

5 Tips for Switching off from Work

as seen on Breakfast, TV One



Switching off from work will help you increase your wellbeing. Wellbeing (at work) could be described as enjoying your time at work, achieving your goals and seeing the value of your efforts whilst balancing your energy levels. Sound good? How often do you find yourself achieving this?

Many of us would like to think of ourselves as machines, well oiled and able to survive or achieve any challenges at work. We attempt to push ourselves and others through tight deadlines and stressful situations, sometimes at the expense of our mind and body. This isn't a good long term strategy because we are human beings, even at work!

In his new book, *Toughen Up*, Michael Hill (jeweller) says "working too many hours, eating junky food late at night at your workstation, going weeks without exercise because you simply haven't the time - these are all symptoms of something going seriously wrong in your life."

If we work in ways that support our wellbeing, we ultimately work better; it's as simple as that. For peak performance, any system, machine or person must be in good condition, functioning well and operating sustainably. Ask any top athlete and they will agree. Besides, once we can influence what's happening inside of us, we can more effectively influence what's happening outside.

Here are just some of the strategies I teach my clients, that you can use too:

1. Leave work at work by downloading out of your head what needs to be done tomorrow. Make a to-do list before you leave the office. Go into your evening ready for rest, relaxation and play.
2. Take a few minutes to reflect on your day and notice three things you've achieved in your day that you're pleased with. There will always be more to do, but notice what has been done, even with all the unexpected (or expected!) interruptions, that you can feel satisfied this. The satisfaction from logging these things helps you enjoy your downtime more. Your downtime is your reward!
3. Have boundaries around your workspace – this could mean limiting the number of evenings you take work home from the office, or if you work from home having a specific area at home that is your 'office'.
4. Have boundaries around your work time. This includes when you have your phone or blackberry switched off or on silent. Most of these devices have a lot of swanky technology, so check whether your Blackberry is running you, or if you're running your Blackberry. Check emails several times a day, not constantly, and if you have email notifications running on your computer or Blackberry, turn them off! Set boundaries for yourself – no one else can do it for you.
5. Make plans for play. As often as possible, ensure your weekends are primarily dedicated to your personal life, whether it be time with family, exercise, trips, DIY, outdoor activities, or lying in bed with the paper and good cup of tea. Refresh your body and mind. It is your reward after a week of work, and it is preparing you for a productive one ahead.

If you feel that you may not be managing your stress effectively, and that it's impacting your wellbeing - and perhaps that of those around you - you have choices to do something about it. If your stress feels out of control or you're not sure how to go about changing it, get in touch, I'd be pleased to answer your questions.

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