

# The Worklife Journey: Journal

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We're back! Thank you for the positive feedback on our first issue last month! If you didn't receive it for some reason, visit the archive on our website.

Before we present this month's topic on Personal Energy and Engagement, we have an introduction to make. After supporting all of the many Worklife initiatives and serving as Program Developer for several years, Laura Butler has stepped in to lead our Life Coaching practice. She brings not only her considerable training in addressing women's issues, but also lots of experience in consulting for both the Educational and Medical Office Management fields. She will focus on work/life integration, relationships and career fulfillment as well as life transitions and leadership for women in the workplace. Welcome Laura!

Our topic this month is one of growing interest and concern in all of our coaching assignments. Personal Energy is at the core of performance of any kind – as an athlete, an actor, writer, leader, receptionist, butcher, baker or candlestick maker. It especially affects how others perceive us and determines the quality of how we project ourselves in any environment.

Engagement serves as a measure of connection and commitment affecting both the quality of our activities as well as our sense of fulfillment. Whether we choose to invest our energy or it is invested for us, the return on that investment is in direct proportion to how much of ourselves we commit to it.

This topic is also referred to as "heart". We use terms like "half-hearted, his heart's not in it, heartfelt and whole-heartedness" to describe levels of engagement, commitment and energy. See Laura's article on "What's your HQ" (heart quotient)?

## Engagement: The Key is Energy, Not Time

Everyone is in a hurry these days, juggling work, family, and play like so many balls in the air. The "ability to multitask" is listed at the top of every job description and most people pride themselves on it. E-mail, cell phones, desktops, laptops and now "thumb tops" keep us more in touch than we have ever been in history. About the only thing that seems to be slowing us down is traffic, and then we gratefully use even that time to catch up on phone calls and messages.

It seems that the more timesaving devices we have at our disposal, the more we have to cram in extra tasks, more contacts, and more meetings. In the name of greater efficiency, we have never been more interconnected technologically but, in a grand paradox, never felt more disconnected emotionally and psychologically. Somehow, if only there were more time, all of our work and life challenges could be accomplished.

Apparently, there is a time deficit. Even if our time is managed more efficiently, there is still never enough of it in a 24-hour day. Cutting back on sleep, skipping meals and exercise, and attending fewer meetings don't help because time isn't really the key issue in the first place.

### Energy is the Key

The issue isn't time—or time management. It's energy focus. And this requires us to rethink much of what we've believed about organizing our work and lives. Managing time efficiently is no guarantee that we'll bring sufficient energy to whatever it is we're doing. We need to learn two new concepts:

1. Energy, not time, is the fundamental currency of performance.
2. Success, health, and happiness are results of the skillful focusing of energy.

According to Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz in their recent book, *The Power of Full Engagement* (Free Press, 2003), the skillful management of energy—individually and organizationally—is the key to high performance and personal renewal. Their assertion is that to be fully engaged in our lives, we must be physically energized, emotionally connected, mentally focused, and spiritually aligned with a purpose meaningful to us.

Everything we do requires energy. Without the right type, quantity and quality of



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As Director of Program Development for Worklife Performance Consulting, Laura has designed and delivered a number of personal development and performance enhancing seminars. Her extensive experience in the growing field of emotional intelligence has earned her a reputation for insight, creativity and inspiration.

Her many clients have included individuals in career transition and life change, as well as schools and community organizations in the midst of growth and reform. Laura is dedicated to empowerment using an "inside out" approach.

### "WHAT'S YOUR HQ"?

It's a pleasure to be leading our Life Coaching practice and to be introduced to all of you along with our second issue and its focus on the "heart" or "HQ" of engagement. My research and work with the concepts of emotional intelligence has shown me the power in leading and living with heart.

