

Birch, A. J., & Gray, T. (2010). Workaholism in academe: Strategies for centers for teaching and learning. *Journal on Centers for Teaching and Learning*, 2, 53-69.

## **Workaholism in Academe: Strategies for Centers for Teaching and Learning**

A. Jane Birch

*Brigham Young University*

Tara Gray

*New Mexico State University*

*Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) staff are wisely concerned about the health and well-being of faculty members. We know that over-working, anxious, exhausted professors do not create the optimum environment to nurture healthy students and healthy institutions. Well-balanced, well-grounded faculty members provide better role models and are also in a position to make more substantial contributions to the university and to their disciplines. Thus, CTL staff have reason to be concerned about work-life balance and workaholism. First, we owe it to our faculty to be aware of the serious issues involved with workaholism and to help them prevent or moderate its affects. Second, as CTL staff we sometimes face problems with workaholism ourselves. The authors explain why academics are prone to workaholism, expose myths about work addiction, help identify the extent to which faculty—or faculty developers—may show signs of workaholism, provide 12 steps to restore balance, and offer several suggestions for how centers for teaching and learning can help the situation in academe.*

Staff at centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) are often charged with all matters of faculty development—as well as tending to our own professional development. For many faculty members—and many faculty developers—the number one professional concern is *time*. Some people respond to the pressure by becoming excellent time managers. Unfortu-

nately, others respond by working “all the time” and may even become addicted to work. These responses are problematic and mean that center staff should be informed about—and provide programming for—work-life balance issues, including workaholism, a condition defined by a person’s obsessive attitude toward work. Center staff can use articles like this one in a variety of ways, but one way would be to share it with faculty who are good role models for work-life balance and then ask them to serve on a panel addressing the subject.

Americans work long hours (Porter, 2001b), and academics are no exception. The pressure to do more and to be more productive (both in terms of teaching and research) has translated into increasingly long academic workdays. Over the past two decades, a time period when the average American workweek remained stable, the number of hours the average academic worked has increased about 20% to nearly 50 hours per week. Furthermore, the proportion of faculty working more than 55 hours per week has doubled from one in eight to one in four (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006). But workaholism is more than a matter of working long hours (Porter, 2001a). Although workaholics typically work very long hours (Spence & Robbins, 1992), what distinguishes workaholics from other workers is not the number of hours they work, but rather their attitude toward work (Machlowitz, 1980). Workaholics are people “whose work habits almost always exceed the prescriptions of the job they do and the expectations of the people with whom or for whom they work” even when the work seriously interferes with other aspects of their lives (Machlowitz, 1980, p. 11). As with other addictions, workaholics engage in excess work, not because the work requires *them*, but because *they* require the work.

Workaholism is widespread, and the problem may be especially acute among educators. When workers from various areas of employment were surveyed in one study, 27% stated work as their primary addiction. In another research sample, 28% were identified as workaholics (Robinson & Kelly, 1997). A study of elementary and junior high teachers showed that 56% had workaholic tendencies (Naggy & Davis, 1985). Research has not yet been conducted on the percentage of university faculty who are workaholics, but this research is needed. This article explains why academics are prone to workaholism, addresses three myths about workaholism, helps CTL staff identify the signs of workaholism, and provides 12 steps faculty and faculty developers can take to help themselves or others restore work-life balance. We conclude with concrete suggestions and illustrations for ways CTLs can use this information and strategies to address workaholism in their own institutions.

### Why Academics are Prone to Workaholism

Academics are particularly prone to workaholism for several reasons that sometimes affect CTL staff as well: (a) Professors have a great degree of autonomy in structuring their jobs, including taking on additional responsibilities; (b) almost every major faculty role and responsibility is infinitely expandable in size and scope; (c) there is an element of prestige and respect attached to the title “professor” that can encourage pouring oneself into the job to the exclusion of other important activities; and (d) more work is being expected of faculty over the past few decades. Each of these factors will be described briefly below.

Autonomy is both a blessing and a curse for academics. It is a blessing in that it allows academics the opportunity to pursue professional interests and passions to a degree that is less common in other professions. But one consequence of having greater control over one’s work and engaging in tasks one enjoys is, for many academics, taking on more and more responsibilities, often to the detriment of non-work interests and responsibilities.

Second, the work of an academic is unlike more structured occupations in that most of an academic’s roles and responsibilities are almost infinitely expandable. As Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) point out, academic work “defies the establishment of clear boundaries” because at the root of a scholar’s work is the responsibility to “continuously learn; and that is a tall, continuing order” (p. 78). While most scholarly papers are finally published and courses do come to an end, scholarly research and preparation for teaching can expand to fill any amount of time given to them. Likewise, student advisement, committee work, and many other responsibilities seem to be never ending and can fill as little or as much time as they are given.

