

QUANTUM COACHING

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The recent notion of "work/life balance" is based on a "Newtonian" view of the world. The Newtonian view holds to the existence of laws or principles, which underlie an essentially predictable and mechanistic universe. From this view arise our ideas about organization and working life as problematic events. Organization problems respond to sequencing (scientific management) or processing (operational research, re-engineering) solution to improve efficiency of the input-transformation-output machinery.

However, we now know that we live in a "Quantum" universe. This view of the world is governed by uncertainty and unpredictability. We can't order chaotic events, but we can determine the probability of their occurrence. This quantum view has challenged what was once considered certain. Living systems are discovered to be self-determining through countless iterations of simple functions, yielding wonderfully chaotic expressions of pattern (fractal geometry, complexity science).

The human body is not a discreet organization of compartments. Every cell "talks" to every other cell. The mind is in the whole body, and we both generate and are influenced by various forms of energy. Just holding a strongly held intention can produce detectable changes to your DNA.

In this quantum world change happens in a nano-second. Energy is information. You know it by the flickering indicator lights on your computer, or by the "gut feeling" of intuition. Now we want organization and working life to be fluid, flexible, and creative. Success depends on "who gets to the future first". Chaotic expression of new ideas and concepts becomes the fuel that drives the "new economy".

Yet, organization structure based on Newtonian principles is at odds with our quantum world. This is the challenge facing human enterprise. Ultimately, organization structure reflects our collective view of the world. See the organization as machine/computer, and you treat chaos as anarchy. Look at the marvelous complexity of human relationships and creativity at work through "quantum eyes" and you see pattern and form arising from uncertainty.

How do you separate the quantum package of energy that is "you" into two distinct compartments – "work" and "life"? You might say that you occupy different roles, but this is merely a social construct. In fact, how you define yourself in different contexts is simply a matter of choice. And that choice is driven by intention (whether consciously held or not).

At the quantum level, who you are is only an expression of your intention, moment-by-moment. So, the notion of "work/life balance" is really a question of knowing your intention at the deepest level and expressing it in healthful, ethical, and creative ways. How do you "work your life and live your work"?

A new forum is emerging to address this question. It is finding expression through ideas such as "the soul of economics", "the conscious organization", "liberating the corporate soul", "the biology of business", and "business spirit".

Finding your intention is like finding your rhythm. Everyone responds to music. Everyone has intention. You can learn rhythm and you can learn "conscious intention". It is a matter of discovering some key competencies, some of which happen to overlap with those of Emotional Intelligence (EIC), and some which derive from intuition and self-regulation.

One of these competencies is establishing a good harmony with your body's biological rhythms (e.g., circadian rhythms).

Organization change begins with a powerfully held conscious intention at any level or position in the hierarchy – the "power of one". This sets up a "resonant field" which attracts others. At a certain "bifurcation point" (the "100th monkey" phenomena), the resonant field starts to dominate, and change occurs.

This is also what makes properly conducted one-on-one coaching such a powerful practice, particularly at the executive level. It's all about helping you to "find your swing" (see the movie, "The Legend of Bagger Vance"), or to locate your most deeply held intention. Then learning how to "resonate" it for good.

You can learn to find balance in your life by locating your intention. What are the dominant stories or mythologies of your place of work?

What is the "soul" of your workplace? Is there congruity between your most deeply held values and beliefs and those of your work colleagues? Is there somewhere else you are meant to be? How can you be a force for good?

SOME USEFUL READING

Business Spirit Journal,
<http://www.bizspirit.com/bsj/index.html>

Cherniss, G., and Goleman, D. (2001)
The Emotionally Intelligent Workplace,
San Francisco, Jossey-Bass.

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The Alchemist,
San Francisco, Harper.

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Executive Coaching: Developing Managerial Wisdom in a World of Chaos,
Washington, DC, American Psychological Association.

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Energy Medicine: The Scientific Basis,
Edinburgh, Churchill Livingstone.

Pert, C.B. (1997).
Molecules of Emotion, New York, Scribner.

Rowling, J.K. (1997)
Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone,
London, Bloomsbury.

Wheatley, M.J. (1992)
Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organization from an Orderly Universe,
San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler.