

LIFEBALANCE

Creating the success and balance you want in life

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By Nicholas Bate

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INTRODUCTION

When I started Strategic Edge, a compass was a natural choice for our logo. We were after all about supporting the development of individuals; helping them 'find their way', realise and release their potential.

Now, years later, our logo has metamorphosed but its message is the same, as is our purpose: we all have enormous potential and increasingly each and every one of us wants to get at it. Many of us have already started and want to accelerate and build momentum. Whatever your current stage of personal development, this guide will help you to be successful, however you might define that (and if you want some help with defining success for yourself, we're going to be covering that, too).

In all my experience of teaching those whose goal is to do more and to be more, whatever their position or background, I've discovered that the real breakthrough comes when they understand their 'PersonalCompass'; a concept which we have developed over our twelve years of teaching to help individuals decide firstly what is important to them and secondly how to achieve it. Decision and action. Decision on its own is not enough. Action completes the change. But action without clarity (decision) can be futile.

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THE STRATEGIC EDGE PERSONALCOMPASS

Few of us would deliberately set out into uncharted territory without a compass - at worst we'd get lost and never achieve what we had set out to do, but equally we might take an unnecessarily long time to get there - and with no one to blame but ourselves.

And that's the challenge for life. There's clearly so much opportunity out there (e.g. fascinating, interesting relationships, financial independence, a world to travel, people to help, amazing children to support to independence, new ways to cook, learning to unicycle...), but how do we get at it? Some seem to get there but then lose it ("she has an amazing job but regularly falls ill because of stress"). Some seem to get there but at an inappropriate cost ("he's the MD of a prestigious company, but never saw the

children while they were growing up"). Some never even get near ("I'd love to do something in design, but..."). And where's there? ("I'm a multi-millionaire. I thought I'd got there. But I'm not happy"). And what's 'it'? It's certainly different things for different people. Oh and by the way it's not that we can't gain a lot from getting lost sometimes (I know I have); we'll find some fascinating inspiration along the way. It's just nice to know that you ARE lost, so that you can get back on (perhaps a new?) track. We need a compass for our lives. That's what we mean by PersonalCompass.

For real people with real relationships, real families and real challenges in real jobs.

In this guide I want to help you:

- Decide what you want; what is success for you? Because despite powerful messages from much of society it's not simply money and power and need to include neither.
- Create good, reliable methods (or 'strategies') for ensuring that success happens for you; in particular, the use of the Strategic Edge PersonalCompass.
- Realise that success will require work on your part but that it is absolutely, undoubtedly accessible.
- Time and time again individuals show just what is possible. And time and time again simple observation shows that this can be achieved independently of education and qualification, money, background and intelligence. It is not really necessary to quote all the great names we all know so well. We know that Albert Einstein

was written off as a poor student at school, we're aware that the Beatles were turned down many times and that Howard Schultz of Starbucks fame was rejected for venture capital over 200 times. Perhaps more usefully I will mention just a few examples of 'ordinary people'.

'Ordinary' people change their lives, massively for the better, too.

In these examples, for simplicity and privacy, I have left out names and changed some details. The intent is to remind you that real people i.e. you and I can change our lives - if we so wish - dramatically for the better. Here I describe each person's role and the changes that were made using the concepts of the Strategic Edge PersonalCompass.

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And I use the term 'ordinary here in the sense of non-famous. They are clearly no less important nor interesting than the 'brand names'.

Director

A senior executive was able to 're-invent' himself. He used the Strategic Edge PersonalCompass concept following the break-down of his marriage to re-establish the balance between work and the rest of his life. He has successfully re-built a strong bond with his children, created clear boundaries between work and the rest of his life and started a workable fitness routine.

Graduate trainee

After initially focussing on work as something simply to clear debts, she re-built genuine motivation for work and decided to set new higher personal standards for herself including giving up smoking and getting earlier student debts under control.

PersonalCompass gave a structure for this process.

Middle Manager 1

After consistent poor feed-back from his teams about, in essence, his 'control-freak' style, he used PersonalCompass to establish a credible leadership approach.

Middle Manager 2

He'd 'been there', 'done that': car, house, family, money, affairs. His PersonalCompass led him to the one he was lacking - contribution.

