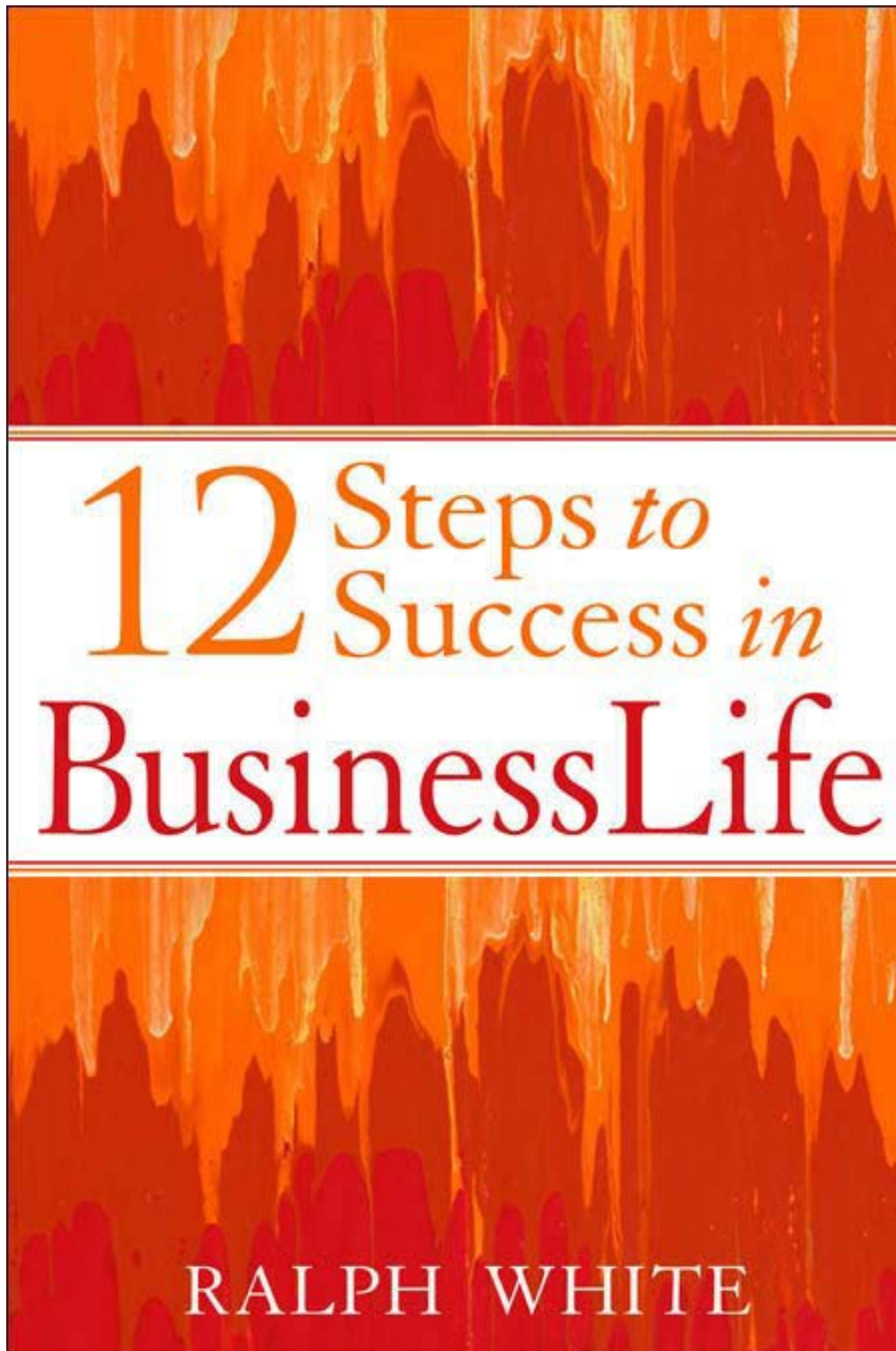




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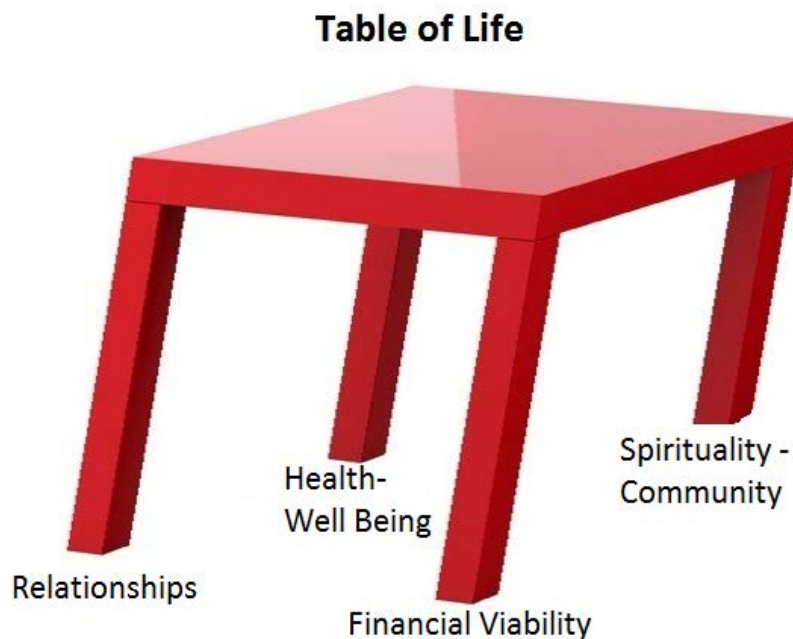
Step 9: The WholeLife Matrix

The WholeLife Matrix lays out the big picture of a person's life and gives the bird's eye view of the road to happiness and success.

The Matrix: A Table of Life

I created the Matrix when I noticed people overworking in one area of their life to the detriment of other areas. For example, I might see someone working to achieve great success in their business life, but their health or relationships were suffering. Or, I would see people who were very physically fit or quite involved in their community but failing in their business.

To help my clients achieve balance and success I developed the Matrix as a “Table of Life” defining four legs or areas of life:



Here's how the table works. When you spend time in one area that leg becomes longer, and the other legs become comparatively shorter. So when you don't spend any time at all in an area of life, that leg becomes increasingly shorter in relation to the areas where you do devote time. You may expend energy, for instance towards financial viability, relationships and health but little energy towards spirituality or community and have a lopsided table that lacks stability. It can't carry any significant weight because what you place on the table slides off. But, a table with four strong legs of roughly equal length has strength, stability and can carry you far.

As I evolved the Matrix I recognized that those people who had well-balanced tables were making money. They were also the ones who were the most successful and the happiest. By spending time outside their business life in each quadrant they could monitor, nurture and produce results in those areas. They might not be achieving out of this world business success, for example, but the overall stability of their life Matrix

*The most successful and happiest people
live well-balanced lives.*

brought them invaluable overall satisfaction.

Living a well-balanced life requires that you spend time involving yourself in each of the four areas of life. Your goal of happiness and success hinges on this simple fact. In my Matrix system happiness is achieved by effort and action, but not necessarily through hard work. I don't believe that life is hard work. I believe though, that success in life

requires commitment, action and managing time well so you can remain focused on your stated intentions and continue to move toward them.

Time

Time is the key factor that connects the four legs of the matrix.

You achieve balance in life by devoting some time to each quadrant. How do you differentiate and set priorities? Look at where you spend your time. How do you spend your days and weekends? Use your calendar to get what you want. If you want something make sure it is in your calendar. For example, if I want more success with my relationships, I put more relationship in my calendar. If I want more spirituality, then I schedule more spiritual oriented activities. People often say *I don't have enough time in life*. Here is the reality: *Time is all you have*. You are born, you have time, and you die. So decide how you want to use that time. To answer the proverbial question—*what is the meaning of life?*—look at where you spend your time: where you devote your energies becomes the meaning you give to your life.

