



Work-Care Balance

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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It was one of those crazy weeks where you wonder how on earth you are going to get everything done.

I had just returned from my grandson's graduation in Saskatoon, which was lovely, but this also meant that I had been out of the office for several days. I knew that the mail would be piled up at the door and my inbox would have several hundred new emails demanding attention.

My youngest son, who has been accepted in the Social Work program at the College, had agreed to begin working as part-time administrator in my office for the fall. He knew that I was feeling a little overwhelmed and offered to travel back with me and spend a week learning and helping with the catch up in between looking for accommodations for his family.

We knew that our time together was precious and that we had to take advantage of every snippet between clients as well as waking hours after they were all gone. It was late night after late night.

When my daughter-in-law arrived, she pitched right in by buying groceries and preparing meals while Mark and I worked steadily on the "to do" list.

By the end of the week there had been both good progress at work which was satisfying but I was absolutely exhausted! Even though it was early afternoon when Mark and family left for Saskatoon to begin packing for the move, I crawled right into bed and slept for hours. When I woke up, I did feel more like myself but decided to commit the rest of the weekend to self-care.

My home was instantly converted in my mind into a day spa. The "to do" lists" were not allowed to have any priority. What is normally a hasty morning showers were replaced by long, leisurely soaks in the tub with bath salts that had been received as a Christmas gift. Simple but nutritious meals were prepared quickly and enjoyed slowly. New but previously neglected magazines became a pleasant alternative to reading books and journals on heavier topics.

And talk about rest - I didn't use or need an alarm but instead allowed my body to determine when it was time to wake up.

We all talk about the importance of balance in our lives and yet we seldom practice what we preach. Imagine what would happen if you always drove your vehicle at full throttle without doing any maintenance? It wouldn't take long until it would break down.

It's time to re-evaluate your choices again. Are you working too hard without healthy breaks? Or perhaps you are taking too many breaks without doing any work?

Good health comes from a combination of hard work and self-care.

The goal for this week is to plan and consciously practice "balance" in your life.