

## **IT'S TIME TO TEAR DOWN THE WALL THAT SEPARATES WORK AND LEISURE**

It is time to tear down the work ethic wall separating work and enjoyment and replace it with a seamless Development Ethic. The dictionary definition of 'work' doesn't include the word 'money': "activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result". Anything we do to creatively use and develop our natural attributes – for pay or passion – adds to the development and progress of the individual and society.

Generations ago the work ethic built a wall between work and leisure. People on the working side had no idea what leisure was all about. They thought it meant laziness, slacking off, even a competitor to work. In essence, a waste of productive working time.

Then 21st century life began to speed up, changes happening daily in every facet of work and life. Stress, pressure, technology and change began to weigh heavily on work productivity and mental health. Stress and burnout had become the number one human and business cost.

Business saw mental problems as a sign of weakness. "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen". Get stronger. Go to a gym, get fit. "A fit worker is more productive". Problem is only about 7 per cent of the population enjoy keeping physically fit. Probably less, when it comes to the workforce.

Technology made working at any time 24/7, pushing the wall further into the leisure space. Work life balance is a nice concept but it's time-based.

What's the answer? While you can't deficit-budget time you can deficit-budget the energy needed to sustain the resilience to deal with stress. You can build your own renewable energy plan.

The source is found in any experience so enjoyable that it takes your mind completely away from your stresses – be it for ten minutes, half a day or a holiday. It can be a physical or mental interest. Any freely chosen creative experience you enjoy so much that you are "in the zone" is, in a word, "energizing". The more frequent the energizing experiences, the greater your resilience to cope and reduce the risk of burnout. Better still it makes work more productive (and a happier boss too).

In effect work and enjoyment becomes a continuous process of work life harmony – a harmonious mix of energizing interests and energy-draining responsibilities at work and

in life. The outdated work ethic wall becomes replaced with, effectively a Development Ethic - a seamless process of progressive and continuous development, utilizing a continuous flow of energy-in and energy out.

The pain of prolonged excessive stress becomes replaced with a natural, personal energy resource for a life in which you are better able to enjoy being your true self.