Choosing Connection

Joseph Campbell, noted scholar and author had this to say about the meaning of life, *"I don't believe people are looking for the meaning of life as much as they are looking for the experience of being alive."* Those moments when we truly connect to another or some bigger mystery give that experience that Campbell speaks of—being alive. But what about all those moments in between when we are driving, surfing the web, or deciding what to cook for dinner filling up the space and time between those

moments of connection? It's a paradox: Time and space separates us but connects those moments we live for. Connection is the theme song; it's why we're here.

I want to live my life being purposefully active. So, I am very intentional about how I use my time. I don't lie awake at night worrying about what I should be doing. Those things get scheduled.

Identify your concerns and the actions needed to alleviate them, and then schedule them in your calendar. That's the application of the Matrix.

You have perfect freedom and a blank slate within the Matrix. Your job is to decide how to fill it. You might say, *well and dandy, but the reality is I have a house and mortgage; I need to work forty hours a week. That's not exactly a blank slate.* I can understand how people come to feel constrained in their lives. I might remind them, though—you choose to have a home, therefore you choose to have a mortgage and therefore you choose to earn a living. Correct? You could choose not to have a home; you could make other choices to spend your time and your life in other ways.

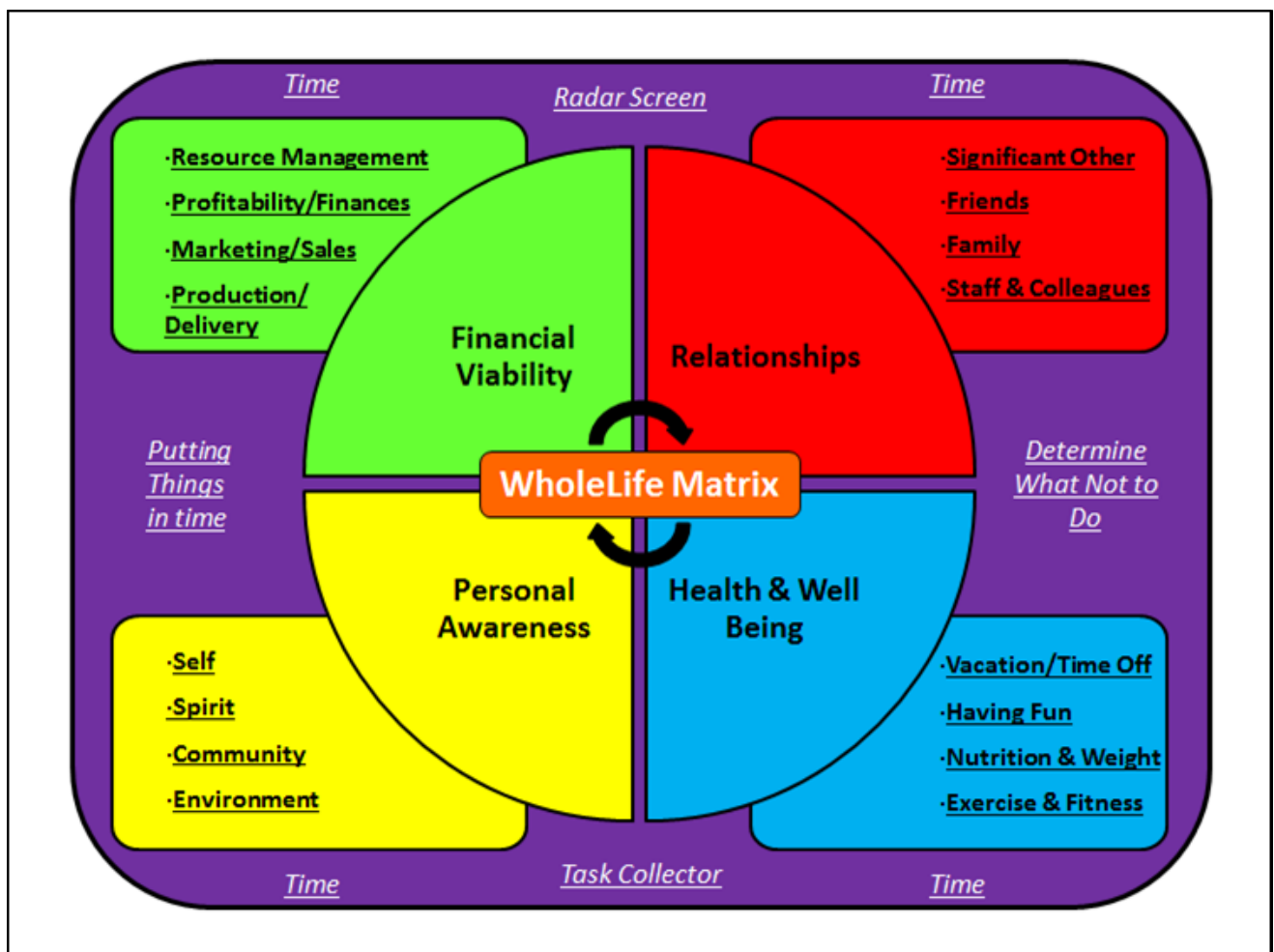
The Power of Choices

When I work with a client one of my first objectives is to help them recognize that they have choices. Power comes from not only having choices but recognizing what they are. When you feel trapped and without options you also feel powerless. So, when you say to yourself, *I have to work because I have to pay my mortgage because I need this house in this neighborhood because...* you aren't recognizing the choices you have made

or could make and become a victim in a situation of your own making. When you feel powerless, you are receiving a signal that you might not be recognizing choices you do have. Do some soul searching. Figure out your options and move into the power and freedom of choice.

Introducing the WholeLife Matrix

After using the Table of Life model, it became clear that life is far more complex. Therefore, I developed the WholeLife Matrix model, expanding the legs into quadrants with more facets of each leg. This model starts with the four areas of life and dives successively deeper into sections needing your time and attention.



