

All public behavior is ultimately private behavior

Psychology, Behaviorism



Ever since Stephen Covey established himself with his phenomenal book *The Seven Habits of highly Effective People*, people are on the lookout for what is deemed quality reading that he had then become known for. In *First Things First*, it is expected that it is going to be a repeat of the success of the previous material (Covey et al. , 1994). People of today are mostly living in harried and often-times exhausted schedules.

The pressure to juggle jobs, family and other jobs primarily due to financial needs is a common experience of people today and this has led to a number of complications both to the mental and physical existence of individuals, and the devastation of some of their precious relationships, that necessitate adjustments constantly. Covey refers to this as time management dilemmas and leadership problems (Covey et al. , 1994).

This paper attempts to draw some important discussions and assumptions that relate to the book's content and the authors' understanding of how several principles are applied to address what makes a person effective ultimately in the public arena or workplace and in his personal life. Discussion It is inevitable that juggling work and family life will be one of a person's demanding experiences. The rationale for having a job is not only to have a livelihood, achieve personal satisfaction in the expression of his abilities and trainings, and receive his remuneration and perks on the side.

Preparation for family stability to be able to provide and thus create an atmosphere of care, for bachelors/maidens, is also the foremost and logical reason for having a job. However, the thin thread that separates between the two polarities becomes blurred, and there lies the tension that pulls a person in different directions (Covey et al. , 1994). The Center for Mediation

and Dispute Resolution opens its website with the following quote: “ Our life is one giant balancing act ([http://www. cmdronline. com/workshops. htm](http://www.cmdronline.com/workshops.htm)). ” Perhaps, no person will ever disagree with that statement.

The goal then is to know how to do the balancing act, to gain competencies in achieving a rewarding, flourishing kind of life that holds work in one hand, while maintaining a well-nurtured and healthy family on the other hand. The array of questions that confront couples or families with this dilemma is quite limitless. Stress is a psychological factor and a common feature of almost every kind of work (Covey et al. , 1994). Two reasons may be suggested why there is a growing recognition of the importance of stress on the job.

First, there is the general awareness that stress-related diseases have reached epidemic proportions. More people die or are disabled today as a result of stress than at any other time. Because stress is so physically damaging and pervasive in people’s lives and because it is primarily psychological in nature the discipline of psychology as a whole and especially the specialty area of health psychology is interested in studying and treating stress and other psychosomatic disorders (Covey et al. , 1994; Chang et al. , 2006). The second reason for the growing awareness of the importance of stress at work is practical.

The effects of stress on the job are costly and are reflected in a lower productive efficiency. Stress has been known to reduce drastically employee motivation and the physical ability to perform the task well thus, increasing absenteeism, turnover, and tardiness (Covey et al. , 1994; Cahill, 2003; Chang et al. , 2006; Williams, 2003). The main assumption that this paper asserts therefore, is that given the impact of stress to people, it is <https://assignbuster.com/all-public-behavior-is-ultimately-private-behavior/>

expected that the average individual look for solutions to minimize its impact and certainly, Covey's principles in time management is nothing else but timely.

The importance of sorting through what is important and the urgent as illustrated in the four quadrants or time matrix is understandably logical, but determining what's what in somebody's schedules and activities are then entirely different. People have to go through "painful" realizations of what activities should stay and what should go in accordance to established priorities. The latter, concerning priorities, the book "First things first," took time to guide in making every reader understand.

Overall, then, each person must confront and deal with a large and recurring number of stress-producing events everyday both at home and at work. Although most people experience at least some of the harmful effects of stress at one time or another, most people, fortunately, do manage to cope (Covey et al. , 1994; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). One effect of stress on the job resulting from overwork is called burnout. The employee becomes less energetic and less interested in the job.

He or she becomes emotionally exhausted, apathetic, depressed, irritable, and bored; finds fault with everything about the work (Cahill, 2003; Chang et al. , 2006; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). Employees with burnout become rigid about their work, following rules and procedures blindly and compulsively because they are too exhausted to be flexible or consider alternative solutions to a problem (Covey et al. , 1994; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). There is a price to pay for such overwork over a long period

of time. Stress accumulates and leads to the psychological and physiological ailments described earlier.

These people work so hard that they burn away their energy faster than the body can replace it. Such persons have been described as workaholics, or employees addicted to work (Cahill, 2003; Landy, 1985; Williams, 2003). There is no person existing who may not possibly experience inefficiency and ineffectiveness (as the book implies); by-products of this highly stressed culture as a result of wrong choices of what is really deemed important. The urgent takes control of the important matters that renders a person conducting unhealthy and often destructive lives (Covey et al.

, 1994). Conclusion Ultimately, people lead their lives in public as a result of personal choices or how they conducted their lives in private. The choices they make in life and work are best seen as results of private behavior; i. e. the important aspects of one's life (the "compass" as Covey states it) (Covey et al. , 1994) takes precedence over the seemingly urgent yet unimportant activities. In general, people become satisfied and fulfilled when success comes to both important areas in his/her life.

Work brings personal gratification and provision for family is secured somehow, while having a happy and contented family is considered miracle in a dog-eat-dog world. This is the aspiration of many if not all working couples and individuals. When employed in an institution that really takes care of their workers, taking into consideration the things that their employees hold dear by providing as much as the employee needs, the worker or employee settles into a condition wherein he/she can focus on the work or be inspired of it.

In addition, the worker can afford more quality time to spend with his/her family. The strategies mentioned are time-and tested approaches. These have greatly helped a lot of people or families in their search for a balanced work-family life. At the stake when a family works to achieve a balance are principles or values they uphold (Covey et al. , 1994). These are the values of family togetherness, rearing and nurturing their offspring, and providing for all aspects of each household member. References: 1. _____Centre for Mediation & Dispute Resolution, Retrieved May 2, 2008 in <http://www.cmdronline.com/workshops.htm>

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