Will it work?

I've been in the business of teaching and developing for most of my working career. I've been doing it in a very focused sense for the last fourteen years. And I know that these ideas work. How? It has worked for me and for so many of the people I have taught on so many courses, many of whom have stayed in

touch. In addition, I regularly receive e-mails from those who have at last made the changes they wanted to make. I'm delighted to be their catalyst. Yes, it will work for you.

Life's a lot easier with a compass

With a geographical compass, there are of course four essential compass points: North, South, East and West. At a particular location and at a particular time, travelling towards a specific compass point will give specific results. Perhaps, for example, if we travel North we get to work, if South we get to a pleasant holiday location. Importantly if we need a holiday it doesn't matter how fast North we travel; we are not going to get that holiday. And however attractive South might be it would be unusual to want to spend all our time there. Clearly, choosing the right direction is important, but also getting the right direction at the right time and right place or balance is vital too. With our personal

development, it is exactly the same. Direction is key, balance is key. That's what our PersonalCompass is for; to support our key life decisions. Perhaps ones such as:

Where do I take my career next?

We've started a family, how will that affect our earnings?

I've got some new exciting work responsibilities. But I've also got a new baby daughter with whom I want to spend time. How do I do it?

I love being fit. And I love working hard and getting the rewards.

What's the 'correct' balance?

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In our PersonalCompass, there are six potential areas of focus and attention:

- Career
- Relationships
- Finance
- Fun
- Mind/body
- Contribution

Each direction is initially apparently independent of the others. Thus we can give considerable focus to our career (and perhaps only one aspect of that career: 'power') and ignore our health. But 'career' and 'health' are of course not independent of each other; they are actually highly interdependent. Who would disagree with the fact that their job very much affects their daily mood and health? This is the concept of the interdependence of the compass points. Similarly, we might realise

after a while that we have been focusing solely on our career our relationships have suffered, our finances are not as secure as they might be and we have certainly not had fun. This is the concept of the compass out of balance; pursuing one direction to the detriment of the others. Or we may pursue a life of pure 'fun' to make us 'happy', ignoring our relationships and physical health and realise that the latter are at least significant contributors to our happiness. This is the concept of the compass pointing in the wrong direction.

At any time you'll be focusing on any one of these directions: career, mind/body, finance, relationships, fun and contribution - maybe unconsciously and maybe inappropriately. And of course in reality no one direction should exclude the others. In reality we'll be seeing that we want balance across all of the compass points. So we do give attention to

each of our compass points but first consciously (e.g. what do I actually want out of my career?) and secondly whilst respecting the impact on my other compass points (e.g. and how might this affect my family?)

Getting the results you want and deserve

As with any area of personal development, there is of course a lot that we might cover. But I believe from working with thousands of very different people of different ages, backgrounds and cultures over the years I know what you want at this stage. You want to make some changes and you want to do it properly, but you also want some results quickly. So this guide is about being 'Brilliant at the Basics' as far as the PersonalCompass is concerned. It's about covering the ideas which will give you rapid, high pay-off returns and be a basis for further developmental work.

Brilliant at the Basics

So now it's time to give some conscious attention to each compass point in order to get the results you want. I'll do just as I do in my workshops; I'll ask questions which trigger the necessary thinking and give some broad solution areas. This guide won't be and cannot be highly individually prescriptive. Some of you may wish for more prescription; in which case the individual compass advanced follow-up guides will be helpful.

Or come on one of my workshops. But please initially simply see the power of attention to these subjects. Simply giving attention is maybe 70% of the solution. It will help you identify the actions which are necessary to get you to where you want to go.

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PERSONALCOMPASS POINT 1: CAREER

Introduction

The first PersonalCompass point we will consider is career: Career: how we earn money, how we spend much of our time each day, one way we contribute to society. For many, career is the one obvious compass point, the one that clearly ‘distinct’ part of their life; so distinct perhaps that it can begin to dominate to the detriment of other aspects. We shall see ultimately that we needn’t let career become too dominant in the balance of our compass; we will simply want it to take its rightful place. For now it’s an excellent place to start because of the significant time commitment it requires from most of us; we spend a large amount of our day in this area and it doesn’t matter whether it’s in a corporate role, running a beach bar or

parenting; it’s still our major commitment from a time perspective. Interestingly, for many this may then equate to being major in importance. However, that’s not necessarily the case as we shall see. One reason for studying the compass is to bring each aspect of our life into its true perspective, its true importance. Time spent on an activity does not necessarily equate to its importance in the big picture.

