterparts fill the air as the talkers stride down the airport halls. I've heard individuals have cell phone conversations in bathroom stalls, along the street and during their grocery shopping excursions. I swear competitions will evolve around who has the fastest draw off the belt in answering that urgent ring.

Here Are My Two Important Questions For You to Answer:

1. Do we really have to be that available?
2. What happened to "down" time?

During the fourteen day tour of bookings, other work surfaced. Now faced with handling the keynote and training sessions as well as those business items piling up at home, stress continued to mount.

How did I know I was stressed?

I woke up at 3:00 AM five nights in a row to make sure I hadn't over slept the 6 AM wake-up call. No peaceful rest for me...there was business to attend to!

Is Your Desire to Succeed Harming Your Health?

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Our need to succeed and be perceived as competent, efficient and effective often interferes with our duty to take care of our bodies, minds and families. In fact, Fast Company's magazine recently cited research indication that only 1 out of 10 people would actually change their lifestyle if they knew they were going to die without the making the necessary changes.

For example, a good friend of mine, Jake, recently suffered a severe heart attack. He was healthy one moment and in the hospital the next. When the physician told him to take six weeks off work, Jake's immediate response was "I can't! The backlog of work will be too much and probably give me another heart attack from the stress of playing catch up!" The physician, with obvious misgivings, shortened the recovery period to two weeks and included strict dietary instructions.

He was making the conscious choice to put his work over his own health. Now what are you committed to?

Here Are 8 Commitments To Help You Achieve A Positive Lifestyle Today:

1. Take inventory of what makes you genuinely happy. As you list each item, evaluate what you do every day to ensure that joy remains solidly in your life. Also list things you do that jeopardize your ability to be happy. Sometimes we are our own worst enemies and don't even know it.

2. Be accountable for the decisions you make. Every time you say "just a minute while I finish these e-mails" and you end up missing dinner with your spouse, understand you chose to stay "plugged in" to the business. It doesn't control you...you control your choices.

3. Learn to turn off the phone. Voice mail was created for a reason. Use it wisely.

4. Laugh at the absurdities that otherwise contribute to your stress level. A young lady in shorts, sitting next to me at the airport terminal, was the recent victim of a walk-by sneezing. Another passenger inadvertently spit on her leg in his convulsion. He ambled on oblivious. She, however, quietly dug in her purse and pulled out a tissue. She wiped her leg, careful to

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shield her actions from others... Except I caught her eye and we both howled with laughter. Bless her heart, she showed class in an awkward situation and exemplified the statement "Stuff happens...deal with it!"

5. Learn to say "NO" with love and affection. Only you know what your priorities and life goals are. Evaluate what others ask you to do, and then determine your response in terms of how it interfaces with your plans.

6. Find out how your behaviors affect the ones you love most. Sometimes a mirror held up before us can tell us more than what our mind eye chooses to rationalize. It may not be pretty, but at least you will have an honest starting point on which to make your lifestyle decisions.

7. Handle your business tasks correctly the first time you deal with them. Quite frequently I consult with clients who feel like the rats in the race are winning. They are overwhelmed by the volume of work they deal with so they do the same tasks over and over again. My advice is simple - slow down and check twice. Not a bad motto to live by.

8. Balance your high-tech and low-tech mentality. Using email exclusively only broadens the distance between us and our clients. Find ways to make your contact personal. A warm voice over the phone or a quick face to face visit can go a long way to cement a relationship. I've learned that it's the eyes, body language, and tone of voice that speaks volumes – imparting information that e-mail could never provide.

We have to define how far we are willing to push ourselves before we damage the positive aspects of our lives that give us true satisfaction and joy.

It's my choice. It's your choice... business as usual or live your life like you mean it. Choose well. If your choice is to live your life then check out my new book, *"Hitting Our Stride: Women, Work and What Matters"* at

www.karel.com

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Karel Murray (<http://www.Karel.com>) is a Certified Speaking Professional, author of "Hitting Our Stride: Women, Work and What Matters" and business trainer who helps women entrepreneurs and executives resolve interpersonal issues and balance their work/personal lives. Now, you can listen to her exciting, free interviews that will help you maintain and sustain a healthy business and a healthy lifestyle at <http://www.JustForAMomentPodcast.com>