

Chapter 23

Take Time Out - Reward Yourself!

■■■ This is a book about growing a highly profitable business, so it may be surprising for me to tell you not to work too hard. Overworking yourself won't make you more money; in fact, it may contribute to burnout, frustration and shrinking profits. **There's a big difference between working smarter and working harder.**

*Y*ou've been working hard, pursuing your business dream, learning as much as possible, challenging yourself every day. You deserve a break! I'm sure that I don't have to tell you that all work and no play is a fast route to burnout.

If you're working for yourself, it's tempting to work all the time - but not smart. You will actually be more productive after you have taken some time off.

Practice the following strategies to stay fresh:

- **Spend at least one 24-48 hour period a week not working, not going in your office and not answering email.**

Modern technology can make it impossible to get away, so you've got to practice self-discipline and take care of yourself both mentally and physically. It won't happen if you never stop working.

- **Find time to do things you enjoy that are not work-related.**

It's amazing how creative you'll be after a break doing something fun that's not work-related.

- **Plan regular vacations.**

Build them into your calendar months ahead of time. Your customers will survive without you. If you work alone, start in advance to train a friend, colleague or relative to fill in for you while you're gone.

- **Set priorities.**

Know what is most important in your life and what can wait. My family comes first, that's my priority. I use the services of a virtual assistant and a part-time secretary to take over when I can't be here. I have also closed the office when I had to, and you know what - my business continued to thrive! Customers understand you are human and need a break.
- **Surround your workplace with things you love - pictures, plants, and music.**

I love being in my office; it's a room with plants, sunlight and my favorite music close by. This makes it a pleasure to start my workday.
- **Reward yourself.**

If you're self-employed, you won't have a boss to tell you did a great job, or to give you the employee of the month award, so do it for yourself. Whatever it is that will acknowledge what you've accomplished, do it!
- **Get help.**

Don't try and do it all yourself. I always make it a habit to get help, even during lean times. It frees me up to concentrate on what I do best. College students, especially marketing majors, make great part-time help. They're knowledgeable, fast on the computer and love to learn.
- **Commit to spending some quiet time with your favorite person – you!**

This practice will do more than support you through difficult times. It will ensure that you are committed to making choices about your life and your business that bring you back to yourself and awakens your dreams.
- **Celebrate your wins.**

So often we spend time focusing on the negative instead of the positive. What went right this year? What can you duplicate and do again to achieve even greater success next year? What goals did you accomplish? What projects did you complete? Taking inventory of the positive changes you've made in your life and your business is the best way to reinforce good habits and build your self-esteem.
- **Keep regular business hours.**

Overworking yourself and business burnout are common in our industry. Resolve to keep regular business hours next year, even when you work at home. Let your

family and friends, and clients know your working hours and keep to a consistent schedule.

- **Gain a new perspective.**

I believe all of life and all of business is a learning experience. When things don't go as planned, ask yourself: *What did I learn from this experience?* Resolve to do it better or differently next time. Learn from your mistakes and then, move on!

Where would you like to be one year from today?

I believe if you can conceive it, you can achieve it. This is a rewarding activity I like to share with all my coaching clients:

Imagine yourself one year from today. Write a list of your wins and accomplishments for the year. Be specific and write them as though they have already happened. Look at each area of your life and make the list as long as you like.

Remember - if you can conceive it - you can achieve it!

INSIDER Information

Here's my favorite strategy for keeping myself going, whenever I'm working on a time-consuming project with lots of challenges, like this manual. I keep myself going by focusing on how good I'll feel when I'm done and, of course, on my next great vacation

I always like to give myself a reward at the end. As soon as I finish this month's project I'm rewarding myself with a special mini-vacation and a day at a beautiful spa. The next time you're working really hard on a project keep yourself motivated by thinking about how you'll reward yourself!

► *What Can You Do Now?* ◀

- **Plan a vacation or reward for yourself and write it in your calendar now.** It need not be expensive or elaborate, just someplace or something you would really enjoy.
- **Post pictures of your favorite vacation spot in your office.** When things get challenging, visualize yourself there as your reward!