Take a moment to consider, where do you want your career to be in 3 years time? Go really ‘blue skies’ and leave aside the financial aspect (we will of course come back to this). Avoid continuing to read until you’ve given this some serious consideration. You might want to take a walk and reflect on this or brainstorm (jot down random ideas) or discuss with your partner or just let it tick over in the background for 24 hours. But please do give it some proper reflection before moving on.

You may come up with:

“exactly what I’m doing now” (E.g. 1)

“promoted” (E.g. 2)

“somewhere else” (E.g. 3)

“I don’t know” (E.g. 4)

“I’d love to <...>, but” (E.g. 5)

- If you have come up with a ‘clear’ goal, perhaps like one of the examples 1, 2 or 3, write down three actions to take this goal further. Make sure one goal is this calendar month and two are in the next six months to bring that consideration to reality. So, if for example, you wrote down ‘to get promoted’, what exactly do you need to start doing? E.g.
 - I’ll talk to my manager about what exactly I need to do to achieve promotion (and note when!)

- I’m going to book myself on a development programme so that my skills are strengthened (and note when!)
- If you don’t know (as in e.g.4), write down how you could begin to discover. E.g.
 - I have loads of friends in other businesses, I could talk to them for ideas (and note who and when).
 - I’ll read some biographies such as Anita Roddick, Business as Unusual (when will you buy it, when will you read it?).
- If you came up with something like e.g. 6 i.e. you do know what you’d like to do but you simply feel it wouldn’t be possible, go straight to ‘insights’.

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- And if you haven't yet answered the question or were not honest with yourself, do so now. Yes, I agree it's not that easy. That's why some people never get around to it and then bemoan their apparent 'lack of success'. If you feel really stuck, go to 'insights' for some inspiration.

Whose compass?

Sometimes, individuals will complain that they don't want to have a plan, never mind a 'whole compass' - remember if you're not using your plan then by default you're using someone else's plan; perhaps that of a teacher or parent or adviser or whoever. Certainly, don't 'dumb down' your Life.

Actions

You should now begin to feel that you're making progress and that's because you're taking action. Before you go to the next level of details in our actions, consider the following.

Insights

1. Very few people actively manage their career. Decide as from today to do so. Nobody else will manage your career - not your company, nor your career guidance specialist (no - not even them - to the level you want). It's down to you. And once you do, your career becomes even more exciting and rewarding. By manage your career we mean:

Decide specifically what you want to do with your working hours.

Decide not to be held back from anything you want to do.

Realise you can get the skills/qualifications you need. Because to get these all you need to do is to change your mind-set. And that is fully under your control.

2. Notice in point 1 how we mentioned the importance of 'mind-set'. Limiting beliefs can stop us from following our career dreams. Many of us have been conditioned to think about 'proper jobs' e.g. Law, Teaching, Medicine. These 'proper' jobs are valid and great for the right person. But building boats? Or Ayurvedic Medicine? Apparently, many of us believe "I couldn't do that". But if you really want to (and it's not an idle fantasy) you can. Or some sense an immediate barrier (e.g. to becoming a Director) and therefore decide there are things we cannot do. 'Everyone says I need a science 'A' Level so...Or some believe in 'the deferred life plan' i.e. work hard, put up with anything because one day... Start to become aware of the limiting beliefs that hold

us back. Yes of course there are real physical limitations. However those mental limitations are invariably a lot lower than the physical limitations.

3. 'Ought' is a word to be used with care. I 'ought' to do this... Always ask what might happen if I didn't. E.g. 'I ought to go to University. I guess'. Possibly. What might happen if I didn't? Would other areas be open to you? Is it not true that so many who go to university quote the 'university of life' as where they learnt their most important things?