Third, faculty life can be quite rewarding where there is a degree of success and achievement and, therefore, recognition. The monetary pay for academic work is rarely high, but the rewards in respect, recognition, and prestige can be very motivating. Respected academics are often highly valued by the department, the university, and the discipline. This type of reward can be addictive and encourage workaholism. This may be one reason why faculty members, who are often already “over-achievers,” tend to set unrealistically high expectations for themselves (Sorcinelli, 1992). According to Schuster and Finkelstein (2006),

Finally, more work is being expected from academics over the past few decades: The professed interest in undergraduates . . . is rising—even as research and publication pressures have

been steadily mounting. One reasonable interpretation is the conventional perception that in the current environment of higher education, faculty are expected to do more—of everything. (p. 129)

In the face of increased work, modern technology (especially portable technology like cell phones and laptops) makes it possible to carry that work everywhere (Porter, 2001b). Being able to do one's work in practically any setting has advantages, but for work-prone individuals, these advantages come with increased risk of working too much—perhaps far too much.

### **Myths About Workaholism**

Because certain myths prevail about workaholism, some academics may have a problem with workaholism and not know it. Three myths keep workaholics from thinking that they have a problem when they actually do.

#### *The Myth That Workaholics Work All the Time*

First, the myth persists that workaholics work all the time. This is as wrong as saying that alcoholics drink all the time. The truth is that workaholics may continuously focus on their work, even when they are not officially on the job, and even when they are with their families or engaging in recreational activities:

I'm in front of the TV thinking about work. I'm at the symphony mentally planning work. I'm lying in bed discussing a project with my boss in my head. It's easier that way. No one can accuse me of overworking and I get to keep my secret and protect my supply. (Fassel, 2000, p. 8)

In this way, workaholics may appear to relax more often than they do. But the consequences are felt, particularly by the family. According to Robinson, "a common refrain is that even when workaholics are physically present, they are emotionally unavailable and disconnected from the family" (2001, p. 8). The resulting toll can be high when manifested in weak family relationships, failed marriages, and mental health risks for children (Robinson, 2001).

#### *The Myth That Workaholism Is Necessary to Get Ahead*

Second, the myth persists that workaholism is the only way to get

ahead. Peters and Austin in *A Passion for Excellence* (1985) suggest that the cost of excellence is giving up things like “family vacations, Little League games, birthday dinners, evenings, weekends and lunch hours, gardening, reading, movies and most other pastimes” (pp. 495-496). Although well-meaning, this advice encourages workaholism. Peters and Austin take the position that the price of excellence may mean the end of marriages, noting that “We have a number of friends whose marriages or partnerships crumbled under the weight of their devotion to a dream” (p. 496). This same myth surrounds academic careers, where excellence is

predicated on the assumption that the faculty member will have an unlimited commitment to his or her academic career throughout his or her working life. Attention to other serious obligations, such as family, is taken to imply lack of dedication to one’s career. (Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, 2007, p. 160)

The truth is somewhat different. High achievers are not necessarily those who work incessantly. In contrast to the sentiments expressed above, Ernest Hemingway is said to have been finished working by 2 p.m. Albert Einstein worked in the mornings, sailed in the afternoons, and discovered the theory of relativity while eating an apple (Fassel, 2000). In addition, research suggests that the work produced by workaholics is often not as high a quality as could be produced if they were better able to moderate their activities; most benefits of workaholism are short-term at best (Boice, 2000; Porter, 1996).

### *The Myth That Workaholism Is Harmless*

Third, the myth persists that workaholism is relatively harmless. It has been said that “workaholism is the pretty addiction. Not only does it look good on the workaholic, it is becoming on their offspring” (Robinson, 1998). As the myth has it, workaholism results in more work getting done while merely sacrificing a few minor activities (for instance, TV watching, Internet surfing, sleep). After all, the myth continues, no one ever died from overwork (Fassel, 2000). The truth is that death by overwork is common enough that the Japanese have a name for it: *karoshi* (Japan’s Ministry of Health and Welfare, as cited in Yates, 1988). In Japan, *karoshi* kills 10% of working men, making it the second largest killer of this population. It typically affects men who put in 12- to 16-hour days over a period of many years. The men are usually between 40–50 years of age and have had no previous health problems. Two thirds of these men die from brain hemorrhage; one third die from heart attack.

In the U.S., experts in worker compensation claims report that stress, burnout, and psychological disease claims are double those of other worker compensation claims (Fassel, 2000). These stress-related claims include chronic fatigue, ulcers, gastrointestinal problems, backaches, headaches, difficulty sleeping, high blood pressure, and bladder infections. The cost of each stress-related incident is twice the cost of physical injury (Fassel, 2000). But the hidden costs go beyond stress and stress-related illness; the cost also includes personal lack of balance, isolation, weakened interpersonal relationships, and family disruption. The combined price tag is very expensive—for the individual, the individual's family, and the workplace (Porter, 2001b; Robinson & Chase, 2001).

