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8 Concepts to Help You Connect With Your Personal Life on a Daily Basis as a Part of Your Business Plan

By Barbara A. Berg

As a woman entrepreneur, it can be so easy to become preoccupied with your work side of life. You have a passion for it, and what you do is very engaging! A potential dilemma however, is that without realizing it, you may not be giving those closest to you on the personal side of things, enough of your full attention, and they in turn, may not be there for you or others in their lives down the road.

Here are a few ideas to consider, which may help you take even more into account than you may be presently, the importance of focusing your attention on your spouse, children, and others you care about, when you are with them and in touch with them. It is so valuable to the intimates and close ones in your life that they really get that you value them, and they aren't just "in your way" or are "holding you back". (You may already be doing all these things, but they're important enough to reiterate here.) If you have any ideas that work for you, or dilemmas that confront you, please let me know. You are welcome to email me at babsberg@earthlink.net.

1. Generally speaking, entrepreneurs as a whole and certainly women entrepreneurs, enjoy change and challenges in their lives and schedules, and new ventures and ideas. They also tend to not like to feel "hemmed in," and "stuck with the same old thing". Ongoing stable relationships over time can start to seem monotonous and even "too predictable," even if they are wonderful! This can be hard on both you and the one you closest to.

Make a point of having plans you both look forward to, as often as it works for you, even if it is just spending time at home together. Make it so that when you are together, your attention is on each other, and what connects the two of you. Avoid making a run down of what you "should really be doing" with your spouse or what you plan to do the next day.

If you need to “get out of the house” and sort out your thoughts without your mate at times, go to meetings, or stay at home and do your own thing even though he’s there, be as clear as you possibly can that you just need to get some things done, and **then** you’ll give him your full attention. Go over what you would like to do together later and **when** you can give him (and/or your children), your full attention. Stick to what time and activity you promised the best you can so as to not set up those in your personal life to be constantly waiting around for you and disappointed.

Interestingly, when a person in the physical presence of someone, and they are not emotionally available to that person, it can set off a feeling of “abandonment” and anger, that you’re not focused on your connection to them, but you’re all into what you have to do “for you”. This could set up your intimate person or family to feel “they’re not getting their needs met,” which can lead to all sorts of problems down the road.

2. As a colleague of mine years ago told me years ago when I was all so dazzled by my newly acquired corporate child care consulting contract, “This is very nice. Now remember, happiness with your husband is your prime investment.” Your investments need to be protected. No business plan is complete if you don’t have a section for your investments.

Your intimate partner is meant to be your cornerstone, not your nemesis. Besides, in the truest sense of business planning, consider this: If you don’t value your spouse’s emotional well being as a part of your business plan, and you get a divorce, your spouse could be entitled to or affect a part of your business in a way you hadn’t expected.” I didn’t listen then- but I’m listening now.

Be as clear and conscious as possible to let your partner, children, friends, or those you are considering getting to know, when you will be available to them fully, in a way they know you truly look forward to it. Really value your interactions, and make phone calls as often as possible rather than emails or text messages to each other, as they are so much more “tactile” and bonding. I knew of an “entrepreneurial couple” who got to the point of only emailing or texting each other throughout the day, mainly tasks they needed to get done. They didn’t have much of anything to say to each other at night either. On one given day, the husband texted the wife that he wanted a divorce. - She finally **called** him back.

For those who are newly creating “space” for more of a personal life, (and I have been there many times), regard that process with the care it deserves. I remember

how I treated guys I was dating as if they would “just have to wait for when I was available and they were certainly not important”. I made a point of always being so busy; I could barely fit them in. That seemed like the thing to do when ‘the chase was on,” but a truly healthy guy will only wait so long and then he’ll move on.

3. Stewart Emery, the wonderful co-author of the book, “Success Built to Last: Creating a Life That Matters,” had stated many times during his workshops that I’ve attended, “What do you have at the end of the day? That is what really matters most.”

Look around you. There is a saying that you don’t have to look too far to see your priorities. Whatever you have right before you is what your priorities are. A colleague of mine told me she makes a point of seeing her husband as much as possible at the end of the day, or meeting him for lunch or dinner if she has a night meeting, so she has time with him every day as possible.

4. It’s important to remember that as much as we want our spouses and families to be supportive of our endeavors, if we don’t support them in their lives enough and connect with them genuinely when we’re around them, they may see our “passion for our work” as only something that takes us away from them, and nothing beneficial in their lives. As much as we want our spouses, dates, and partners to take us seriously, it’s not their job to “cheer lead us” all the time. Besides, they can be there for us more easily when we’re there for them.

