

Holistic
**WORK-LIFE
BALANCE**



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR CLIENTS OF
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WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Work-Life Balance requires us to consider how all the aspects of our lives are interconnected. What happens in our relationships affects our professional/career life and our health. What's going on with our bodies affects our interactions with our friends. Money issues can make it difficult to work out relationship challenges or to have fun and relax. And so on.

Below you will find 12 domains of daily life to which we must all pay attention, to one degree or another. Using the form on the next page, I'd like you to start by giving each of those areas of life your subjective satisfaction rating. Zero "0" means "completely dissatisfied"; ten "10" means 100% satisfied. Choose any number between 0 and 10. As you give your rating, think about why you are giving that rating and what would make you 100% satisfied with that aspect of your life. Everybody's satisfaction ratings are different. What bothers each of us and causes us to have lower ratings differs. What makes each of us happy differs. This is not an objective test. You cannot pass or fail it. Be as open and insightful as you can with yourself. What you are doing is the first step in raising your awareness about each area of work-life balance.

A few notes about what you might consider for each of the areas:

1. Health: Your energy and vitality, any health issues, diseases, warning signs, mobility issues that bother you, sleeping, etc.
2. Body: How you look, weight, hair, shape, etc.
3. Friends: Relationships with friends from all times and walks of your life, keeping in touch, college/high school, neighborhood?
4. Family: Relationships with your biological family members, extended and nuclear family, children, "friend-family," responsibilities to or for family.
5. Personal growth: Activities you do to help you grow and develop, personal growth workshops, coaching, etc.
6. Spirituality: Any religious or spiritual practice, meditation, prayer, attending religious services, etc.
7. Rest and relaxation: What you do for fun that relaxes you, expresses you creatively, dancing, writing, walks in nature, vacations, art, etc.
8. Career: Job content, status, title, respect, work relationships, responsibilities, authority, meaningful work, etc.
9. Significant other: Time for romance, sensual/intimate activity, commitment, mutual trust and respect.
10. Finances: Do you have/earn enough money? Have a sense of financial freedom? Savings? Debts? Assets? Positive net worth? Know what any of this means?
11. Home: How you feel about your private space. Is your garage clear? Is your home decorated to be restorative? Comfortable? Does it reflect your taste?
12. Environment: Country, community, sunshine, seasons, diversity, your "sort" of people, surrounding aesthetics, city/urban/suburban, views, nature, etc. Might also include your company office space.

Step 1: Record your satisfaction level with each of these areas of your life in the “Rating” column. Note your reasons for that rating in the “Why?” column. Describe what a 10 would look like for you in the “10 would be?” column.

LIFE ARENA	RATING	WHY?	10 WOULD BE?
Health			
Body			
Friends			
Family			
Personal growth			
Spirituality/religion			
Rest, relax, rejuvenate			
Career			
Significant other/romance			
Finances			
Home			
Environment			

Step 2: Look at all the areas of your life and your ratings. What insights do you glean from looking at your satisfaction ratings? (You might want to share those insights with a friend or coach).

Step 3: Look at areas you gave the lowest ratings, and then what would be a 10 for you. That is your ideal scene. What actions are you willing to take to get you from your low rating to your 10?

Action 1:

Action 2:

Action 3:

Here are some resources that point to possible actions you might take for each of the areas where you have less than 10. As you read through the information, highlight actions you are willing to take to move you toward work–life balance.

Body: The most common reason for less than 10 is not being at your ideal body weight. The weight management industry has lots of suggestions for this.

- * Physical hunger
 - * Eat the right foods, right time, in the right portion
- * Emotional hunger
 - * Watch out when you're eating your feelings. Check by using the acronym HALT: Are you really . . .
 - * Hungry?
 - * Angry?
 - * Lonely?
 - * Tired?
- * Under stress adrenaline pours from the adrenal glands (hence the name), your heartbeat increases, you start to sweat, and your pupils dilate. With chronic stress you're like that all the time; eventually your body releases steroids that cause you to grow *omentum* (belly fat, to be ready for famine and a quick response).
- * Life energy comes from the sun—eat foods closest to that life (not processed) and with range of colors.
- * The Indian life science of Ayurveda says that we should eat the six tastes of life: sweet (milk, pears), salt, sour (citrus, yogurt, cherries), pungent (radishes, ginger, cinnamon), bitter (greens and yellows), and astringent (cause you to pucker up, like Asian mushrooms, figs, lentils, green or black tea).
- * Right times: Breakfast within hour of waking (after exercise); lunch 4 hours later; dinner around 7 (sunset), followed by constitutional walk.
- * Portion = size of palms; two-thirds full.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Friends: Pay attention to who you hang out with, and cultivate your nourishing relationships. There's something called *social contagion*. We “catch” the emotions of the people around us. Social contagion is the transmission of ideas and emotions from one individual to another that increases in strength over time. We become the average of the five people we’re closest to (emotionally, length of time, proximity). How nourishing are those relationships in your life?

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Family: Families are simultaneously a source of strength and a source of wounds for many of us. The key is to have realistic expectations. Many a therapist's work is based on helping people deal with family issues. From a self-help perspective, if you want to explore what your beliefs and expectations of family are and bring them into reality, I suggest [The Work of Byron Katie](#).¹

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Personal growth: Since growth activities are often important, but not urgent, it is your job to make time for those experiences. You can always listen to growth gurus using audio and video programs, or read some of the many self-help books available. I think an annual retreat is a great gift to yourself. Here are some links that offer these kinds of personal growth retreats:

- * retreatfinder.com
- * Omega Institute—eomega.org
- * Insight meditation society—dharma.org
- * Spirit Rock Insight Meditation --- spiritrock.org
- * Vipassana meditation—dhamma.org

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Spirituality/Religion: Your spiritual or belief system can give your life a sense of intention/purpose/meaning. You must do what's meaningful to you.

