



EmpowerChangeNow Newsletter

Life Transformations—empowering change

August, 2008

Volume 2, Issue 8

Life Transformations was founded in 2002 by Joanne Aaronson. Joanne's mission is to foster empowerment in the individual to achieve his/her ideal life including relationships, career, and financial situation. Or for the executive, to achieve Enlightened Leadership to empower their best organization possible. The [Empower Change Now Newsletter](#) was started in 2007 to support this mission by sharing information about the underlying paradigm shift necessary to empower change in the individual for unlimited possibilities.



Welcome!

Being self-aware and knowing when you're ready for some downtime is as important as having an attitude of "commitment to the job". This month I emphasize articles regarding balance and how it helps us to maintain perspective, stay healthy and keep up an even pace of productivity. Apply these capabilities in your life for both personal and professional success! I welcome your comments or experiences with this material.

**Always in light,
Joanne Aaronson, PMP, Ct Reiki, Ct EIIS**

The Role of Disease in Our Lives

It's an interesting question. Just what is the role of disease in our lives? If we break the word down, it gives us some perspective. We start off from a good place – that of being in balance or "ease" and then go out of balance or "dis"-ease. So one definition of *disease* is that it means the body is out of balance. What else does it tell us? Certainly, when we're not well, we slow down. Perhaps there are things we are not looking out for. Perhaps we have been working too hard and we need rest, but just don't do it. Does a cold come on to slow us down? Or if one doesn't listen perhaps something a bit stronger, such as bronchitis sets in? I know of people where it takes pneumonia and a visit to the hospital to slow them down. But "disease" finally does slow them down. Would it be easier to just "listen to our bodies"?

Often we get major illnesses as a time for reflection. I know that during my brother's serious illness when he had to have half of his stomach removed, he realized he needed to change professions. At that point in life, suddenly the flashiness of the LA lifestyle complete with a home in Beverly Hills, the associated bills, the 911 Porche and the job that he hated that enabled it all weren't important any more. He totally shifted his perspective and got rid of it all and started over based on his love of music. It hasn't been easy, but he's a lot happier. I recently met a woman that during her convalescence with a difficult pregnancy that required total bed rest for many months, she re-evaluated her life. During this time, she decided to give up corporate America and launch a line of specialty teas and is in the process of making her vision a reality with an on-line business. She's very excited about the promise of creating her dream. I would be remiss if I didn't mention my own struggle with elbow tendonitis that has slowed me down over the last few months. For me, I know that I also need to move away from my current position in corporate America and launch full-time with my Life Transformations business. Trying to work full-time and launch a business has taken its toll on my health. After all, I teach the importance of balance – I have to do it myself. I don't teach these concepts because I'm perfect. It's because I've learned the lessons very well! (I plan to go full-time this fall so the time is coming! I'm listening!)

In summary: what is your body telling you? Do the aches and pains mean something? Do you need to make changes in your life? Are you unhappy with your job? If we create our thoughts and our world comes from what we put out mind on, then we create our world one thought at a time. Why would we create pain for ourselves, unless there is a purpose for it? What lesson is there for us? What are we supposed to learn from this experience? Ask these questions to learn and give up the pain and struggling.

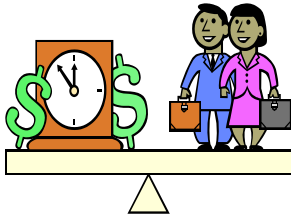
Please share your experiences with me at joanne@empowerchangenow.com

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The Gospel of Work Life Balance

I came to work at a government program one day as a consultant. My prior job had been cut due to budgetary considerations. According to my life philosophy, everything happens for a reason. As I started this new, but temporary position, I wondered what "my lesson" would be there. It didn't take long to find out. My desk was situated along a hallway that was near the printing room which made it a common walk way. I quickly had people stopping by to visit and very soon was hearing stories of their lives and of their work situations. The stories all had a common theme. These people were working long hours, nights and weekends and even holidays. There were stories of people having hundreds of "extra" hours banked but not able to take them neither as compensatory, nor as vacation time as would seem the norm in most places.