4. Dharma - a Sanskrit word meaning 'Life Purpose'. Reminding us we all have a purpose in this life. Find it and we'll enjoy it and be well paid for it. Now you might say Wow, there's some concept. Is that all you're going to tell me? And the answer is yes. We'll study a lot more in the Career advanced guide. For now simply let that idea flow... that maybe there's something you are really good at,

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totally enjoy and could be well paid for. And you're probably en route to it now. But how much closer could you get?

5. Decide to be outstanding now. Sometimes people think "I'll give of my best when I've got my new job/I'm promoted/when I'm not so tired". No, do it now.

Make 'out-standing' your new wired-in calibration

You'll be well-positioned when you do start

Begin to really enjoy your job

6. Keep this thinking separate to money. We want to make a definitive distinction between work/career and money. Focusing solely on money will possibly send you down the wrong career path.

7. No positive change can occur without action. Thoughts, discussion, reading are all great things. However obviously tough it might be, things only happen once we take action.

8. Time spent does not necessarily equate to importance.

Actions

Now decide your actions again. Write them down.

PERSONALCOMPASS POINT 2: FINANCE

Introduction

As we have seen, career is for more people naturally a very important compass point. But, as we have also seen, unfortunately money can be a big distracter in getting this compass point 'right'. Early on one's career it seems so difficult to separate the role and its reward. Who hasn't (I have) taken a job/switched their career, just 'for the money' at some stage? We shall see ultimately that the power in getting the balance and direction we want and consequently setting our PersonalCompass correctly comes from separating these two factors: career (or as we have seen 'dharma') and finance (or as we shall see 'affluence') and considering them separately.

Actions

Take a moment to calibrate your current financial state on a scale of 1 - 10.

- Calibration 10 equates to your financial state being excellent. You know what comes in and what goes out. You know when you'll be financially independent and you're happy with that date. You're entirely financially knowledgeable yourself or you have good advisors and you trust them. There is little more you could do at this stage apart from firstly continuing to be aware of market considerations and financial regulations and secondly continuing to review.
- Calibration 0 - your finances are in a very poor state. You're regularly overdrawn; you don't know what comes in or out. As for financial planning, well. You realise that the thought of 'managing your finances' is an alien one.

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- Now write down 3 actions you could take immediately depending on your current calibration which would begin to close the gap.
 - E.g. Current Calibration o
 - (1) Start recording what comes in and out and to where
 - (2) Tear up one credit card
 - (3) Start saving £5/month
 - E.G. Current Calibration 9
 - (1) Review all current financial advice
 - (2) Improve savings (amount and scheme)
 - (3) Start a virtual stock portfolio
- Now write down longer term actions.
E.g. o Calibration
Read a financial advice book

7 Calibration

Set up and practice with a dummy stock market portfolio

Insights

- 1. Limiting belief(s).** For many individuals, they simply do not believe that they can get in control of their finances, never mind begin to develop financial independence. Decide now to realise that if this compass point is important for you, there is nothing to stop you achieving management of your finances very quickly and once you have achieved that, a plan for developing independence. Don't be held back simply by a poor belief.
- 2. There is often confusion between the two terms: 'Standard of Living' and 'Quality of Life'.** For many, these two terms seem to be equivalent. It's important to realise that they are not, certainly in the longer-term. By standard of living we mean level of

possessions, from hot-and-cold running water to central heating, from juicer to television to timeshare in Morocco to designer clothes. This list is a list of things. We want them because of what they give us. And we hope that is 'Quality of Life'. By 'Quality of Life' we mean living the life you want to live: fun, happiness, enjoyment. As you think about it, you will realise that they are not equivalent. Interestingly, for many, it dawn one day that their Standard of Living has become so high it is reducing their Quality of Life; the pressure of maintaining that level of possessions means they have little time to enjoy them or be themselves or do the simple things in life. Chase Quality of Life not Standard of Living.

3. Worry over 'control' and management. They are different. Don't worry, this won't turn you into a control freak. It'll simply give you more options.

4. Begin to start thinking about the bigger overall concept of affluence. We may not always be financially well off but we can be affluent in terms of rich relationships, health etc. true wealth for many comes when we stop thinking purely about cash or stock or the value of our house but in terms of the intangibles we have. The love of our children, going on a beautiful walk, the magic of a medieval building, a marvellous piece of theatre, helping an individual, baking a birthday cake for a special person.

