

How to Regain Your Life Balance

(Editor's note: The following article was authored by Sharone Bar-David, president of Bar-David Consulting and a leading Canadian expert on workplace incivility, based in Toronto, ON)

Is your life out of balance? Here's a very partial list that will help you answer that question:

- 🍁 You feel trapped
- 🍁 You feel you're constantly pulled in different directions
- 🍁 You're 'always juggling'
- 🍁 You can't manage to do anything in a deeply satisfying manner
- 🍁 You have a constant sense of being in a rush
- 🍁 You feel a sense of emptiness at the end of a seemingly very busy week
- 🍁 Life seems like a never-ending 'to do' list
- 🍁 You are cranky, whiny, stressed and overall not a person with whom you, nor anyone else for that matter, would like to spend time

If you find yourself agreeing with some or many of these points, here's what you can do about it:

1. Examine your purpose. Before you decide to change anything, you need to know where you're going. What do you want to be said about you at your 80th birthday celebration? What are the key elements that will make you say at that time: "Yes, I've lived a life worth living!" Reflect on this, and then write it all down in great detail.

2. Commit. Whatever it is that you want to say at age 80, commit to it now. Do not wait to be shaken by an illness or some other catastrophe. Besides, who's to guarantee that you will ever reach 80? What if you only have one remaining year of life?

3. Time block. When it comes to leading a purposeful life, time is often our biggest enemy. No matter how difficult, create 'time blocks' in your schedule that are dedicated solely to activities that are 'compass-based'. It might be a five-minute time block before you start your day, dedicated to reading inspirational material. Or an hour once a week dedicated to a hobby or passion. Whatever it is, you owe it to yourself to create anchors of sanity and equanimity in the midst of chaos.

4. Convert. Often we do meaningful things in a non-meaningful way. For example, we visit our elderly parents but are rushing through the visit without ever being present. If you want to say at that 80th celebration that you were a 'caring child to your parents', convert these visits right now: when you visit them, exercise mindfulness and presence. This will cost you no extra time, but oh what a difference it will make to you – and them!

Keep doing the above activities until you regain your balance. And continue 'converting' regularly: examine your daily activities and ask yourself which of these are you doing in a hurried, non-purposeful way? How can you convert these activities, one by one, into their rightful place as meaningful occurrences in a focused life tapestry? 🍁