

Work Life

~~BALANCE~~

Happiness

Positive
TEACHER NETWORK



Everyone seems to be searching for the perfect **work life balance**, but does it exist and if it does how do we obtain it?

As you know, here at the Positive Teacher Network we are very passionate about work life balance and my goal is to help as many teachers as possible find it. But the big question is, **what does balance even mean?**

The thing is, there are different theories and ideas on this and it also differs from each individual's perspective. For me, it is definitely about **prioritising enjoyable activities** outside of work and making sure there is something everyday that gives me a chance to switch off.

But for you this may be different, because **balance is all in the mind**. It is not based on a mathematical equation. Balance is about your perception of your life. So this training is about assessing your current situation and then assessing your current mindset about your work life balance.

Shawn Achor, a key psychologist who researches happiness and fulfilment highlights that:
**'only 10% of our happiness is predicted by the external world.
90% is a result of how we look at our world.'**

We need practical **solutions** and **strategies** to create a balance between our work and life which is what I want to propose in this training. But if we were to ignore the way we think about things it is all too easy to slip back into old patterns. So part of the solution is **reframing the idea of balance** and starting to look for work life happiness.

Join me in transforming your work life balance into a **happy and healthy work life connection**.

x Clare

WHERE ARE *You* AT NOW?

Let's start by looking at how you feel or think about your work life balance right now. I am assuming that if you're reading this you feel there is room for improvement. So, on a scale of 1 to 10 where are you currently. Circle the scale below:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

1 : Overwhelmed

5 : Surviving

10 : Life's Amazing!

We want to come back to this mini assessment later when you have implemented some of the ideas.

But first I want you to put your work life balance into words.

Write down a sentence to describe your work life balance. No need to hold back, if it's all negative that's fine. Let's get it out!

My work life balance is...

Next I want you to propose your ideal outcome. This might include specifics or it might just be a feeling you want to have about it. For example, I want Work Life Happiness. But your words might be different.

I would like my work life balance to be...

PURPOSE *and* CONNECTION

Knowing why we do things and what is most important to us is essential for our feeling of balance or in my words 'happiness'.

There are different components to our lives and sometimes it feels like one is pulling against the other, but once we become clear on the purpose of each of these aspects we can see how they are actually connected. It helps us view the relationship between work and life in a different way.

Dan Thurman (coach and author) in his TEDx talk describes the need to be **"Off Balance on Purpose"**. This is about recognising that balance is a constantly shifting process and we have to be prepared to make small adjustments all the time. This comes by making choices, but also seeing connections between the different spheres in our lives. He describes 5 spheres:

Work, Relationships, Health, Spirit, Interests

Work doesn't have to be in conflict to the other spheres.

What is the purpose of work?

- Does it provide money to support your family, as well as some to engage in interests and activities?
- Does it provide some opportunities for professional relationships that challenge and stretch you, which we could link to our spiritual growth?
- Does it require you to be physically active standing, moving and walking around the classroom?

It is easy to make negative connections between work and the other spheres but reframing is all about thinking differently. So my challenge to you is to make connections right now about how work positively impacts the other 4 spheres of your life in some way that is positive.

WORK Positively impacts:			
<i>Relationships</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Spirit</i>	<i>Interests</i>

VALUES *and* IMPORTANCE

Creating a positive outlook is important and I talk more about this in the video tutorial but even if you managed to tease out some positive connections between work and your life, if your overall feeling about your work life balance is not positive then there is still work to do.

This task is about looking at your values. What is important to you in Work and in Life.

There will be tons of things I imagine, so we are going to narrow it down to 5 for each.

The questions I want you to answer are simply:

What is important to you about work?

What is important to you in your home life?

I invite you to find a scrap of paper or turn over and use the back of this page if you printed it and jot down as many ideas as you can. Nobody will hold you to them, so don't think too hard. Anything that pops into your head, jot it down in one long list.

When there's nothing left, ask yourself - Is there anything else?

It's surprising what comes out when we give ourselves time to think.

Then comes the toughest bit. Pick out the 5 most important and write them down here:

	WORK	LIFE
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

These are the key things you value in both your work and life. Are there crossovers? Are there conflicts? Do you allocate time for all of them?