5. Money and personal worth. Decide not to equate your personal worth with your level of earnings. Equate it with you and your level of contribution (see PersonalCompass point 6).

6. This is all about choice. In the end few of us are truly motivated by money (and if you doubt that let me assure you that most of the senior level coaching that I do revolves around this issue - "I have everything and yet nothing"). Money is a tool. Money gives us a choice. Money (itself) does not give us happiness. And you may want to read that last sentence one more time.

Actions

1. Manage your finances
2. Learn about your finances
3. Read

PERSONALCOMPASS POINT 3: MIND/BODY

Introduction

Write in bold above or even better on your morning wash mirror:

THIS MIND/BODY IS ALL I'VE GOT !

PersonalCompass Point 3 is mind/body.

This compass point reminds us to give consideration to our mind and body and realise they are firstly, in every sense, fundamental to everything we wish to achieve and secondly much more strongly inter-related than any of us might initially realise.

Oh yes, of course, you have a job and family and car, some money in the bank BUT its all dependent upon the state of your mind/body. When you are in great state - when you awake in the morning, saying Yes! another great day. When life's little challenges remain as little

challenges - you know you can do anything. But when you are in a poor state, well you know.

So, honestly, are you doing enough to look after it?

- Are you exercising it so that heart and lungs and muscles are in fantastic condition? And consequently you have the strength and stamina you need?
- Are you fuelling it well so that you have a 'clean' energy source which ensures you feel great all day, every day without recourse to artificial stimulants?
- Are you perhaps teaching it a language to stretch its neural networks and developing new memory skills and mind-mapping to open up new parts of the brain?
- Are you giving it good quality rest, sleep and fresh air so that it will be creative and energetic?

- Or are you a 'sofa slouch' or a 'couch potato'? A flight of steps leaves you dizzy. Your naked body frightens you! Your mind is cynical and closed. Curiosity is something which killed the cat; it's certainly not for you.
- Have you 'clicked' to mind and body being one? And realised the enormity of that?

Actions

Write down immediately 5 things you can do to improve. Not just mind, not just body. Here are a few examples to act as inspiration; nothing complex - simply achievable.

1. Walk every day; always take the stairs
2. Eat fruit and veg every day, every lunch/supper
3. Drink more H2o
4. Learn a language

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5. Do crosswords
6. Deliberately read outside your mainstream area. Read about past British Prime Ministers. Read about the science of tackling AIDS.
7. Use a stretch-band every day
8. Deliberately work hard to understand (not necessarily agree with someone else's strong viewpoint
9. Take time out in nature
10. Take a different route to/from work
11. Read some poetry: Spike Milligan to Deepak Chopra to Shelley
12. Learn 'Tai Chi
13. Learn to meditate
14. Learn chess and/or the game of 'Go'
15. Subscribe to National Geographic or New scientist magazine

16. Learn some Spanish cookery
17. Take up Water Colours
18. Join the National Trust/English Heritage and visit your local sites
19. Learn the Greek and Russian alphabets
20. Write a mini-book on a favourite topic
21. Start swimming again

Insights

1. Mind-body connection. Realise that mind and body are intimately linked. What we do to one clearly affects the other. Register:
 - our body gives us feed-back; a headache is not a failing of the mind/body system, it's simply a message that says: rest, look after yourself, slow down and take a break
 - as we strengthen our mind, we strengthen our body and vice versa

2. That although we started with career (PersonalCompass Point 1) as it seemed a natural place to do so, in fact mind/body is perhaps our base compass point. Without sound mind/body, how does anything else work for us?
3. Realise that as with all of the compass points, there is so much we might do, but once again simply decide to be brilliant at the basics.

Actions

Now, decide your actions.

LIFEBALANCE POINT 4: RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

Few of us can claim that all of the relationships in our life, our most intimate, those with our friends and those in our working lives are always as we would like them to be. They can bring us joy, they can bring us misery and they can be 'OK'. And they are rarely static. They ebb and flow.

Consider three relationships in your life: one most personal, one child or parent, one business relationship.

Actions

For each, what's just one thing you could do to make that relationship even better than it is at the moment? Take a moment to consider this and jot down your thoughts.