Just as our featured authors, Loehr and Schwartz, have outlined four principles for Energy Management, I follow four guiding principles for "HQ" Management by envisioning an internal compass. I look North on my internal compass and ask "What is my personal mission"? If my personal mission is clear, my heart can proceed in the most important direction. As I look East I ask "Am I being accountable for my actions"? By living a life of personal integrity, my heart can be engaged and answer with the truth. Then I look to the South and I ask, "Am I empowering others"?

energy, any activity we undertake will eventually be compromised. Anger, fatigue, confusion and forgetfulness result from inattention to our need for an energy re-charge. Personal energy gets taken for granted, as if we have unlimited amounts. In reality, personal energy requires strategies for recovery and renewal.

When you think about it, the ultimate measure of our lives is neither about time on the planet nor how much gets done, but rather it is in the quality of our moments. Memorable moments, though sometimes short, are the things we remember and that can actually re-energize us long after they have occurred.

when I can help another person fulfill their dreams. Finally, turning toward the West, "Do I have an open and unbiased view"? The answer from my heart will be yes if I can respect each person's unique strengths and attitudes even when they are different from my own. My HQ is Mission, Integrity, Service and Respect, and I know that if I follow these, my heart will follow as well.

Check in with your own internal compass and ask, "What's my HQ"? What direction are you working on and is your heart engaged? I look forward to hearing about your journey. Email me at [laurabutler@worklifeonline.com](mailto:laurabutler@worklifeonline.com).

## Engagement as Core Strategy

Significant research by the Gallup Organization has found that less than 30 percent of employed people are fully engaged at work. Over half are not engaged, and 17 percent are actively disengaged. That means that over two-thirds of people at work are not enthusiastic about what they are doing. While the causes may be varied, it is clear that lack of engagement leads to poor performance, absenteeism and unwanted attrition. As the War for Talent grows, talent engagement is becoming one of the core strategies of enlightened companies. In the same way, lack of engagement creates problems in relationships, families, schools and communities.

## Four Principles for Energy Management

Here are four important principles put forth by Loehr and Schwartz in their book:

**PRINCIPLE 1:** Full engagement requires drawing on four separate but related sources of energy: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Because energy capacity diminishes with both overuse and under-use, we must balance energy expenditure with intermittent energy renewal.

**PRINCIPLE 3:** To build capacity, we must push beyond our normal limits, training in the same systematic way elite athletes do.

**PRINCIPLE 4:** Positive energy rituals—highly specific routines for managing and renewing energy—are the key to full engagement and sustained high performance.

It becomes evident through research and other written work that the key to more fully engaged lives and careers, leading to more physical, emotional, mental and spiritual health and happiness—is in the focusing and renewing of our personal energy.

Forget time—we all have the same 24/7. But we can learn to improve the quality of our energy. There are actual steps we can take to increase our energy capacity in all four domains: physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

## The Importance of Positive Ritual

Attaining full engagement in work and life involves having positive, personalized habits or rituals that help you connect with your "inner battery". These rituals may also include interests or passions that feed your engagement and actually grow stronger as you practice them. Such rituals help us to conserve and create energy rather than deplete it and may include writing in a journal, meditating, engaging in a regular workouts or sports, reading inspirational books, or participating in the creative arts. They help connect you to your four centers of energy focus. Together, they can help you to manage your energy more effectively and achieve higher performance.

In our coaching practice we help you become aware of the ways in which you expend energy and how you can improve your ability to renew it. In some cases, you may need to stretch yourself to expand your capacities. In others, you may need to build in renewal and recovery rituals. Those of you that have used Worklife services in the past have participated in many of our assessment tools, especially the Birkman. Check your results and see how much you regularly include activities that engage your interests as well as practices that re-charge your needs. We will shortly have an online library of suggestions for you on our website [www.worklifeonline.com](http://www.worklifeonline.com) under the e-learning tab. We also are now offering our new **"Wheel of Life" Worklife Balance and Integration Assessment** to help you in this growing area of challenge and concern.

Do yourself a favor and turn off all of your electronic equipment and go do something you love.

## The "Best of" Worklife

Movie	Book	Website
Office Space	Learn to Relax By Mike George	Optical Illusions A Little Perspective Workout