

Barbara - Day 6

Today I had an epiphany. I had seen my friend Janice the day before, and she looked a little down. I wanted to call her to see how she was doing, but knowing Janice's schedule, I would not have been able to call her until the evening, after we had both gotten the kids to bed. I was frustrated that I would have to wait to check on a friend. I thought to myself, "If I could re-write the rules for this week, I would write in provisions for family and close friends." Then it hit me. It was not an "all" or "nothing" thing. It was not a "productive" or "slacking" thing. I *do* write the rules. There *was* a balance; I just had to define the parameters. I knew then that I would not be able to stick to a typical work schedule, but that there needed to be clearly set work times and personal times. I freely admit that working is a hobby to me. When the kids are in bed and my husband is working on his hobbies, I choose to work on my laptop. But I know that I can't be fully engaged during family time if I have my BlackBerry to distract me. I have defined the boundaries, now could I set them?

Tina - Day 6

I got more sleep last night than I've gotten in a single night in years. The time changed helped, but it was more than that. I did not get out of bed when I woke up in the middle of the night. I had no need to know what was going on or what had come in since I went to bed.

This was my day of self-discovery. I did not expect to reach this point. I did not expect to be able to function without my blackberry - so I had to ask myself, how did this come to be? How did I become addicted to the blackberry in the first place? It wasn't merely "for work," and my job wasn't just a "job." Barbara and I walked away from successful careers to start MetroplexBaby.com because we needed the resource as parents. We knew that other parents would use the same resources, and it became about being there for all these parents. Over the years, we have received countless emails and calls after hours, and we respond when possible because we would have wanted someone to respond to us when we became new parents.

So I understood the source of my addiction. Then it hit me. We needed to create this resource so that we would have the information we needed to be better parents. But what good are the resources without the time to apply them to our families? I would never fault another parent for taking a day, even two to respond to me because of family obligations. Would parents really fault me if I didn't answer an email that came in at 1:02 am until the next morning? Unlikely. What's more likely is that my family would miss out on me because responding to emails in the middle of the night makes me tired and rushed when I'm getting the kids ready for school in the morning.

Balance. Is it possible? I remembered how great it felt to snuggle and watch a movie with my 6-year old. I remembered how nice it was to spend an evening with my husband without interruption, and without him giving me "that look" for picking up my blackberry.

It is possible. Instead of wearing the blackberry as an accessory and answering it every time it goes off, I will pick it up only every few hours during the weekend. I won't let it interrupt every activity. I will take 30 minutes to respond to everything at once, instead of a few minutes here and a few minutes there - which is disruptive to family time. I get it.