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Insights

Here are a few insights which may help you with the relationships you would like to improve. Remember that it's so much harder to have a complete relationship with one person than superficial relationships with many. Decide the relationships which are very important to you. Look after them. Accept those that you cannot spend as much time with as you would like.

1. Firstly, the 5As of relationships.

- The First 'A': Attention: A relationship needs attention for it to grow and develop. Simply by giving those three relationships above some thought, some time and attention, I'm sure you have already realised some ways to make them even better. When being with someone whether it's formal (perhaps your manager, or a team colleague) or informal (your daughter),

always give them 100% attention. face them, really tune into what they're saying. In personal relationships, look at their face. In business relationships, look away from that spreadsheet. With your head bend down, perhaps slow down a bit and get down to their level.

- The Second 'A': Awareness of difference: Be aware of differences between you and another. We are all unique. Apart from obvious cosmetic changes and differences of sex and culture, there will be differences such as:
 - How you wish to approach something
 - How you decide what is important: your beliefs and values
 - Speed of Thinking

business we often highly prize difference when it's known as creativity, but at other times can resent it.

- The Third 'A': Appreciate: At home, at work, thank people for what they've done for you. Never assume. Focus on the positive and what is working well. Appreciate them for all they do for you.

At work:

Helping with a presentation

Making you feel welcome in a new team

Getting some informal but useful

coaching

- The Fourth 'A': Affection: In personal relationships be interested in what interests them. Be careful about judging. Hug more often. Look into their eyes and get to really know them.
- The Fifth 'A': Action: In any relationship, start; take action. The biggest influencer of another's behaviour is your own. Put your ego aside. Start now.

2. Second important insight (this is clarifying the Fifth A). Don't wait 'for them' before changing your behaviours, Start now and notice the benefits. Remember that most relationships are simply not at their best

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because we don't look after them. Yes (especially in the 'corporate' world) there are one or two 'right bastards'. However, let me assure you that they do not sleep well at night and actually they're usually scared stiff. Do what you can with them and don't spend unnecessary time with them.

3. Finally, be yourself, be warm to people. Encourage others to accept you as you are. Love the appropriate ones. See the magic it generates.

Actions

So, what actions will you take?

LIFEBALANCE POINT 5: FUN

Introduction

A simple but tough and vital compass point. Simply ask yourself, am I having enough fun? If yes, well done. If not, you'll be like many of us. And yet, what's it all about if we're not having enough fun? Bear in mind:

Insights

1. Allow yourself to have fun. Yes, there is a time to work hard if we want to change our lives. And yes, it's important to consider others. But we can find that both of these issues can be addressed and still allow us time for fun. And ultimately, getting the changes you want will be fun not work.
2. Having fun will energise you.

3. Be creative about how you have fun. Don't immediately think 'pub' or your favourite pastime.

4. Notice how the most amazing fun can come from helping and supporting others - see LifeBalance Point 6 (Contribution) and LifeBalance Point 1 (Dharma).

Actions

Write down ten ways that you could start having more fun. Give it five minutes, then consider the following for some more ideas.

Ideas

1. What used you to enjoy but have forgotten, got rusty, feel too old and serious for?
 - dancing
 - playing the guitar
 - gardening
 - collecting
 - chatting

2. Try: new activities

- unicycle
- juggling
- water colours

3. Join:

- National Trust or a Rock Group or both

4. Look at what you currently do, but in different ways e.g. playing with the children actively.

5. Allow the other compass points to be fun. Set a new calibration that it will be fun.

6. Ask how can I have fun without money?

Insights

- Fun is literally vital. Never consider it too trivial to have fun.
- Be surprised that fun can come from amazing sources.

Actions

How will you get serious about fun?

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LIFEBALANCE POINT 6: CONTRIBUTION

Introduction

Compass Points 1 - 5 are more about ourselves and immediate family and friends. LifeBalance Point 6 is about looking outside of us and considering people and the world at large. It's a reminder that we are always part of something larger - a system - and that our thoughts and actions will always impact on others. Thus we are part of:

A family

A team

An organisation

A community

Amongst other 'systems'

In essence, Compass Point 6 asks: how are you supporting the systems of which you are a part? Or even more simply, how are you contributing? Firstly, specifically for the systems we looked at:

- A family: what would make things easier in the family?
- A team: how can I support others and live and breathe the mission?
- An organisation, ask: am I a cynic, do I contribute or destroy?
- A community: are you a complainer or a contributor?
- A relationship, ask: what does my partner need from me to make this an even better relationship?

