

Balancing Owning a Gym and Your Personal Life-Part 1

By Patti Komara, Tumblebear Connection



I opened my business in 1969. Since then I have seen so many of my gym owner friends go through divorces... sometimes multiple divorces per owner. Our work schedule doesn't coincide well with raising a family. After one divorce and then a second marriage and family, I have some observations and have what I would like to think is wisdom. You know wisdom comes from good judgment based on lessons learned from bad judgment. *How do we* balance a family life with a successful career in this business? Last year was my most successful year ever and I definitely worked less than ever. I want to share some methods of developing your business to the point where you can have a life also. Do you work for a living or live for your work? Are you designing a life or making a living? I think it's hard for a woman to be a gym owner and a mother. I'm going to share what has worked for me and offer some specific suggestions to be able to *try* to "have it all". You know many female CEOs say, "You can have it all just not all at once." Hmmm-there's some truth in there for sure.

I did a survey of 6000 people who was on my gymnastics newsletter list at the time. I asked them a lot of questions that had to do with "having it all", frustrations in owning a gym, and their challenges. It was a shock to me when I realized the women said the most frustrating part of owning a gym school is when they made more money than their husbands! My husband was a school teacher, so that goes without saying that I made more money than he did. I wonder if the problem is they feel insecure or that some stay home and are "house husbands" and don't like that. Here are some specific suggestions that might help:

Improving the marriage when you are the major breadwinner (husband does not work in the business with you)

1. Check your ego at the door and make the transition from CEO to partner, don't act like the boss at home—hand out backrubs when needed ☺
2. Never bring up the fact you make more money
3. Set a schedule and try to keep it—minimum evenings and week-ends. Try to schedule all meetings during work hours or have your department managers lead all other meetings
4. Turn off or silence your smartphone, so that when you're home you can really concentrate on him! Give him your full attention as well as your kids. However, they do need to understand that we own a dangerous business and you might need to take an emergency call. Texting you is even better.
5. Make it a goal to have daily dinners all together as a family-put spouse as main topic
6. Take them on trips with you and add a few days for family or "couples fun"
7. Tell your staff no business calls after 9pm, and before calling you at home ask themselves, "Can this wait till tomorrow?" If it can, then don't call. Or, can someone else handle it?
8. Give yourself a FREE DAY--24 hours from work
9. Ban all talk of the business from the bedroom, dinner table, and vacations
10. If you choose to do a lot of extra-curricular activities (Zumba, yoga classes, blogging, T.V., Facebook) and you're away from home or just not being with him, your husband might take that as he's now third behind work and your personal fun.

11. Think of things you can do together. Fridays are our special day to be alone, Saturdays are usually with friends (couples), and Sunday is family day. Go out on your Harley together! Do things together you used to do when you first dated.
12. Acknowledge his role in the family success and compliment his contribution
13. As a couple, understand a lean year in business can be a speed bump to success and to always take the long view—less stressful that way.
14. Work together for a charity or cause--volunteer at church, rotary, chamber of commerce events, etc.
15. Resist dumping worries on him
16. Give him a voice and really listen to him
17. How informed does he really want to be? Good news and bad?
18. Make a checklist of chores to share
19. Have a home office...spend time with him when you can

The next two months I will have articles here that continue this topic. There are more than 50% of the gyms in American that are owned by women. This is a topic I feel strongly about. Stay tuned and check back here for the August article that will be focused on if your husband works in the business with you and also some ideas for managing a household of kids when you own a gym. Until then, go home and kiss your husband.

For more information on this topic and help with time management click on the links below.

[#400 - Gymnastics School Operations Manual](#)

[#183 - The Secret to Time Management for Gym Owners](#)

[#173 - Balancing Owning a Gym and Your Personal Life](#)

[#148 - Problems Facing Women Gym Owners](#)