



Balance—Part 2

In our last issue (issue 5, summer 2008), I wrote about creating balance in your life. I addressed two of the three keys to a balanced life: Establishing priorities in your life, and implementing dedicated time to structure your day and week. The third key is self-care, the subject of this newsletter.

Self-care is the maintenance of your mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical well-being. It not only determines how you feel, but determines how you conduct yourself and perform in all areas of your life. The following are the most important components of self-care and can be remembered by the acronym RED.

Rest is critical. Your body requires time to shut down and to recharge. Sleep deprivation is epidemic in this country. Not enough sleep compromises the functioning of your body, the health of your immune system, the sharpness of your mind, your emotional stability and thus your performance in every area of your life. Health professionals assert that eight (8) hours of sleep is necessary for optimal health. While many of you have said you can't get that much sleep, the unpopular solution is to go to bed with "lights out" earlier. If you have trouble getting to sleep that early, lie quietly in your bed and focus on pleasant thoughts such as all the things you are grateful for, or some mindless activity like counting backwards from a hundred.

Exercise is necessary for the growth, strength, general health, and functioning of all the parts of your body, particularly your lungs and heart. Forty-five (45) minutes to an hour per day of exercise that raises your heart rate and causes you to break a sweat is optimal. The minimum is twenty (20) minutes of exercise that increases your heart rate. There are many ways to get exercise ranging from a morning walk to lifting weights. Which program of exercise you choose matters little if it meets the lengths of time and the body changes recommended above.

Diet seems to be a challenge for many people. Eating nourishing foods in adequate quantities on a regular schedule is difficult for most very active, busy people. Missing a meal or eating crap is easy for many people. Eating too much or too little is common. Nutritionists and Dietitians recommend not less than three well-balanced meals a day. Breakfast should include fruit, whole grain, and protein. Lunch and dinner should include green

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- ~ **Book Review**: Doug shares one of his latest favorites

business services

We offer a variety of services for the business, or the business-minded.

Executive Coaching: geared toward the manager who wishes to develop further skills in the workplace.

Women's Leadership Program: specifically focused on women in business, this is a program of strategic guidance and empowering support for female leaders.

Workshops and Speaking Services: focus on business performance, motivation, team-building, management, communication, organization, and leadership.

individual services

Life Coaching: for those who long for self-improvement in career, relationships, health, or overall wellness.

Career Coaching: for the person who wishes to improve their current career, begin a new one, analyze goals, and self-improve.

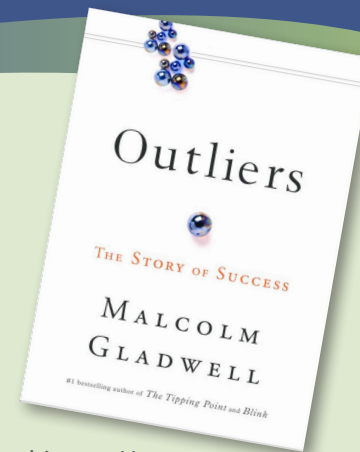


let's face it, we could all use some help sometimes. That is where Life Skills Training Institute comes in. Comprised of some of the leading health and wellness professionals in the industry, LSTI provides the right perspective, the right resources and the right information you need to achieve a more balanced life at home and at work.

Book Review

by Doug Sawin

Outliers: The Story of Success
by Malcolm Gladwell



This volume by the author of The Tipping Point and Blink is an exploration of the background of high-achievers. He offers intriguing answers to the question: Why are some people hugely successful, living remarkably productive and impactful lives, while so many others never reach their potential? It's a fascinating read.

Ask Doug



Over the past few weeks, some of our readers have submitted questions for Doug. A few are answered below, but to read more Q & A's please visit www.LSTIonline.com.

Q. Dear Doug- I am puzzled and frustrated by what people say about me. Lots of times people at work and even my family tell me I'm angry and aggressive when I'm not. Even

when I try not to sound angry, they still say I sound that way. I want to be a nice person, but they say I'm not very nice, even rude. What am I doing wrong? What can I do? Jancy B.

A. Dear Jancy- You sound like a very nice person so I can understand your frustration when people think you sound angry and that you are not very nice. There are two factors you may want to take a look at: 1) Tone and intonation when you speak. Record yourself talking as though to someone at work and listen for "attitude" in your tone or for anything that may sound aggressive; 2) You may not have learned the distinction between aggressive vs. assertive ways of saying things. Find a book, article, or on-line information about assertion or assertiveness and learn to speak in those ways. P.S. Don't worry about being nice, just be authentic, and be conscious of how you sound to others.

Q. Dear Doug- I was recently promoted to a management position and I'm having some trouble. When I talk to my people, even when they come to me, they don't seem to listen to me and they don't say much. This happens when we are in our weekly meetings and when I talk to them alone. I try to encourage them to talk when we meet by talking to get the conversation going. I want to be a good supervisor but it doesn't seem to be working. Help. Donald R.

A. Dear Donald- Effective communication between manager and staff is the key to effective supervision. Unfortunately, few of us have had any training in this area. I suggest you use what I call Functional Dialogue. In conversation with a staff member, listen intently and hear what they are saying. Every so often, tell them what you are hearing them say in an abbreviated form that captures their meaning. When you are talking to them, pause every so often and ask them what they are hearing you say. You can tell them that you just want to be sure you are being clear. And now, most important, I advise executives and managers to give the highest priority to listening over talking in conversations with staff. A good rule of thumb is to listen 90% of the time and talk 10% of the time. When your staff wants to talk to you, they want you to really hear them and not talk too much.

Q. Dear Doug- My mother passed several weeks ago. We were not expecting it so it was a terrible shock. I am feeling so bad and crying so much that it is hard to do the things I need

to do at work and at home. I can't be crying all the time. I think I should be over it by now. That's what my husband says too. Georgine V.

A. Dear Georgine- Death of a loved one is painful and very sad. In our culture, we are taught to "get over it" in a short time and stop feeling sorry for ourselves. What most people do not know is that grief is the natural reaction to loss. We experience it as feelings of loss, pain, and sadness. Crying is the natural expression of sadness. Grief has a natural course from seemingly overwhelming sadness to periodic moments of recall of the loss and feeling sad. Grief needs expression. If we don't do it at the time, it will reappear and compound the grief from losses in the future. Or, it may show up while watching a film or television or when we read about someone else's loss. The heavy grief generally lasts about six months decreasing over time. After that, it shows up periodically for short periods. So, Georgine, let yourself grieve. Talk about your loss and cry as much as you can. If you will give your grief twenty minutes two or three times a day, it will give you time for other activities.

If you have a question for Doug, please email us at AskDoug@LSTIonline.com. We would love to hear from you!

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vegetables, complex carbohydrates, and protein. Several portions of vegetables and fruit per day are strongly recommended. Processed and short order foods provide little or no healthy nourishment.

Other important considerations are: spending time with your family and friends, "work-free" vacations, and the number of hours you work per day and week. A quiet time by yourself before you start your day and/or before you end your day will change the way you do your day and how well you sleep. Peace of mind, mental sharpness and emotional stability are greatly increased with meditation and/or Yoga.

You will find that self-care greatly improves the efficiency with which you do your daily activities. You will get more done in less time and thus spend less time working and more time doing other things you like to do. You will have more energy and feel less tired. You will work "smarter rather than harder".

The quality of your life, your health, your mind, and your performance are determined by the choices you make about RED. Compromises here, compromise every aspect of your life. So, take care of your self as though your life depended on it! ■

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