

ALTER EGO = *Relax, Focus and Succeed*

It's 7:00 a.m. Sunday morning. Do you know where your namaste is? Do you constantly think about your SMB consultancy in off hours, often in a jumbled-up attention deficit disorder fashion? You are not alone. Based on his personal experiences and how he overcame chronic health conditions, Sacramento-based Small Business Specialist Karl Palachuk has written a book that allows you to ascend to a higher level of thinking beyond your business and start taking better care of yourself.

"I went through a period of having severe health problems and I was forced to learn to get more done in less time. It was essential that I run my business between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. during that era to allow sufficient off-hours



recovery time. This situation led me to develop techniques to focus myself and get more done in less time," Palachuk shared for

this interview. "The result is an ability today to relax, get focused on one thing at a time and be more successful."

So how does he do it and what can Karl's new book, *Relax Focus Succeed* (Great Little Book Publishing) do for you? Boiled down to the most basic elixir, it would be two steps. First, take the time to think about the day ahead via meditation, prayer and quiet time. Second, write down two or three things that you need to accomplish that day. But it's really much more than that. "It's not that there is a specific set of exercises. It's slowing down and putting everything in perspective." Palachuk added. "With my

approach, I've found the ideas just flow in. I need to spend more time with my wife, kids and finally write that book!"

Meanwhile, back at the office. "So much work is busy work and doesn't contribute to any of your goals. The key is to have energy for other things," Palachuk said. So, does this mean a new career direction for Karl and new professional paths? Already known for his Small Business Specialist-based consultancy and his strongly-selling network documentations book, Karl has led several Relax Focus Succeed workshops in the Sacramento area. "Plus I've been writing a newsletter on this topic for three years. I'd like to test the waters in this

workshop area. This is my alter ego and I want to develop this side of [my] personality. I'd like to help others develop more

holistically as well," Palachuk shared. "But fear not, I have a few more technology books in me!"

So what's the net-net on this namaste networker? "Since I started living the Relax Focus Succeed lifestyle a few years ago, my health has returned, my business is running great, I have a great marriage and a happy teenage daughter!" Enough said. ■

On a personal note: Publisher Harry Brelsford balances his life practicing a form of yoga known as Hatha Yoga, while editor Beatrice Mulzer is a Bikram yoga addict. 'Nuff said!

I was inspired when Harry Brelsford told me the premise of Karl Palachuk's latest book, **Relax Focus Succeed**. In the fitness industry I often deal with clients suffering from healthy bank accounts, but bankrupt minds, bodies and spirits. Karl's book addresses all three aspects of a person and beautifully sets forth a practical plan that inspires readers to change their lives by first changing themselves -- to work from the inside out.

As Palachuk states in his Introduction and Overview, workaholicism is a sign of the times, and not necessarily a positive one. As a yoga instructor, I've worked with workaholics from the business sector, as well as stay-at-home moms, community volunteers and church leaders. **Relax Focus Succeed** doesn't devalue hard work. In fact, Palachuk reinforces throughout the text that it is essential to personal and professional fulfillment. He teaches that our efforts must be redirected toward self-knowledge first, so that we can direct our energy into productive channels that relate directly to our goals. In fitness classes, we teach that it isn't the number of repetitions we perform with a set of hand weights, it's the quality with which we perform them. Sometimes more is more, but oftentimes less is more.

Slowing down in order to become more productive isn't an easy sell, but Palachuk doesn't intend it to be. He acknowledges that those who put in more hours often receive more glory, yet he convincingly illustrates for us that recognition has its price. The book is filled with concise examples that illustrate how our misdirected energy can damage our personal relationships as well as our physical and emotional health. Perhaps the most convincing is Palachuk's own story. While his testimony begins with a health crisis (rheumatoid arthritis), and ends with a life reconfigured around family, introspection and self-understanding, we witness that despite chronic pain, these techniques are necessary and life-changing when practiced with discipline and authenticity.

Why is authenticity important? Palachuk credits self-knowledge as the primary key to his current personal and professional success. He writes, "Knowing your true self will help you work more effectively to reach your true goals. It

will lead you down the road to success. It will bring a calmness that will improve your attitude and your relationships with others."

In yoga we teach self-understanding as the way to respond to life rather than react. Most yoga schools offer meditation, breathwork and physical movement through postures to help achieve exactly this. Palachuk, too, offers many similar disciplines. However he does so in a way that makes them accessible to all audiences.

"True Relaxation," as the author defines it, is simply "taking time to let your body and mind slow down and stop 'working'." Suggestions include a long, quiet walk, prayer, or reading a book that "doesn't require you to think." In his chapter "Meditation and Quiet Time," he explains that meditation in particular is actually "very Christian," based on the tradition of contemplation and the practice of Jesus himself. Ultimately, it's not about even talking to God as it is about listening, and its benefits include the ultimate realization that, as individuals, we are not the center of the universe.

Relax Focus Succeed, then, is not just about each of us achieving a more fulfilling life for ourselves, it's about serving others as well. He clarifies that we have to do the work at home first before we can offer our best to the world. Palachuk offers a formula for "success" and goals for how to achieve it, but his plan also differs from others in that the path of personal growth he lays before us is its own reward. Just as one workout can make a difference to your health and well-being, one day of slowing down and looking within can increase your productivity and quality of life.

I look forward to sharing this book with my clients and introducing them to a role model who knows first hand the challenges inherent in balancing career and family, without losing ourselves in the process. Nothing is more critical to the health of our society.

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