Quadrant 1: Financial Viability

The **Financial Viability** quadrant sections are: Resource Management Profitability/Finances, Marketing/Sales, Production/Delivery. Let's start with profitability. Say you want to increase profit and need to design a way to generate more income. You will need to decide how to allocate time and energy for this task.

You may need to allocate additional time to the appropriate sections of the quadrant to increase income, for example improving productivity, making more sales or managing resources.

Here is how the four financial viability sections work for me. In order for me to be profitable I need to be coaching people. So, a portion of my work time (resource management) is scheduled for coaching appointments (production/delivery). But, I need to also be marketing my services (marketing and sales) to ensure that I'm going to be making money (profitability). Because if I'm not selling my services then I'm not coaching people and I won't be making money and that would be a problem.

How can you apply the thinking behind the Financial Viability quadrant to your business and life? Start by quantifying what financial viability means to you. Does it mean making \$150,000 a year? Or \$1,000,000? Does it mean paying all your bills every month or having \$500,000 in your retirement account? Maybe it means owning a business that generates \$5,000,000 per year in net profit. Being specific about your vision of financial viability allows you to determine the actions you need to take to realize your vision.

Let's say you want to make \$1,000,000 per year. Does your business have enough resources (materials, inventory, and people) to sell enough products for you to make \$1,000,000? If not, what do you need to do to get your company to that point? Looking at profitability, how much product would you need to sell to generate enough profit to leave \$1,000,000 for you to take as a distribution? How would you need to control your costs to earn that profit?

From a marketing and sales standpoint, evaluate how many sales you need to make to hit your goal. Is that possible in the time you have, or will you need to hire additional sales people? How will the cost of additional salespeople impact your profits? Finally you need to consider production and delivery capacity. Can your current operation create enough product to fulfill the sales goal that will get you \$1,000,000? If not, where will you get that capacity? From more efficiency? From outsourcing work?

