

HOW TO CREATE TIME FOR LIFE, EVEN IN AN UNSUPPORTIVE WORKPLACE ...

*"The majority of employees who have access to flexible work arrangements are reluctant to use them. Many people fear doing so shows low work commitment and will have a negative impact on their career."
HBR August 2019*

Sound familiar? This quote is from a recent study of 400 Italian working parents.

It's a global problem ... The researcher behind this study makes the case that patterns set by "Happy Workaholics" are contributing to this problem. Is there a global trend where too many of us think of "free time" - the time when we are not working - as a waste of energy? Read on to learn more.

It's not just flexibility, it's about health and well-being ... Kevin O'Leary from the TV show Shark Tank brags that he and his employees never turn off work. Is this the future we want? Especially when research proves that employees who feel supported to take vacations are happier with their jobs, their company, their relationships, and their health.

We can support you to make change ... Is there a way to counter this trend? Believe it or not, change can begin with the simple act of fully (or significantly) turning off work on vacation. Join us next week on our Thursdays with ThirdPath webinar, when three experts will show you how to embrace more time for family and friends. [Register here.](#)

Thanks for being part of the growing, vibrant, inspiring ThirdPath community!
/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

PS - Support our nonprofit's cutting edge work and the free resources we make available. [Become a donor today.](#)

Missed our most recent TWTP webinar?

In November, **Pepper Schwartz** joined us. Her book, *Peer Marriage*, was one of the first written about Shared Care. Today she's an expert on the TV show, *Married at First Sight*. Hear our lively discussion with Pepper and learn how families have changed (and not changed) in the past 20 years. [Listen to it here.](#)

Download the [full list](#) of our interactive webinars. **Want to join the next one?**

Email: [Rashis617\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:Rashis617@gmail.com) **Subject:** Thursdays with ThirdPath

Be the Change You Want to See

Did you know turning off work on vacation can promote significant positive change? Whether you are taking a stay-vacation this holiday, or planning something more exotic, our next Thursday webinar will explore this truth.

It turns out planning a vacation can also boost your happiness. People who plan vacations are happier than non-planners in a variety of ways - including being markedly happier with their personal relationships.

So follow these simple steps as you plan how to turn off work this holiday season. And don't forget to check out our free "[Vacation Check List](#)" for more tips.



1) Plan ahead.

Think through what work needs to be tended to. Determine which tasks can be front-loaded, delegated or postponed.

2) Clarify and manage expectations.

Agree on the best process for making time-sensitive decisions and managing unexpected work responsibilities. Let everyone involved know your plan, and who is responsible while you're gone.

3) Anticipate and define emergencies.

Realize that emergencies can happen, so be flexible. Think ahead about challenges that could arise and plan out different scenarios for effectively addressing them. Also, set clear boundaries for yourself by defining what an emergency is so that all work doesn't become an emergency.

4) Manage communication.

Decide how you prefer to manage on-going communication while you're away. Set up an out-of-office reminder with instructions of who to contact in an emergency. If necessary, check emails at preset intervals. Choose one person as your emergency contact and let them know how you can be reached.

5) Schedule in "quiet days."

Avoid scheduling a lot of meetings and calls a few days before you leave and when you return.

Work Life Balance - A Global Challenge

When 400 working parents from Italy were asked to rate their organization's work culture, 81% rated it as unsupportive.

The research also revealed that companies are more supportive of women who request family leave than men. And that fathers - even when they are entitled to do so - prefer not to take longer leaves, or days off associated with family leave to avoid potential negative consequences.



The researcher, Marcello Russo, will join our next Thursday webinar to explain why these facts aren't just bad for parents, they are also bad for business.

In his recent [HBR article](#) Marcello described how both parties - employers and employees - "need to change their mindsets and redefine what it means to be an 'ideal worker'... ***Many of us have an innate desire to protect the happy workaholic identities we have constructed...*** and to avoid our fear of what a novel and more balanced professional identity could look like.

"This fear is largely born out of the fact that many of us do not know what to do when we are not working. Scholars argue that because we give significantly less consideration to how we spend our free time, than how we spend our work time, ***we have begun to think of free time as a waste of energy, when in fact, data shows the opposite...***

"We believe that it is important for us as workers and leaders to cultivate broader professional identities, ones that leave space for family, community, and that find meaning in activities beyond work. ***Once we begin to value our leisure time, we will more easily be able to find balance between - and separate - who we are at work and who we are outside of the office.***"

[Register here](#) to join next week's webinar with Marcello Russo and two other guests who will provide inspiring examples of how we can push against this troubling trend.

Inspired to "take a pause" and move away from an overly work focused approach? Read this month's blog to learn [8 different ways to pause that will increase your happiness and effectiveness.](#)