Remember:

- **Dedication to the job is important**
- **But so is your health!**
- **Stay balanced!**

At first, I thought it was just isolated examples, but there were more and more people and more stories with this same theme. I began to ask a few managers about the number of staff. Was the program fully staffed? "Yes", they said. Oh, so why were people working these crazy hours? I began to investigate! I asked other questions; such as, were they charging all of these hours to the customer? It turned out that they were only charging a standard 40-hour workweek. Now no one has to tell me about salaried employees and the bit about getting paid for the job and not by the hour, which implies that some degree of extra time is expected. That being said, it is also true that there has to be a limit to how much time is given to an employer otherwise, there's no personal life. That's where the "work-life balance" comes into play. Sure, the "job" needs to get done, but there must be something wrong if the program is fully staffed and people are working so many extra hours. Why were so many people all asking me to help them as if I were some kind of white knight coming in on a horse to save them? I was listening to them, that's true, but why me? And what was the real issue here?

I heard stories of people gaining 30 pounds over the last year that they had worked on this program as there was no time to eat properly, exercise or relax. There was a person that got very sick. Others worked with bronchitis or other reasons that should have sent them straight to bed. I kept asking myself why anyone would risk their health like that. No one should be that irreplaceable or indispensable. Seems like a heart attack in the making to me. I certainly understand crunch periods, but this seemed like much more than that. Was management condoning this behavior or were there lots of office warriors working on this program? Why were people sacrificing their health for their jobs? So many questions but I had no real answers. Images of the hero mentality came into my mind.

Here's the picture: many of these people were young, impressionable and believed that they needed to work night and day to get ahead. No one was guiding them otherwise. I was listening so I was told these stories. I became a Mecca; a fountain in the desert. People were almost begging me. What could I do besides listen to them and suggest that they did have options.

**If you decide that you want to evaluate a job or career change,
check in with me regarding my upcoming
Creating Your Ideal Career Workshop (estimated date is November, 2008).
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Want to know more?

We're on the web:

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Balance Your Life Corner

It's almost the end of summer, so I thought I'd give you another easy recipe that's healthy and fast. There's a new Asian grocery store that opened near me and they have wonderful frozen Cornish hens (2 per package) for about \$5.00! So I bought several packages to keep in the freezer. They make a great meal for myself (for several nights) or for guests (for 2-4 people depending on serving size).

2 Cornish hens

your favorite spices—I like herbes of provence (which is basically thyme, basil, rosemary and other fowl type spices) and then I add garlic. My mother does an orange marmalade rather than spices so either way—prepare the hens.

Roast on 375F for about an hour in an open pan. Cover for about 45 min. then take the cover off for the last 15 min. to brown.

My favorite additions are Rice mixes such as Rice/Lentils—just fix according to the box.

I love the Trader Joe's frozen root vegetables (they come in their own sauce) - they're delicious. Enjoy!

Continuation....

In addition, here's what I did. I asked the Program Manager if he was aware of the hours these people were working. He responded that he was but he indicated that it "was isolated" and felt my assessment that it was pronounced was off base. Coincidentally, there was an article in the PM Networking Magazine that month on *Crunch Time* that featured a story on why it isn't productive for people to work long hours consistently. I made about 15 copies of this article and left it under the door of the key managers on this program at the end of the day after many of them had gone. I wondered if people would know where the article had come from, but took a chance that they would accept the message. I didn't hear a thing the next day. I wonder if people even read the article.

Oh, well, I tried. I did what I could. I didn't have any power or authority there. I investigated. I researched. I brought the issue up to management. In the end, it was up to each person to make a decision about their own life, how they wanted to live it and whether it was time to move on to another more healthy environment. For me, it was only a temporary environment. Eventually, I found a permanent position and moved on to another program. I felt bad for those I left behind, but it was their choice. It takes effort to find another job, but there's no replacing one's health once it's lost.

In summary, if you find that your work life is out of balance and you are not able to take a day off here or there to relax... At some point reflex on whether this is just a Crunch Time, and temporary? Whether it's worth it to risk your health?

If you want to throw your personal life away?

If you want to see your children grow up or have personal time with friends?

How important extracurricular activities are to you like sports, dancing, hobbies, etc? Is it time to evaluate changing jobs or careers in order to get back into balance?

