

Striking a Balance: WORK-LIFE COACHING for LIBRARIANS

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Tips and Advice to balance work and home life

- TIME MANAGEMENT
 - at work
 - at home
 - with friends
 - with self



Tips and Advice to balance work and home life

- LEARN TO ADOPT AND ACCEPT CHANGE
- HAVE A POSITIVE ATTITUDE
- UNPLUG
- VOLUNTEER WORK



THANK YOU AND HOPE YOU
LEARNED SOMETHIND FROM
WHAT I SHARED



Striking a Balance : Work-Life Coaching for Librarians

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TIPS FROM A RETIRED BUT NOT TIRED LIBRARIAN

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Well I was honoured and grateful when my colleagues in the ASLP Board asked me to share with you my recipe for a better work-life balance. They said I am in a position to do this because I was able to raise a pretty and loving daughter single-handedly and at the same time working full-time librarian and doing some volunteer works. My husband passed away when my daughter was only 9 years old and from then on I was a single parent. Well, I don't really have a recipe for it – for me work-life balance is just simple to be happy with what you are doing either at work or in your life. Just have a simple, happy and invigorating work-life balance. How I attained it – well I will give you some tips.

During my early years in the profession the term or expression work-life balance was not yet famous or never heard of. The term or expression work-life balance was first used only in the United Kingdom in the late 1970s – to describe the balance between an individual's work and personal life. In the United States it was first used in 1986.

For me if you are happy with your work and with your life then you are having a balance with your work and life. If you are not happy or satisfied with your work (work environment, colleagues and salary) and you are still young and energetic well it's time to scout for another job that you feel you will enjoy and grow in your chosen profession. If you are not satisfied with your work it will not only affect your performance and the way you deal with your clientele and officemates but will also affect your private life including your love life. If you are over stressed – it will lead to sickness so better look for a new job – Health is wealth.

When I started to work in the early 70s never heard of or did not use the term work-life balance. Had it been used before for me it will be **work-study-life balance** and not only **work-life balance**. Because, I was still in college when I started working as library assistant at the UP Main Library. I was accepted with the promise that I will continue and finish my degree. I was then a full-time employee and continue my studies in the late afternoon till 9 pm.

Well the roads I travelled to reach where I am now were not all concrete and smooth. There were bumps and rocky roads along the way. Sometimes I stumbled down because of the rough roads and toxic people around but I learned to stand up and kick - these made me stronger and better. So when you stumbled down stood up and kick for a better you. Huwag ho kayong magmokmok sa isang tabi dahil nasaktan kayo. Cry as long as you want but after you released all your anger and bad feelings move on and continue with your life.

The tips I can share with you are: first and most important for me is

TIME MANAGEMENT

The key to effective time management is understanding the difference between urgent and important tasks.

Urgent tasks demand your immediate attention, but whether you actually give them your attention may or may not matter.

Important tasks matter, and not doing them may have serious consequences for you or others.

For example – Answering the phone is urgent

- Going to dentist is important
- Picking your children up from school is both urgent and important
- Reading funny emails or checking facebook is neither urgent or important

The distinction between urgent and important is the key to prioritising your time and your workload whether at work or at home.

I learned the value of time in my first job – we have to be on our post at least 15 minutes before the opening time of the library. It was now in my system to be on time in whatever I do. Even with the current traffic situation I see to it that I will be on time with the appointment that I have to attend to whether it is official or meeting friends for bonding time and chika-chika. If you are on time – you will feel comfortable and relax. It is better to wait than to be waited upon. For me, **punctuality** is very important in time management. Start the day right by being on time.

We have to learn to **prioritize** things – because you cannot do everything at the same time unlike with millennials now a days they tend to multi-tasks.

Have a schedule of your activities so you can track down what needs to be finished first. If you have deadlines to meet – do not wait for the deadline to do your job. If you can do it ahead of the deadline the better. Less stressed and less wrinkles and everybody happy. Avoid cramming – coz it will add wrinkles and you will not look good chilax lang para beauty forever.

If your boss ask you to do something and ask you how long can you finish it, If you can do it in a week tell him you can do it in 10 days so you have buffer in case of

emergency. There is no need for you to rush but you have to finish it before the deadline that you gave para may plus factor ka na you can finish your job ahead of schedule. Para paraan lang po yan. Learn also to say no – if you think it is not part of your job and somebody must do it say so – huwag matakot.

Well nasabihan naba kayo ng boss nyo na matigas ang ulo nyo? Naranasan ko po na masabihan na matigas ang ulo kasi hindi ako sumunod sa gusto nya. As long as you think na tama kayo ay huwag kayong matakot. Ika nga pag nasa katwiran ipaglaban mo.

Learn to delegate some routine tasks to other staff – you cannot do everything so try to train somebody whom you can delegate some of your tasks (clerical ones)

Leave on time at your work place – if you will stay late they will think you cannot do your job on time so bawal mag overtime ng walang bayad hahaha.

