



Work-life integration – a step closer

In November 2015, Hong Kong's South China Morning Post (SMCP) published an article on family health: how Hong Kong dads battle to balance work and family and why men feel pressured to show commitment to their work. The article highlighted the fact that dads in Hong Kong struggle to balance work-life integration, often experiencing emotions such as guilt, frustration and resentment.

This comes to no surprise as research by Community Business, a non-profit organization based in Hong Kong, shows that 54 per cent of men are willing to leave their current job if a new job allows them to spend more time with family. The finding echoes the sentiment of many of our clients – both corporations and individuals – who are concerned and are now proactively seeking healthier work-life opportunities.

Of course, this challenge and sentiment belongs not only to men but to women too, who often prioritise their children and partner's health and wellbeing before their own.

This calls for action. Ask yourself the following questions: how much closer are you to healthy work-life integration? How do you manage your hours; your family and work events; your health and time for personal growth?

In order to achieve 'work-life' integration we need to feel empowered, set priorities and get into action. This does not mean quitting jobs or yelling at bosses, this means integrating self-care moments in our daily lives and even simple things such as traveling with the gym clothes or socializing more with friends can make a positive difference.

If you recognize the need to achieve positive work-life integration in your life, start with three simple steps this New Year:

1. **Health check.** Book in that long overdue health check or appointment with your family doctor. We simply can't perform without our health in order and we need our bodies to sustain us in this lifetime. A health check will not only assess your current health, it will also draw awareness to areas that require attention so you can plan a customized diet and physical regimen for 2016.
2. **Improve personal energy.** We often face moments of low energy, which result in us feeling depleted and demotivated. Heading outdoors, besides burning calories and toning your muscles, can improve your energy levels. A health study found that going for a 20-minute al-fresco stroll twice a week was more restorative than getting the same exercise in an indoor environment like a mall. When was the last time you enjoyed Hong Kong's plethora of trails and beaches?



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3. **Improving our diet with Superfoods.** in our busy and hectic lives we are often lacking in important minerals and vitamins due to high levels of stress and anxiety. Stress and continuous muscle contraction, for instance, can deplete your system of magnesium and calcium. Superfoods are foods that are nutrient-rich, low in calories, and superior sources of antioxidants and essential nutrients. Integrating one or two items in your monthly diet can assist you in building physical resilience and addressing natural depletion. In Hong Kong, we have an unlimited supply of Superfoods such as Maca Powder, Goji Berries and Raw Cacao to name a few. Start a new shopping list for 2016!

Remember, work-life integration is not a 'nice to have' but key to thrive in modern days.

If we take a 'wait and see' approach, we can spiral down and potentially reach **burnout point**. To rebound from a burnout situation is very difficult and often requires medical long-term support. Why wait?

Take action: Make 2016 a more healthy and balanced year.

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