

Keene State College – Women in Safety Conference October 2024

Ahhh, the Elusive Work-Life Balance

Pam Walaski, CSP, FASSP

Owner – RiverLure OSH Services

Taking Charge! Peer to Peer Mentoring Groups for Women in OSH

ASSP President



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
SAFETY PROFESSIONALS



Taking Charge!

**Peer to Peer Leadership Development Groups for
Women in OSH**

True or False

There is no such thing as work-life balance.

Work-Life Balance?

Work-Life Fusion?

Work-Life Integration?

Work-Life Blending?



Work Life Balance is a Myth

- Binary nature of this concept makes it a zero-sum game – you win, or you lose
- Do we end up longing for something we maybe cannot achieve?



<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/platform-success/202203/why-work-life-balance-is-myth>

Balance Doesn't Mean Equal Time

How about the 7-slice approach instead?
Family, profession, personal, physical,
intellectual, emotional, spiritual



<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/platform-success/202203/why-work-life-balance-is-myth>



Process Not a Goal

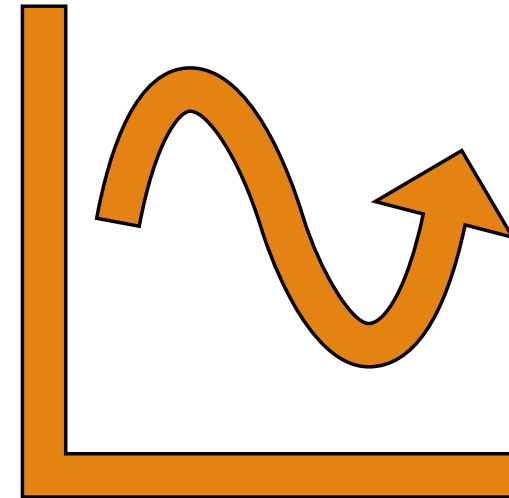
Take it off your to-do list. You won't get there and move on to something else.

It's a Cycle, Not an End Point

Work-Life Balance Is a Cycle,
Not an Achievement

Do you have an unhealthy
assumption linking working
long hours and professional
success?

<https://hbr.org/2021/01/work-life-balance-is-a-cycle-not-an-achievement>



Try This

Five steps

1. Pause and normalize
2. Attend to emotions
3. Reprioritize
4. Alternatives
5. Make changes



<https://hbr.org/2021/01/work-life-balance-is-a-cycle-not-an-achievement>



Employer Role

Who is responsible
for creating it?
(Whatever “it” is!)

“It's becoming more and more difficult to separate work from our personal lives. It's commonplace to check emails at all hours, take business calls at the dinner table and work on our laptops on weekends. ***How has this become acceptable?***”

Joe Wedgewood/September 2022

<https://thehappinessindex.com/blog/importance-work-life-balance/>

Leadership's Role

- Leaders can't give it to you or make you take advantage of it
- They do create the environment where it's possible
 - Influence the decisions you make
- Company value – “don't work too much”
 - Define how much work is too much

Maura Thomas

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/maurathomas/2022/07/26/what-does-work-life-balance-even-mean/>

Gender Differences

Is it different for people who identify as female? (regardless of marital or family status).



Some Things to Consider

- Benefit of having/not having children in the workspace
- Pre-dispositions placed on you because of your status
- What about keeping your home life private? If no one at work knows whether you have children/are married.....



Quiet Quitting

- New or response to the failure to achieve balance and how the pandemic has changed our view of it?
- An option for privileged employees

Doing Less is Good?

- If you can't leave or options don't work, would this work for you?
- Quiet quitting is about not avoiding a meaningful life outside of work.
- If all you have is work, it skews how you value yourself

<https://www.fastcompany.com/90780011/quiet-quitting-why-doing-less-at-work-could-be-good-for-you-and-your-employer>



Closing

What did you learn?

How will you use it?

pwalaski@gmail.com

@safetypam

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pamwalaski/>