How was your day? We all get asked this question regularly. However, besides billing our time, how many of us really pay attention to how we spend our time during the day?

Why am I asking these questions? Well, we are almost halfway through 2018. Where did the time go?

As attorneys, we regularly feel that there are not enough hours in the day and wonder if a work/life balance is possible. And there is no denying, our time is limited. Therefore, if we are regularly spending time in ways we don’t want or wasting time, this will negatively impact our health and job performance. Consequently, it is important to regularly evaluate your time.

TIME FOR AN EXERCISE

I am going to share an eye-opening exercise my meditation teacher, Elesa Commerse, taught me. This exercise will take you a few minutes. If you are about to stop reading because you don’t think you have a few minutes, you especially need to do this exercise! Here is the exercise:

1. Get a plain piece of paper or open a new Word document on your computer;
2. Write or type out the 24 hours in a day (12 a.m., 1 a.m., 2 a.m., 3 a.m., and so on); and
3. For each hour you listed, write next to it how you generally spend that hour of the day (10 p.m. to 6 a.m., I would write “sleeping.”)

Here is an example of how a day might look:
- 12 to 6 a.m.: Sleeping
- 6 to 6:30 a.m.: Morning routine
- 6:30 to 7:30 a.m.: Exercise
- 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.: Shower and eat breakfast
- 8:30 to 9 a.m.: Travel to work
- 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.: Work (eat lunch at work)
- 6 to 6:30 p.m.: Travel home
- 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.: Dinner
- 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.: Catch up with things around the house, help kids with homework, watch TV, social media, read, listen to music, catch up with family/friends
- 9:30 to 10 p.m.: Get ready for bed
- 10 to 11:59 p.m.: Sleeping

You can even get more specific with your day, if useful.

WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Now that you know how you spend your day, it is next important to know what you need to be healthy. Is it cooking nourishing meals? Spending time in nature? Exercise? Meditation/prayer?

We all have things that help us recharge and ultimately make us better lawyers and people. On your same piece of paper or Word document, list five things you need in your day/week to maintain your health and well-being. Also, indicate how long you need to do those things per day or week.

ARE YOU GETTING WHAT YOU NEED?

At this point, I am guessing you are looking at your list and thinking once you complete getting ready/grooming, eating, traveling to and from work and working, there is not much time remaining in your 24 hours. Take a close look at how you generally spend your day. Then look at the things you need to maintain your wellness. What matches up? What does not?

We all have the same 24 hours in a day and as much as some of us may want it, no one is getting more than 24 hours. Do you have time in your day to do what you need and want to do and also do the things that keep you healthy?

If your answer is “no,” you need to ask yourself if there are any changes you can make. Are there places where you are wasting time? Are there places where you can say no? What does work/life balance mean to you? Can you replace something in your day with something that would improve your overall well-being? Are you willing to make changes?

NOW IS THE TIME

As Dr. Seuss reminds us, “How did it get so late so soon?” Some of you might be asking, how is it already summer? However, now that you have examined the way you spend your day, you probably have a better sense of the answer.

Your time is your life. Therefore, my challenge to you is take a little time to evaluate where you can make some small adjustments in your day that can have a big impact on your overall health and well-being. It is time!

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