The One Rule to Achieving Work-Life Balance

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Would you like to know the "one rule to creating balance in your life"?

Here it is – "There is no one rule!"

It's a recipe, or rather a combination of things that help you achieve the life you desire. However, there is one truth, and that truth is that the *quality of your life depends on the people in your life.*

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Imagine you live your life in one room, and that one room has only one door. Now imagine this door is an "Enter Only" door, "No Exit!" Whoever comes through this door will be in your room and your life – forever! They can never get out.

Luckily, this is a metaphor, but let's assume for a moment it is true. If so, would you be more selective about the people that you let into your life? Everyone I've ever talked to has said, "oh yeah, definitely!"

So the question then is: Why aren't we more selective? In fact I would argue that the "Room Principle" is more than a metaphor. Think for a moment about someone who was once in your life, but now they are no longer part of it. Think of their name. Remember how they created chaos in your

life. Maybe they were angry or toxic or just difficult to be around. Take a moment: Do you have someone in mind?

Well, if they're still in your head, they're still in your in your room, because every decision you make in the future will be based in part on past experiences you had with this person. Neuroscientist Dr. Daniel Amen says, *"Significant input that is received in your brain triggers neural activity that cannot simply be erased."* In other words, their fingerprints are all over your brain.

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This means that if you want to create your best life, you need to learn how to screen entry into your room. For this, I recommend the "Doorman Principle." The "doorman" guards entry into your room and your life. This is your conscious and subconscious mind. It is a process of thought and feelings to help you determine whether your door should remain closed or be opened to allow someone entry into your life.

The first thing you need to do is train your doorman on your values. This is important, because you want to allow people into your room who have values that are resonant with yours. They don't have to be the same values, but they can't be dissonant or incongruent with yours. When I ask people to name their top 5-7 values, you can generally hear crickets. So here's a great technique to begin the training: I recommend you start with your "deal breakers." These are people in your room with incongruent behaviors. These are things you refuse to allow into your room and into your life from now on. They may be things like being toxic, exhibiting excess drama or not being truthful or positive. They are things you just can't stand to be around. When you start understanding these, it's easier to move towards things you do want around you.

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Understanding your values and training your Doorman will help you screen all the future people who try to gain entry into your room, but what do you do with some of the negative or toxic people that are already there?

Here are two great techniques to use:

First is “Benign Neglect.” This is where you gradually reduce contact and interaction with someone. Assuming you don’t want to burn bridges, but you do want to remove yourself from the relationship, a gradual dis-entanglement over a period of time is very effective. This works even when you don’t want it to. Think about someone you really did like but with whom you lost touch over the years. This generally happens through *unplanned* benign neglect. Now, imagine achieving this with a plan.

The second way to help you address people in your room you wish you hadn’t allowed entry to is through “Homeopathic Doses.” A homeopathic dose is the minimum dose necessary to treat a problem. In this case, it’s about dealing with people in your room by structuring your interaction in very small doses.

The takeaway to consider: People can effect your happiness if you let them. The secret to not letting them, is to curate the room you desire because the quality of your life depends on the people in your life.

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