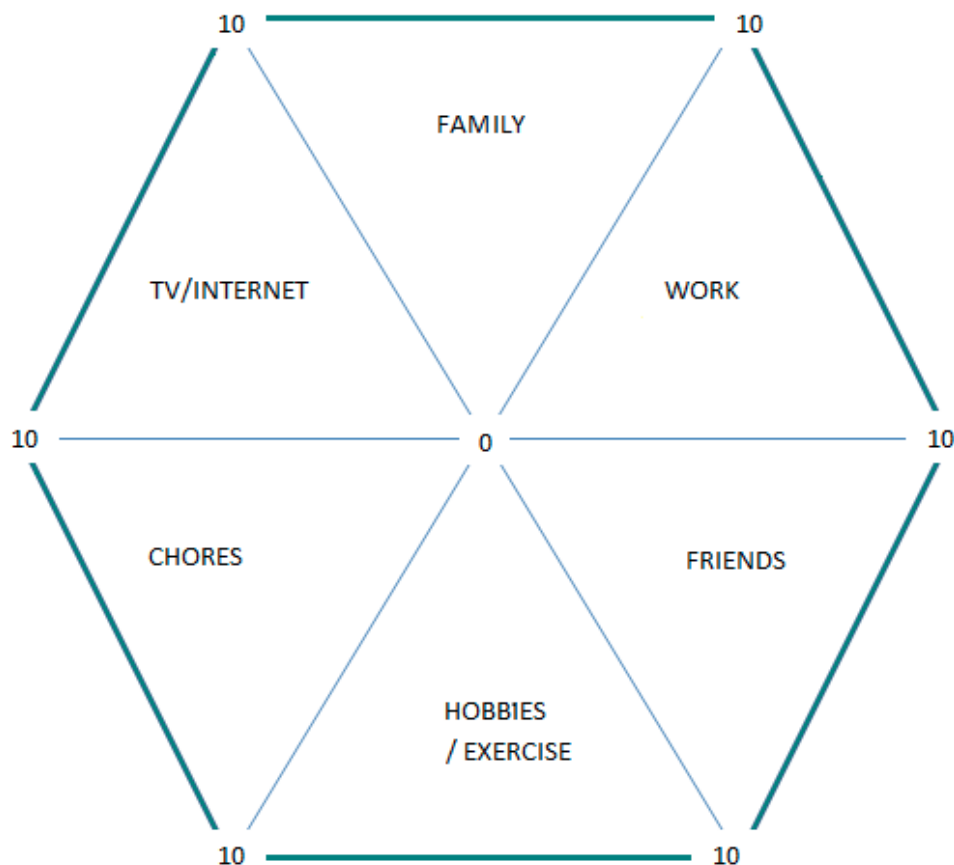
Identifying our values is so important and too often is forgotten about. We assume that these things are obvious. But we can get so used to telling people our surface reasons for doing things that we don't give ourselves time to truly reflect on what is important to us. We need to be honest with ourselves about what we want out of life if we are going to create a positive work life balance.

Next up...some insights about how you spend your time.

Think about the different areas of your life on the hexagon below and shade in, or simply score out of 10, how much time you devote to each area.

The centre is 0 – no time spent

The outside edge is 10 – lots of time spent.



The aim of this tool, when done honestly, is to provide perspective on where your time is being spent and how this compares to the areas that you identified as being important to you in your life.

Are you currently finding time for the things you said were important to you?

I imagine there are things that could warrant more regular attention in your values list so the next step is to schedule.

SCHEDULING *your* VALUES

Scheduling is the only way to make time for something in your day. We all know it. Life is busy and there are always things that we could do, or demands being made on our time. So, unless we are disciplined and strong enough to schedule in the things that are important to us, they end up not happening.

I don't know what you ended up writing down in your values list or how detailed you went. But let's say you had Health as an importance or Family or your kids in the top 5. You need to identify an activity that you could deliberately schedule into your week that would foster this value.

The same goes for your list of what's important to you about work. Are you getting all those needs met? If not, how could you engage in an activity that would allow you to meet some of those needs?

	WORK VALUES	Activity to support
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

	LIFE VALUES	Activity to support
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

And then, schedule them in.

Print out the Schedule Planner that is also in the resource area and commit to including some of these activities in the week ahead.