

Striving for Tech-Life Balance

By Donna Rawady

Recently, I took an evening walk, and noticed an elderly gentleman shuffling toward me. As I was about to pass him, I realized that he wasn't aware of me at all. He was looking down at his phone and texting while walking. Seeing an elderly person texting was a first for me.

In 2006, I wrote an article for a business magazine in which I anticipated how technology was likely to impact our work-life balance based on our around-the-clock accessibility relating to global work demands. And now, nearly eight years later, in addition to being responsive to a global market, 24-hour connectability to our business associates, friends and family is accepted as a norm.

Our devices have become personal assistants and conduits to social media, entertainment and the latest news. They provide an instantaneous connection to our families, friends, colleagues, clients and vendors — all of whom are awaiting our timely response. Is it any wonder we find ourselves exhausted at the end of the day?

How likely are we to disconnect from our devices for any length of time to fully engage with people right in front of us? Are we at risk for a lack of quality time with ourselves and/or our loved ones? To take a true vacation, do we need to travel to some remote island without cell or Internet access, or leave our devices behind? Good luck with that one.

I'm on a mission to work toward tech-life balance (easier said than done, I realize) by choosing chunks of time when I'll disconnect from my devices, and just live and breathe. What's interesting to me is that there was a time, not so long ago, when simply living and being in the natural world, without communication technology, was not so strange.

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