Apart from any particular set of beliefs, most traditions agree that it is helpful to have an attitude of gratitude. Creating some practice in your life that allows you to focus on what you are grateful for and what is going well in your life can bring enormous inner satisfaction. For many young people I have worked with using the *Career by Design* process, the question "What do I believe?" can seem like an easy question. Usually they point to the teachings of their family's religion. But college is a time when beliefs can and should be put to the test. Beginning to understand religion for themselves and coming up with their own religious practice and ideology is a process through which many students go. In the Values List you saw variations on religious/spiritual values you could choose. Here are some key words to consider as you think about your rating for religion / spirituality that may be helpful also.

Dogma is the established belief or doctrine held by a religion, or by extension by some other group or organization. It is authoritative and not to be disputed, doubted, or diverged from, by the practitioner or believers.

Praxis is the practice of faith, especially worship.

Religious means relating to or manifesting faithful devotion to an acknowledged ultimate reality or deity.

It may be that you are interested in the dogma of a particular religion, or not. You may find yourself attracted to the practices of a particular religious or spiritual path. Maybe you are not religious or devotional at all, but you do have a spiritual side. For some people the questⁱⁱ for the meaning of life is what they rate.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Rest, relaxation, rejuvenation: Remember your motivating interests. Remember to regularly engage in a motivating interest. Do it weekly, if not more often.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Career: The Career by Design workbook provides strategies for having a career that is a 10!

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Romance/significant other: The book by Gary Chapman, [*The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*](#) (and all the subsequent books in his series), starts from the premise that we all have a primary and secondary preferred love language, and that we respond (believe we are loved) when our significant others “speak” to us in one of those two preferred languages. The 5 “languages” are:

- Words of Affirmation
- Quality Time
- Receiving Gifts
- Acts of Service
- Physical Touch

Problems occur when we speak our love language to our significant others, but their love language is not the same as ours. In short, when we use the golden rule in love relationships—which looks like loving them the way *we* want to be loved—we miss the mark. We need to use the platinum rule: love them the way *they* want to be loved.

Some people may crave focused attention; others need regular praise. Gifts are highly important to one person, whereas another sees fixing a leaky faucet, ironing a shirt, or cooking a meal as filling his or her “love tank.” Some partners might find that physical touch makes them feel valued: holding hands, giving back rubs, and sexual contact.

Gary Chapman describes why a person who does yard work, dishes, car maintenance (Acts of Service), etc., is floored when the significant other says, “You never show me you love me. You never cuddle with me, or caress my hair, or make the first move for sex” (Physical Touch). Or, “Why don't you spend time with me? Why do you work so much?” (Quality Time). And, “Why don't you buy me flowers? Why don't you ever get me cards or balloons . . . just because?” (Gifts) Or “You never tell me what I mean to you. Why don't you ever share with me what I mean to you, or what my good qualities are?” (Words of Affirmation). His books help you figure out what *your* languages are and what *their* languages are. Sometimes you have a clue to your preferred languages by noticing what you complain about most in your relationships. The books also contain questionnaires to help you determine your love languages.

The concern some people have with Chapman’s books is that they have a strong Christian and heterosexual bias. That can be comfortable and affirming for people with those beliefs, values, and lifestyle—but quite off-putting for others. I think his basic framework is helpful, but because I work to be as respectfully inclusive as possible, I share that caveat about his bias along with my recommendation.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Finances: The most common issue for people who have low satisfaction scores in this arena is the desire to move from debt to financial freedom. I cannot give financial advice. You need to get support from licensed professionals in this area. I can recommend the following:

- Books: [*Your Money or Your Life: 9 Steps to Transforming Your Relationship with Money and Achieving Financial Independence*](#)—revised and updated for the 21st century by Vicki Robin. Many people are surprised to discover the hidden costs of certain work situations. And of course, her approach is consistent with using motivating interests, strengths, and skills effectively. It is in the line of another good book [*Do What You Love, the Money Will Follow: Discovering Your Right Livelihood*](#).ⁱⁱⁱ
- Website, TV shows, books, workshops, and programs by [Suze Orman](#). Millions of people find her approach helpful.
- Weekend workshop: [Millionaire Mind Intensive](#) by T. Harv Ecker includes a lot of activities that help you examine your emotions and beliefs about money. Be careful not to spend a lot of money buying all the products sold at the workshops, however.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Home: I think of the home as an outer structure reflecting your inner realities. Does your home feel like *home*? Reflect you? What does the architecture and design of your home say about you and your family? How are the entry, movement, key rooms, cleanliness and usability of the basement/attics? Is your home welcoming, passable, cluttered, etc.?

To get some suggestions for your 10 home, consider:

- Feng Shui—an ancient Chinese system of aesthetics designed to harmonize energy in physical structures.
- Cable TV design shows
- Organizational consultant assistance to eliminate clutter.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

Environment: I talked about space in the mission statement module. Other environmental factors include sustainability and community. One thing I will say is that most emergency help comes from your neighbors, not emergency techs. Choose a community where you feel comfortable and engage in community activity. Get to know your neighbors, and be a good neighbor. You'll enjoy your community more. Plus you may need each other in an emergency.

RATING:

WHY?

10 WOULD BE?

ACTION(S):

i If you decide to explore the Work of Byron Katie and her methods, I suggest starting by watching the [free online videos](#) or listening to the [audio version of Loving What Is](#) if you can find it. In the video and audio versions you can hear her tone-of-voice and that is important for appreciating her approach.

ii See Quest spiritual orientation in Values Inventory.

iii [*Do What You Love, the Money Will Follow: Discovering Your Right Livelihood*](#) by Marsha Sinetar