You can see that using the Matrix is a way to help you quantify your intentions, and set specific actions for achieving them. Each quadrant impacts the others, and all are necessary to achieve that balance that will help you reach your goal. The Matrix quadrants are starting points, and should elicit ideas and questions that will help you identify the actions that will turn your intentions into reality.

Quadrant 2: Relationships

The next quadrant on the Matrix is the **Relationships** quadrant. This area of your life addresses all of your relationships. The four areas of this quadrant include Significant Other, Friends, Family, Staff & Colleagues.

The Significant Other

When someone says that they want a relationship and yet don't move towards it by

Coaching Focus:

I work with numbers of clients who would like to find a significant other. Here's how our conversation typically goes:

Ralph - How many people did you introduce yourself to this week?

Client - None.

Ralph - How do expect anyone to find you if you stay in your house and you don't go out and don't introduce yourself?

Client - It's probably not going to happen.

Ralph - Probably not, especially if you aren't taking any action.

participating in activities that connect them to other people, you wonder if they really want one. And, certainly if they don't take action, that relationship may be a long time coming.

I coach people on how to work around this difficulty by adapting a different attitude and approaching the problem with tools they have learned to use in business.

It's a no-brainer, right? *If I want to get married then I better go meet people.* But, a lot of people have difficulty taking the necessary steps. So I coach clients on a mode of thinking that circumvents the usual resistance. If you were a client I would ask you to make a list of roughly thirty items. I call these list items *conditions of satisfaction*. These are the talents, qualities and characteristics that you are looking for in a partner. Then, you go shopping. You go out and find potential partners. They may be found for example, through an Internet dating

service, a friend or going to a community function. Once you have a potential partner in front of you, introduce yourself and interview the person to discover if they have the qualities you are looking for. It's no different than looking for an employee.

I liken this process to a marketing exercise. With marketing often you need to spread the net wide to reach and find your potential customers. The same goes with a life partner. Here, though, you are only looking for one customer and they need to be just the right one. If you're looking for a relationship then it is one of the most important marketing/shopping events in your life. Interview fifty to one-hundred potential candidates. Keep momentum and use your list to guide you. Don't compromise. You may have deal breakers on your list. For example, you may not want someone who smokes. So, if you meet someone who does, cross them off and move on. Too often people say, *oh, they're really attractive so I can bend my rules; they'll change* but don't count on it.

Shop until you find what you want. I often hear, *there's no one out there for me* or *I just can't find the right person*. I cannot believe that someone in Los Angeles, for example, cannot find a compatible partner. Millions of people inhabit this planet; there are a lot of choices. Shop and go find one. Is it a comfortable process? No. Confronting? Yes. Does it take time? Yes. When you find yourself stuck in a pattern of inaction, evaluate your level of commitment, for this is the barometer that measures success in any quadrant of the Matrix.

Friends / Family / Staff / Colleagues

When we think about relationships, our minds usually gravitate toward the significant other in our lives, or our desire to have such a partner. It is equally important to focus on the other people in our lives, and devote time to nurturing different kinds of relationships.

The most profound and powerful relationship you may have is with family. Your ties to your parents pre-date your birth. Your siblings are the people with whom you share personal history. Your children are forever tied to you, even as they mature and lead lives of their own. Healthy family ties are essential for nurturing feelings of confidence, support, love and accountability. Few will argue that people who come from a close, nurturing family are often the most capable and successful. They say you can't choose your family, but you can choose how you deal with them. Family relations may become strained over time due to circumstances, but that doesn't mean you shouldn't reach out from time to time to acknowledge your relative and the fact they "knew you when." Accept that sometimes family members have strange ways of showing they love you, and strive to keep them in your life in ways that support both you and them. From the occasional phone call to the weekly meal, scheduling time for family has long term benefits for all your relationships.

Friends are another indispensable relationship. Everyone needs at least one friend. But how do you nurture friendships when time is scarce? Some people can remain friends with only limited contact over the years. They pick right up where they left off.