Create a way to be with your work, that it is something you are truly into, but it’s not the only thing that matters. Surprise gifts and cards showing you really are thinking of them help, and just taking the day off to go someplace fun can especially help generate support from your spouse and children, as they’ll see your work doesn’t always take you away. – It is especially helpful when they can count on when they will have your full presence again the next time.

5. In case you find you are in a dilemma where you want to keep developing your entrepreneurial business but you are vacillating about whether or not want to stay with your spouse, consider the idea that you don’t want to make things so miserable between the two of you, that you have no working relationship at all.- The reality is, even if you do end up divorcing, which inevitably can create issues all its own that you may not have considered, it is best to have some communication line between the two of you so that every inch of progress you make along the way isn’t more difficult than the last.

Besides, without realizing it, you may find a whole new perspective on your situation if you make a point of just taking today, and appreciating what you do have in your life in connection to him rather than what you don't have. Find ways to connect and give this some real attention. Any progress you make in this area won't be wasted. If there is a moment where the two of you tend to just fight or have a "stand off," see if you can be the one to say, "I'd really like to do things differently here." – Get some professional help on your own if you need someone to help you sort things out. Don't just let each day get more and more distant. Do find an inroad where the two of you may have more of an inclination to get along than to just turn the other way or fight.

Please note the attached poem on its own page after this article. It's about the possibility of joining together in some positive way rather than doing the "same old same old".

6. For those of you contemplating getting back in the "important game" of connecting with a possible mate, consider the following thoughts. – Of course it is all up to you. – There was a time when I was beginning to date again after divorce, and I found myself working so much and making sure that every minute was filled, that I didn't have much time for those who wanted to date me, even if I really liked them. I imagine in some way, I was "getting back" at my father who worked every night from what I remembered, but I was actually exhausting myself. While I really loved what I was doing, I felt like I was constantly overwhelmed and missing something, but I didn't know how to "create the space" for an actual relationship.

I didn't realize that, like a business, relationships take time and effort. It was all too easy to meet people who were possibilities for me, and then tell myself, "It's nice to know I *could* have some one in my life, but I just don't have the time". While that can be very true, especially if you are just starting up your business or you have other complexities going on; but I came to see that with me, I might always use that line.

I got to the point of realizing that if I didn't watch it, my entire life could pass me by, and my work would be in the business of relationships, while I would possibly never really have one again! When that hit home, I took it seriously and made time (like I would make time for a business meeting initially), and dated a lot of guys through many different sources. And then I met George.

That was almost six years ago. We've been married for a little over a year now, and I've been able to create the space for the relationship to thrive while I continue to evolve into who I feel I'm meant to be more and more each day. The big difference this time, is that I take into account the time and energy I have to be present with George much more than I ever did in the past. Also, I finally get how every interaction matters, and to appreciate each one. That appears to help everything fall into place.

7. For those of you who are very happy to date people now and then, if at all, and enjoy those close relationships you do have, just continue to enjoy them and connect in ways that work best for you. The most important point here to remember is that at the end of the day, create time and space for ways you can feel complete and connected. Not everyone needs the same degree of intimacy with someone, but we all need those people in our lives that "get" who we really are, and appreciate greatly that we are in their lives too.
8. Wherever you are in your life now, consider the seventh stage of "Erik Erickson's Seven Stages of Man" (and Woman), which is "Integrity VS Despair". This is the stage at the end of your life, (and it's important to evaluate your life all along), where you contemplate whether or not you focused in your life the areas that brought you the most joy and soul satisfaction in return. Do you love who you are? Do you love what you do? Do you love and are you loved by those you are with? – Consider that every interaction in some way will lead to these answers – all along the way.

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How's Your Couple Communication?

The Tale of the Lonely Nag and the Winsome Whine

How come when I am not around
You're mad that I'm not there?
But when I'm home you seem to act
Like you don't really care.

Just when I need a hug the most,
Your game point's neck and neck.
It seems like when I've much to say,
You're tired and feel a wreck.

How come we never get it right?
It used to be so good.
I wish just once we could go back,
And make it as it should.

I love you dear,
And you love me.
I know somehow that's true.
I'll tell you this when you're not tired,
Or tied up in some stew.

Perhaps next time we have a fight
I'll hug you anyway.
I'll hope that you can hold me too;
And maybe save the day.

And on and on the whole thing goes,
Til we are old and blue.
I wish for once things would go well.
Please know that I love you.

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