

Balancing Owning a Gym and Your Personal Life-Part 2

By Patti Komara, Tumblebear Connection

Last month I wrote an article that explained how I felt about having a balanced life when your husband isn't part of the gym. This month I'll talk about what can happen when he works in the business with you, and also some ideas for dealing with kids when you own a gym.

Working with Your Spouse in the Business

1. Each of you oversee certain departments
2. Separate but equal is rarely sustainable, so one of you needs to be in charge
3. Home has to be a sanctuary
4. Too much together can erode "soul quality" of a relationship and can de-energize romance. Do some things all alone sometimes.
5. Limit your re-cap of day's work early in evening and then turn it off
6. Don't dwell on mistakes or stress about what didn't get done
7. Don't argue at work—that starts gossip immediately. Even if you argue about personal things, employees think you're having trouble at home. Never argue at a staff meeting or challenge his ideas any more than you would a fellow staff member.
8. Give your spouse some space—separate offices?
9. Always give them the benefit of the doubt-show confidence
10. Befriend other families who own a business
11. Define hours, working conditions, job duties, title, etc. and then every six months evaluate the arrangement
12. Establish when workday ends—light candles, turn off computer or cell phone

According to Meg Hirshberg, author of the book, "**For Better or for Work**", all businesses should have a Shareholder's Agreement for the business in case of a divorce. Even co-founders should have one addressing things like how the business would be valued, maximum pay-out period, if one spouse owns

minority share how to establish a buy-out, if you continue to work together what would the arrangements be, ongoing role of the children in the business, etc. At least have estate work done and have a succession plan. Would you gift it to the children over dozens of years possibly, and what would descendants pay the original owners and for how long?

Being a Mom:

A Work Life Institute study showed that 60% of families are stressed out by conflict between professional and parental roles. It almost feels like business is another baby of ours and that sets up a tug-of-war between the two. When you say you're doing it for the kids they think you're doing it instead of them. Every moment is a moment lost. No wonder we feel guilty. No success in business can compensate for the feeling of failure as a parent. Regret is a big deal. I so wish I knew back then when my kids were small what I know now! The big news is ***you don't have to be at the gym all the time!*** Get a General Manager to be there when you can't or don't want to. Prioritize your time keeping mindful of ROT. This isn't return on investment. This is return on time. Your time with your kids is precious. Don't let anything interfere with that and make it a priority. Write the word, "Priorities" on your mirror at home and your wall in front of you at work.

A friend of mine named Donna is a business owner and a mom. Her daughter texted her what she wanted at her birthday party. When Donna asked her why she texted her, she said, "Because Mom, that's the only thing you pay attention to!"

Here are some specific ideas while parenting:

1. You must set boundaries such as if the door is shut, it's off-limits unless it's an emergency
2. If you're on the phone, have them write you a note
3. Have set work hours and when you're off, you're off!
4. They shouldn't answer the business phone just because they are family if they are not old enough to work the office.

5. Pay them! Have them work at the gym. Here are some IRS rules to follow:

***This is a general statement. You should check with a qualified CPA in your state.*

a. If you are a corporation, take taxes out like other employees

b. If your business is a sole proprietorship and kids are under 18, no taxes out.

Pay them a reasonable rate, but as high as you can. It's a great legal way to funnel gym money to your kids. But, they have to work--even if it is going in on Sundays to clean the gym.

6. Set up a Roth IRA for them. Annually you can put \$5500 in a Roth IRA or up to that amount if they make at least that in earned income. We've been funding our kids IRAs for 22 years.

7. Show your children they mean everything to you and set your meet schedule around their activities. That's why I got rid of my teams...parents complaining I was not at the gym's meet, because I was at my daughter's basketball games. (You know how I felt about that!)

8. When you're home...remember this...if you're there, be all there! Here's the scene...you're home and feeling good about it and you're reviewing payroll while your son is playing video games. Don't kid yourself, you're not "all there". Multi-tasking is out, mono-tasking is in!

9. Each child might need different things from you. Observe them and look for tell-tale signs of what they might need you're not giving them. Pay attention.

10. The daycare issue vs. bringing the kids to the gym—I took them to daycare after they were old enough to talk. Before that I had an adult babysitter at the house. I don't think your place of business is where they should be. That has to be your personal call.

11. Paul Piersall, The Pleasure Principle, says: Do less, Have less, Say NO! When asked to do something that takes you away from your family, say, "I really appreciate the offer, but I have to say no, because I have a more powerful yes, my kids." But, say yes to things like school trips with your kids!

12. Jumping on the tramp after having kids or "this is a Depends moment" and other things that happen to our bodies as we

age...backs, knees, shoulders, and voice. Take care of yourself by exercising, eating right, and getting rest. Make it a priority—your family will thank you.

13. Don't confuse activity with accomplishment. Ask yourself, "Will this drive my business forward?" If not, don't do it.

14. Find balance in your life. "Purpose without pressure." Wouldn't that be great?

What do you want your friends to say about you at your funeral? "Boy, she worked so hard at her gym. Even though she ended up getting divorced and her kids got into so much trouble, because she was never home, she **was** nice." The old adage applies, "No one on their death bed ever said they wished they had spent more time at the office."

Is owning a gym worth it? Is it a good business for women? You bet! I hope I've helped you by listing some mistakes and possible solutions for your life. I certainly would do things a lot differently if I had only learned some of these lessons sooner. I hope I've motivated you to make next year the best you've ever had, personally and professionally.

Next month I conclude this topic. I focus on just some random thoughts to make your life more balanced, more profitable, and hopefully less stressful and therefore happier. Stay tuned.

This info was extracted from Patti Komara's [#173, "Balancing Owning a Gym and a Personal Life"](#). For more info go to tumblebear.com to see all of Patti's products to help you succeed in a gymnastics, dance, or swim school.