Other friends demand more attention, and expect more of your time. Just remember that friendship is a two way street. Both of you need to get support out of the relationship.

Social media is one way to stay in touch with a click of a mouse. Even so, nothing takes the place of being together. Even a half hour coffee meeting will help strengthen those friendships that matter most.

What about your colleagues and staff? Chances are you spend more time with these people than all the other people in your life. It is worth your time to develop these relationships and to see these people as who they are beyond the workplace. Each person in your office has an important job to fill. Take time to acknowledge each person's contribution. Learn a little bit about that person. Find out what they want to achieve from working together. When your colleagues become friends, or at least trusted co-workers, everyone benefits, and the result is typically a more productive, successful environment.

What relationships do you need to work on? Do you want to connect more with family or friends? Or, develop stronger relationships with staff? If so, then schedule more time in your calendar to devote to these relationships. I have two friends that I've known since 1988. We schedule dinner once a month and every time we get together we schedule our next dinner. We have shared dinner nearly every month since 1988! The dinner date shows up in my calendar as a reoccurring event. I'm committed to keeping that relationship in existence. I have other old friends that I haven't seen because I didn't commit to or devote time to the relationship. The friendship faded away. Once again we

see that scheduling time is essential for the success of any relationship, be it with a significant other, family, friends or colleagues. A little time spent on relationships goes a very long way toward keeping your life in balance.

Quadrant 3: Health and Well-being

The third quadrant is the **Health and Well-being** life area. In this sector of the Matrix energy and time gets devoted to: Vacation/Time Off, Having Fun, Nutrition & Weight, and Exercise & Fitness.

Vacation/Time Off

Many people, especially business owners, have difficulty allotting time for vacation. They will say *oh, I really want to take a vacation. I say, well then schedule it!* Put it in your calendar, book it, and buy a ticket. Business owners who don't schedule vacations rarely get one. I'm speaking from experience. Between 1969 and 1981 I didn't take a vacation. Twelve years is a long time without a break. I started scheduling vacations in 1981 and have consistently taken one every year since. I discovered that scheduling and booking the vacation pretty much guarantees it happens. Vacations are a time to relax and renew, see new things and enjoy yourself.

Coaching focus

I often suggest that clients schedule time in their calendars to do nothing. These are *do nothing days*. On a *do nothing day* do whatever you feel like doing, but don't schedule yourself. Flow with your natural rhythm and follow your inner impulse. If you feel like getting up and then going back to bed, go back to bed. Go ahead, schedule a *do nothing day*!

Having Fun

But you don't have to wait for a vacation to slip in some fun. I hear clients complain that they never have fun. They have forgotten how or they don't have the time. Well, whatever fun is for you put it in your calendar. Schedule fun time and learn what gives you kicks and makes you smile and laugh.

Nutrition & Weight

There are probably a million books and self-help guides for those who would like to lose weight and develop healthier eating habits. No one will argue that maintaining a healthy weight and proper nutrition are important keys to living longer, feeling well, and feeling good about yourself. So why do so many people struggle with this particular issue?

Once again, I believe one of the main culprits is time. If you know you need to lose weight, you have to schedule time to do it. It took a lot of your time to gain the weight and it will take time to take it off. Losing weight involves scheduling time to exercise, to learn about good nutrition, calories and portion control. It involves scheduling time to prepare the right meals. And for some people it may require setting specific times of the day to eat so that they can stick to that schedule.

It can be very easy to opt for the drive through burger and shake instead of going home and cutting up vegetables. Take time to scout out healthier restaurants in your area, or find prepared meals that are healthy and in your calorie range. Stock up on things you can take to the office and keep there instead of going out to lunch every day.