Time Management does not only apply to our work – it also apply at home with our family and friends. We have to allot time to our family and friends and not only work work – All work and no play makes Alice a dull librarian. If you have no time off from work you will get bored and burned out. Enjoy every minute of your life whether at work or at home.

You also have to schedule your activities at home – kailan maglalaba, mamalengke, magluluto, cleaning the house etc. Wala po kaming kasambahay so kami kami lang ang nagtutulungan sa gawaing bahay. When my husband was still alive – he will do the marketing and washing of clothes on weekend – I will do the cooking sometimes siya na rin magluluto pag sinisipag siya.

My weekends are usually reserved for the family and for friends – we have to spent quantity time with our family even though how busy we are. Find time to go somewhere with your family or eat out for lunch or dinner. Are there mothers here who cook? Do you cook everyday? Some tips for those cooking mothers – what I usually do on weekend - I cook 3 to 4 dishes good for the week and place them in the freezer in a serving size container. So need to cook every day. For veggies you can prefer it on the day itself kasi hindi po maganda pag na frozen na. You save time for cooking- init-init nalang po.

As we add chapters to our life – we also add circle of friends – so we have different circle of friends (high school and college days and colleagues in the profession and former officemates). We should find time to keep in touch with them once in a while because it adds spice to our life to reminiscent what we have done before especially the silly things that happened before like going direct to work without sleep after having a night out. The different funny experiences at work with officemates and bosses and so on.

It is easy to balance work and life when you are still single you can go anywhere with your friends. In the late 70s –with my officemates we usually went out of town once in a

while. We will leave Friday afternoon and be back Sunday afternoon or early Monday morning. Since airfare during that time was high so land travel lang kami either in Nasugbu, Batangas, Laguna, Bulacan, Bataan or Pampanga. We go different places because we are all single and nbsb (no boyfriend since birth) lahat. Gala lang and peg pag payday. Sometimes kasama pa yong immediate boss naming. kunsintidor po yoon. Until now after more than 4 decades - we still find time to see each other once in while maski 3 nlang kami natira kasi ung iba maagang kinuha ni Lord mas mabait daw po sila. We call our self the ORIG -

If you have a family of your own - - your first priority now is your family. Your going out and meeting friends will be lessen but do not loose contact with them. Always keep in touch with them – a simple greetings on their birthdays and other special occasions will be greatly appreciated and mean a lot to them. Even without any occasion just a simple how are you and miss your company is enough to keep in touch with them. Now with the social media like fb and instagram – it is more easy to get connected with friends and relatives all over the world.

The same with our family – to our parents (kung buhay pa) and siblings - Send simple good morning everyday. When my mother was still alive (my father died early at the age of 50 years old) – we spent every Sunday with her – nag lalaro ng bingo chikahan, treat her for lunch and go to places and so on.

Last in time management

The most important is - **Have time for yourself** – pamper yourself once in a while Have a relaxing massage, facial, body scrub. Or just find time to unwind, meditate just by yourself. You can see a movie, window shopping and so many things to do...

Learn to be alone coz in the long run your children will have a family of their own and you will be alone unless you want to be with them but it is good to be independent.

You are not sure if you will get along with your son or daughter in law.

Pursue your interest - How are you at work is strongly influence by how are you outside work. Away from work, pursue your interest passionately. Even if these passions are not related to your work, your enjoyment of life will reflect on your disposition when you are at work. Enjoy your hobbies – for me I do handcrafting activities (like making greeting cards, gift tags, crocheting shawls and scarves and many more).

Another tip -

CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Learn to adapt and accept CHANGE with a smile.

According to Buddhist master Suzuki, a crucial principle we all need to learn is to accept change. “Without accepting the fact that everything changes, we cannot find perfect composure. But unfortunately, although it is true, it is difficult for us to accept it. Everything changes, It’s the fundamental law of the universe. Yet, we find it hard to

accept it. Suzuki further says: that in whatever you do, it should be an expression of the same deep activity. We should appreciate what we are doing.

Many times at work we are under very short deadlines as unexpected requests arise all the time. If your attitude is always “sorry – cannot do it” you will not be given the opportunity to work on something big when it arises. Take chances and challenge yourself and you will be surprised at how much you can really accomplish in a day... You are stronger than you realize.

Like us baby boomers – with the onset of new technology we have to embrace the changes that the new technology brought to our life or we will be left behind. As a baby boomer, I consider myself lucky because I had previous trainings with computers and was able to experience to work with different types of computers before libraries embraced them. I experienced to work from second generation (1947-1962) – the UNIVAC (Universal Automatic Computer and IBM – International Business Machine – these computers have storage media as disk and tapes and printers for output to third generation using MS Dos as operating system then came windows, desk tops, laptops, tablet, iphones and smart phones. I remember some of my officemates were very hesitant in using desktops computers and even my former directors – he will always call on me saying that the screen is all black all the icons are gone or the printer is not responding and so on... yon pala hindi naka plug ang printer. The millennials – you are born with the new technology – baby palang me hawak ng gadgets. Be careful in using gadgets.

