



## **Sue's Top 10 Tips for Creating Work Life Balance**

**(yes it is possible!)**

### **1. Prioritise**

List your personal commitments in order of importance

These could include partner, children, extended family, friends, relaxation, hobbies etc. Now go through your week and work out how much time you currently spend on each - be honest and include weekends.

Regardless of whether you THINK you have any choice, are you devoting too much time to work at the expense of your family life? If you are and it's causing you anxiety, it's time to change things.

### **2. Dare to dream**

Think about how it would be in your dream scenario; really go into detail – what would it look like (best it could be), what would you be doing, where would you be, who would you be with, how much time would you be spending on each of those commitments in your list? What steps could you take to change things?

### **3. Is work working for you?**

Are you happy with the hours you're working? What do you get out of your work / career? Make a list of the pros and cons. What would you want to change? What's the big step here?

If it's just a matter of hours then look into more flexible working. There are now plenty of online recruitment agencies specialising in matching working mums with understanding employers – a great place to start is [www.womenlikeus.org.uk](http://www.womenlikeus.org.uk)

And if the list of cons far outweighs the pros – is it time to do something else? Is there something you've always wanted to do? This is your one life – how do you want to spend it?

#### **4. Ask for help**

This is often a hard one - I know! Letting go can be very difficult but just ask yourself the question: “How is it serving me trying to cope with all of this by myself?”

Asking for help is often the best and quickest way out of stressful situations and dilemmas and people are often very flattered by being asked! So, recognise when you need help, understand why you don't ask for it, and don't leave it too long – the sooner you ask the better!

#### **5. Choose 'good enough' over 'perfect' – and delegate!**

When something needs to be done ask yourself the question: “Is it important that the job is simply done, or that it's done perfectly?” If it just needs to get done, don't waste your valuable time and energy on making it perfect – let go!

Also ask yourself the question: “Does this job just have to get done or does it need to be done by me, my way?” Again, if you don't have to do it, who else could? You could delegate it to someone paid – yes, a cleaner – or someone in the family – yes a partner!

#### **6. Do something for yourself**

I'm talking about something that you enjoy and look forward to. I don't mean something you think will be good for you or things that your partner and children would enjoy. This is for you. Whatever it is – going

for a drink with an old friend, going down the gym – make it non-negotiable and regular – say once a week. You deserve it. If you're happy, everyone's happy.

## 7. Slow down

Who was it who said having children wasn't a sprint but a marathon?? Well you may pride yourself on getting everything done and making everything happen – but at what and whose expense? By rushing around and multitasking like a madwoman – what are you fully experiencing or enjoying? Do one thing at a time. Enjoy what you are doing in that moment. Give yourself permission to slow down.

## 8. Say NO

I'm not talking about saying no to working within your job description or saying no to everything and anything at home. This is about all of those extras you're asked to take on - both at home and at work. If you have a tendency to say 'yes', take on too much and then get overloaded, read on...

- DELAY - if someone asks you to do something extra say you'll get back to them in five minutes or when you can check your diary. Use this time to think about whether you really *want* to say yes or no.
- PRACTICE - If the answer is 'no' - say it – and keep on saying it if it's what you *truly* want to say. Practice saying it at every opportunity, every time another appeal is made to your good nature etc. And don't justify yourself or give excuses - a simple "No, I'm sorry I don't have time" etc is ok!

## 9. Get organised

Find techniques and systems that work for you. We're all different so what works for one person won't work for the other. Is there's some technique you've used in the past that worked well for you? Ask those who know you – what do they think would work well for you. One thing that works for me is writing down the tasks I want to get done each day

rather than working from a huge 'to do' list. And be realistic – the last thing you want to do is make yourself feel bad about failing.

### **10. Don't be a Victim – or worse, a martyr!**

As far as I'm concerned this is the big one. If you crack this – all the rest will be easy. This is the biggest shift for most of my clients who are working Mums. When they realise what I'm about to tell you, it simply changes their lives.

And it's this.... you have a CHOICE!!

Yes, you really do. Yes you can sit there and listen to those sabotaging voices in your head – the ones telling you what you “have to do / should do / need to do / can't do / it's not possible to have” OR you can CHOOSE to do things how you really want to.

By listening to those voices you *are* living the life of a victim (your choice), and worse, if you then sit there and moan about it - you're being a martyr (again your choice) – OR you can start making choices and changing things.

How would you rather live?

**Sue Belton is a Certified Life Coach who specialises in helping women achieve the work life balance *they* want**

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