When it comes to losing weight, commitment is as important as time. At the end of the day, you have to want to be thin more than you want the milk shake. Scheduling the actions in your calendar that will help you get there, even if it's "eat salad for lunch" helps to create a tangible existence system for your success. Your weight loss calendar should also include periodic benchmark measurements. Schedule a weekly weigh in, or track your daily calorie intake. Don't forget rewards! Schedule that trip to the mall at the end of the month so you can buy something in the next size down. And having that occasional treat in the calendar (ice cream every other Friday) will help you resist temptation in between. Use your calendar as your nutrition and weight loss champion, your partner in this important and life changing activity.

Exercise & Fitness

Another element of the health and well-being quadrant is keeping fit. Schedule time to hit the gym and exercise. If you find this difficult, it may help to hire a trainer and pay them in advance. Get your exercise in, and get the support you need to make it happen.

You can also look for those little ways to change your routine, like taking the stairs, or parking as far away from the office as possible. Try to find ten things you can change about your daily routine that will involve moving around. Walk the dog, walk to the corner store instead of driving, or schedule an evening walk with your significant other instead of having dessert! You can check off both time spent on fitness and relationships at the same time!

Another key to finding success with exercise is to build up to it. No one is going to run a marathon on the first day. Start by scheduling 15 or 30 minute workout sessions three or four times a week. You should start noticing a difference in how you feel after the first couple of weeks. As you get stronger, schedule longer workouts or schedule them more frequently. Be sure to mix things up. Getting bored with your exercise regimen makes it easy to drop it out. Look for new things to try. Go dancing, kayaking, or hiking, but go somewhere. Before you know it you will come to see this exercise time as an important part of your personal fulfillment. And time spent on fitness will also benefit other areas such as productivity, weight loss, and relationships. Fitness is key to your WholeLife balance!

You must schedule time for rest as well. Everyone must have time to restore and rejuvenate in order to function at peak levels. It may seem silly to schedule time for sleeping, but it is also a great relief to come to that time of the day when you allow yourself to stop doing everything and focus on rest. Your body, mind and business will thank you for scheduling ample time to sleep and recharge your batteries.

Quadrant 4: Personal Awareness

The final quadrant is **Personal Awareness**. This quadrant also has four sections: Self, Spirit, Community and Environment.

Self

Personal awareness time is connection time but not necessarily to others like in the relationship quadrant. Personal awareness time is devoted to connecting with yourself, to

nature, and to your spiritual life. For me, personal time includes painting on canvas while connecting to my inner source of creativity. When I paint I experience a valuable emotional release. I listen to music and let paint flow from brush to canvas almost of its own accord. It's essential that you schedule some time to let your creative side express itself. Your commitment to creativity will benefit other areas of your life. You may experience yourself as more effective, self-assured and resourceful. Since I've committed to my art, I have observed that my consulting is far more effective and creative.

Creativity is a force in the Universe, a power that flows through us and continues on its path to others. It is important not to ignore this power. I believe the reason we are on earth is to allow for this flow and expansion of creativity. Whether it shows up as painting, dancing, writing or an idea makes no difference because it is the power of the Universe expressing itself through what we say or do. The more aware you are of this creative power the greater access you have to bring it into your life and the lives of others.

It is essential that you give yourself time to decompress and let go of the tensions of life. When you connect to yourself and listen to the voice inside, you have an opportunity to learn about yourself and to assess whether you are enjoying life. Why are you here? What do you want to be known for? What will they say about you after you are gone? Answering these questions can help you determine what Self means to you. Look within and connect with the Self to create peace and balance in your life. Step

outside the hustle and bustle of life. Try meditation and watch your breath to relax your mind and body.

What are you doing for self-improvement? If you are not improving yourself you are on the decline. Read, listen to music, look at art or participate in any other activity that connects you with Self. Feed the inner source so it can support your full expression in the world. Learning something new opens new vistas and opportunities and lends fresh insight into your life and path. It is critical that you do not overlook this key component of life. When you quiet your mind and listen to your inner voice for guidance and direction, you invite joy to fill the dark cracks of your being.

Spirit

When I am in touch with my Spirit I know I am more centered and effective; I also do my best work and reach for a higher purpose. I know the force is with me when I am in the flow of life. During those moments it seems that everything I do brings joy to me and to those around me. I strive to be happy every day.

Spirit can mean many different things to different people. For most it means a power that is greater than themselves, whose reach extends beyond the physical world. Connection and relationship to that spirit which transcends our mortality helps us to balance our earthly existence in the context of a greater possibility. Each of us searches for meaning in our lives. Spirituality can be the gateway to finding that purpose that influences our daily actions. Scheduling time to worship, meditate or pray can have

tremendous benefits for all aspects of your life, not only your personal awareness and relationships, but your business success as well.

Community

How do you honor your community? What are you doing to give back? How do you express yourself out in the world? Scheduling time to contribute to your community contributes to a balanced life. We are here to interact with and help each other. So the more you schedule time to help others the more you are contributing to the world.

The very word community implies that you are part of a group of people that share some common bond, be it geography, religion or other affiliation. You can find your community in any number of places. If you haven't considered making a contribution to your community, perhaps you first need to get specific about what community means to you. Your community should be something that you care about preserving, enhancing and participating in. Once you have a sense of your community, schedule an opportunity to spend time learning about it. Whether that is talking to people, reading online, or walking around, take time to decide how you fit in and what you would like your contribution to be. Being part of a community is more than paying taxes; it should be an expression of where you feel you belong.

Environment

What are you doing to take care of the environment around you? Do you keep your space clean and open? Are you recycling and reducing our negative impact on the planet? Find ways to make a larger contribution to the world around you. The earth is on

loan to us for the short span of our lifetime and it is our responsibility to take care of it. The earth is 4.54 billion years old. And, each of us visits for a mere breath in comparison. During that time we are like renters. We must use what has been given to us responsibly and return it in the same condition or better. If we don't, then it is our children and their children who pay for our irresponsibility.

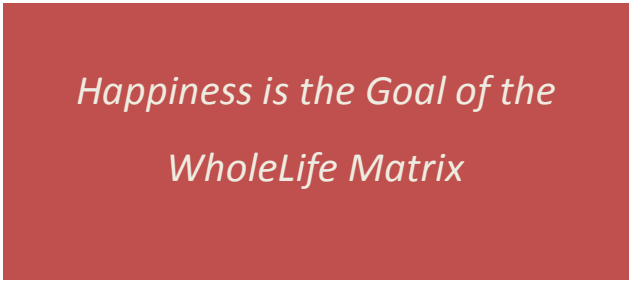
As with every other quadrant of the Matrix, caring for your part of the environment has to happen in time. There are many things you can do as a regular routine, but how about scheduling an hour each month to plant or tend a garden, or help older people clear some clutter from their garage? Caring for the environment can be much more than recycling cans. It can be an opportunity to touch your community, your relationships, and your business too. Be sure to evaluate what your company is doing to stay "green." Look for ways to be more efficient and reduce waste. You will wind up saving money and a piece of the planet all at the same time.

Make sure this leg of your table is strong and stable. Many discover this leg is their shortest. Coming last doesn't mean least.

The Value of the WholeLife Matrix

The WholeLife Matrix is a tool to help you along your path. It is intended to provide direction and show you where you need to go to find success. If you don't know what's next or what you want to do, go to the Matrix. It may shine a light on where you should be devoting time and spending energy. It may also lead you to recognizing the next steps you need to take for more joy and fulfillment.

As you familiarize yourself with the different quadrants, and start scheduling time in each one, you will start to see how they intersect and interact. You will start to understand that in order to achieve balance in your life, you need to take action in each quadrant, and have a plan for what that action will be. Use the WholeLife Matrix as your road map to achieving your intentions, and living the happy and purposeful life that you desire and deserve.



*Happiness is the Goal of the
WholeLife Matrix*

For more details on integrating the WholeLife Matrix into your everyday life, see my blog posted on my website at www.Consulting2win.com. To share any thoughts, questions or responses contact me by email Ralph@Consulting2Win.com.