The next tip -

Have a positive attitude

Smile and be happy all the time. Do not bring your problem at home with you when you go to work and vice versa. Because this will affect your moods and attitude towards your officemates and clientele.

Problems are always there and this will not be given to us if we cannot handle them.

Be positive that every problem has a solution and these are only trials to make us stronger. He has his own ways of helping us in solving our problems just ask and you shall receive ika nga. I experienced to have a zero balance when my husband got sick but with His help we were able to survived the trials. Until now I do not know how we survived the situation. Help will just knock on our door. Pag uwi ko makikita ko sa ref may whole chicken – I'll ask my daughter saan galing yon – ibinigay po ni Manang – our neighbour - dapat niluto na nya biro ko lang. Sometime – my mother will call me and give something ayon ganoon lang po ang buhay... We have tricycles but due to budget situation sold out lahat pero I do not have regrets or ask the Lord bakit ganito I just pray for His guidance. Pag punta ko sa office – ihahabilin ko lang yong daughter ko sa kapitbahay kasi tulog pa at yong school nya lunch time. Pero she knows what to do pag gising nya. Nakahanda na yong breakfast and lunch at yong baon nya. She knows to

get dress up for school at 11:00 am for the service. That's why my daughter learned to be independent early.

The next tip--

UNPLUG

New technology has helped our lives in many ways. But it also created expectation of constant accessibility. The work day never seems to end. Just shut your phone off and enjoy the moment out of work. Make quality time through quantity time. By not reacting to updates from work, you will develop a stronger habit of resilience. Resilient people feel a greater sense of control over lives while reactive people have less control and are more prone to stress.

Pag walang stress everybody is healthy and happy. Pag wala sa opis do not answer your phone if the calls is from your office.

Before our Admin usually stays in the office on weekends and will call us to ask something and so on – at first I answered her but later on I just ignore it and if she asked me the following Monday why I did not answer her call – I told her – I am with my family and my work is only from Monday to Friday. You can ask me now but do not call me on weekends.

Like us at the ASLP Board – we have a group chat and usually sa gabi active and kicking coz they are all working – sometime even 12midnight alive na alive pa ang group chat – so if it is my sleeping beauty time (around 11:30PM) – I will just silence my fon. I remember Mila complained that her fon keeps on alerting for new message and she can't sleep so I told her, just put her fon on silent mode and she can check the messages the following morning. Me sleeping time kasi ang baby boomers unlike the millennials na you can stay awake the whole night and can also sleep the whole day.

Last tip –

VOLUNTEER WORK

Do some volunteer works – even if it is not related to our job.

I am doing some volunteer work with KADIWA sa PAGKAPARI Foundation, helping and caring for the sick and retired diocesan priests.

And also with Eymard Formation Center – by attending their mass for the priests every 2nd Thursday of the month and helping in their activities in the seminary.

When I was operated and needed 12 bags of blood before and during the operation They were just a phone call away. They come in full force to donate blood and offer prayers for my safe operation and early recovery.

A careful balance of life long activities and short-term growth creating and fulfilling activities is the best way to go.

And remember more time doesn't always equal a happier or more pleasurable life if you don't fill it with something you enjoy.

That's all that I can share with you after working for 42 years in different types of libraries here and abroad (academic, national/public and special libraries)

I am now a retired but not tired librarian 'coz after my retirement from Goethe-Institut Philippinen – I am still active with the ASLP Board as one of the advisers and I am a member of the ALCU- Committee on Accreditation (Association of Local Colleges and Universities)

During my spare time I am happily engaged in my hobby – kumikitang hobby
My hobby is handcrafting - like I do greeting cards, gift tags, crochet shawls, scarves, baby dresses, placemats and coasters and many more. Going to places with my daughter and sometimes with siblings and friends.

They said retirement is boring but not for me parang mas busy ako ngayon. You have to find ways and means to make yourself busy and happy with what you are doing.

Sometimes people when they learned that I am already retired – they will look at me again and say mam bata nyo pa di kayong mukhang retired na – nakaka happy po to received those encouraging comments...

So just smile and be happy for a younger looking you.

Look good and feel great always. Avoid stress and especially toxic people.

Connect with friends – and with your former officemates

And most important – go to places – travel as long as you can, walk everyday

I love to travel – sa office before they call me Dora – the explorer kasi lagi daw po ako nsa viaje and sporting a backpack. For me it is easy to use backpack because your hands are free so pag may nanloko madali nyo masampal.. joke lang po.

I'M HAPPY TO BE RETIRED WITH A LOVING DAUGHTER!

Maraming salamat po for lending me your ears and hope you pick something from what I shared with you.

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