And secondly, more generally:

- Set up a Standing Order for your favourite charity
- Increase Charity Standing Order if you've already established your charity
- Buy Big Issue every week
- Give some time to a voluntary organisation
- Have a contribution mind-set:
Become less judging
Become more accepting
Think about and respect the environment
- Try some random (anonymous) acts of kindness
Actions
What actions will you take?
Insights
It reminds us

1. The so-called 'Golden rule'. What we give we tend to receive.
2. Things are never so bad; it's always relative.
3. As others grow, so do we.
4. Given that we are part of a system, when things don't go to plan, what might this indicate about us?

Actions

Integration of LifeBalance Points and synergy between them

You now have a deeper level of understanding of the six compass points. To help that understanding we have taken one compass point at a time, explored its implications and agreed some actions, explored its implications and agreed some actions. This has ensured clear direction. However as we said in our introduction, we also need

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BALANCE. So in a moment we'll be taking an over view and seeing if there is any fine tuning we need to do to bring the six points into balance.

Once we do we'll see the synergy between each of the points and how the compass really works.

- E.g. 1 Focusing on our career and deciding what is important to us and beginning to achieve. It helps us feel more purposeful and energetic, hence our mind/body is given more direction.
- E.g. 2 As we give more direction and focus to mind/body we feel more relaxed and less irritable and are better in our relationships.
- E.g. 3 As we give direction and focus to finance, we begin to realise we can contribute a lot more to others.

- E.g. 4 As we begin to contribute, we begin to realise a bigger picture and the compass works even more for us.
- E.g. 5 As we begin to do what we want in our career, we start to have more fun.

Balance is respecting the push and pull of the compass points. When you consider the compass holistically, that is when you gain the energy to be successful.

THE STRATEGIC EDGE LIFEBALANCE: EVERYDAY

Introduction

Let's now summarise the daily use of the LifeBalance.

The LifeBalance is our guide; it helps us get out of life what we want to get out of it. It does not control us, it frees us. Let's review it at the most strategic level and then get more tactical.

1. Monthly review. Do a major review of your LifeBalance once a month. Each month ask the LifeBalance Power questions i.e. the questions I guided you through. As a result of your responses, detail your goals for each compass point and the actions necessary. Consider both long-term (e.g. 'start my own business') and short-term (e.g. 'achieve quality targets this month').

2. Balance LifeBalance. Check that appropriate balance is given across all compass points. E.g. if you've decided you're going to have a 6-month push on getting promotion, how will you ensure you do not at the same time neglect your family?

3. Review with your partner. It is important that compass planning involves those closest to you, probably your partner and certainly eventually children. The best approach for this is to arrange a half-day together, perhaps once every three months. Each of you work separately on your individual compasses and then come together to review and discuss differences and areas of overlap. Remember differences are healthy and normal. (See specific guide: LifeBalance Point 4: Relationships.)

4. Consider major decisions against the compass e.g. education for the children.

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5. Create a Master List (q.v.) against the compass. Each week, plan the up-coming week and set priorities on your Master list.
6. Extend your planning horizon.

The Master List

The Master list is our practical 'into action' tool. It is a running list of tasks which we need to do/want to do, home and work, short and long term. It is in one place and it is portable.

Now what might stop you?

Now is a great time to start work.

Let's just spend a while on what might stop you. In my experience, these are the top five barriers that you may believe that you have met:

Challenges:

- How exactly do I do it? Simply start. You'll learn loads as you go along. Add to this the further detail from the individual compass point guides.
- How do I get the energy to do it? Really work at mind/body. Read mind/body-compass point. Focus on quality fuel only.
- How do I keep motivated? Start, don't wait until you are motivated - you may never become so! Start. And then you'll be motivated.
- How do I find the time? That's exactly what this is all about. You'll never have enough time; but you can have sufficient direction.
- What might people think as I begin to change? On this occasion, forget them. Get on with what you know is important.

And now

You're ready. Take action, read more and try and attend a workshop. But above all, Start! Good luck.

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