### **Diagnosing Workaholism**

What does all this have to do with CTL staff? Between our American work ethic and the power of myths about work, it is understandable that workaholism is not taken very seriously by the population at large or in the academy and, therefore, probably not often discussed in centers for teaching and learning. If we are honest with ourselves, is it possible that we may even at times unconsciously promote elements of work addiction? As part of our role at institutions of higher learning, we wisely aim to help faculty set high standards and expectations for themselves and their work and to work hard to achieve these goals and expectations. All of this is important and good, but if we are not aware of the dangers of work addiction and the importance of helping faculty be realistic about time management, work-life balance, and staying grounded and connected to values and life beyond the academy, we may be encouraging and nurturing a lifestyle that is not ultimately in the best interest of either the faculty member or the institution. In contrast, we have found that faculty members react very well to our attempts to establish high expectations in the realistic context of competing demands and the recognition that choices must be made. We know we've hit the right balance when we get comments like this on our surveys, "The Center offers a good mix of high pressure exhortation and the need to manage and balance my work with the rest of my life."

The truth is, even CTL staff are not immune to workaholism. It can be eye-opening to explore the extent to which we or the faculty we are concerned about are workaholic. Experts in workaholism suggest beginning by asking the following questions. Does your sole identity come from your work (Fassel, 2000)? Do you feel "intense, impatient, and overscheduled" (Boice, 1997, p. 22)? Is your life characterized by busyness, rushing, and

rescuing (Fassel, 2000)? Do you work half days—8 a.m. to 8 p.m.? Do you feel debilitating exhaustion at the end of the work day? Are you so tired you could cry (Fassel, 2000)? A better diagnostic test can be found at [http://www.quintcareers.com/workaholics\\_quiz.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/workaholics_quiz.html). CTL staff can take this test themselves and seek permission to administer it to others during workshops on the subject.

In addition to individual workaholics, there are institutional workaholics. To begin thinking about the extent to which your institution is workaholic, you might want to ask yourself the following questions (Fassel, 2000): Does your college or university believe workaholism is a positive addiction that improves productivity? Does it boast about productivity, but remain silent about the effects on people? Does it feature “happy workaholics” in its newsletters? Does it routinely develop job descriptions that are beyond the reach of those doing them? Fassel argues that such institutions abound. She says that “the work addicted institution is the new church, and workaholism is the religion” (Fassel, 2000, p. 106).

## 12 Steps to Avoiding Workaholism

As CTL staff, there are many ways we can help our faculty develop greater work-life balance and avoid workaholism. Perhaps the most important way is for us as individuals to become aware of ways our own work lives may be out of balance and to develop better, healthier attitudes and behaviors in our own work. By doing so, we will become intimately aware of both the benefits and, just as importantly, the difficulties of living and maintaining a more healthy work style. We will then be in a better position to serve as role models and as consultants, and our experience can infuse our efforts to help others with greater creativity and insight.

In the following section, we attempt to summarize in 12 steps the best ideas found in the literature for avoiding workaholism, combined with insights from our own experience. These ideas can be shared and discussed with faculty members in many formats, and we will suggest some specific formats for CTLs in the next section. But again, we hope that CTL staff will also take this opportunity to think about their own attitudes and behaviors toward work-life balance and accept the challenge to make small, incremental improvements.

1. *Don't put work first* (Lazear, 2001). Keep work in perspective. It is not healthy, and, in the long-run, it is not satisfying to make work your number one priority in life (Robinson & Chase, 2001). If you are a workaholic, work is your comfort zone, so it will be difficult at first to change your habits to work less and spend more time on other values (family,

hobbies, spirituality, relaxation, and the like). Don't expect this to be easy, but do persist. The more time you devote to other interests, the more these interests will "take hold" of you and become a well of satisfaction in your life. Think of work as one part of your life. Ask yourself, what do you love (or want to love) more: yourself, your family, or your work? If it's yourself and your family, put your personal and family life first. Also ask yourself what you are avoiding by working so much: Being alone? Problems at home? Lack of other interests? See if you can change what you're avoiding, rather than just avoiding it. Remind yourself that it's been said that nobody on their deathbed has ever wished they worked more. Consider scheduling time for yourself and your family, the way time for work is scheduled. Resist the temptation to work—or even to think about work—during those time periods.

2. *Don't run on empty.* Get plenty of rest (Adamson, 2002; Elkin, 1999). Eat regular meals, and take your time with each one—they call it a lunch "hour" for a reason. Use the time to rest and refuel rather than to work (Drake, 2000). Exercise daily or at least four times a week (Adamson, 2002; Groves, 2004; Wheeler, 2007; Winner, 2003). We all know we should do these things, but once again, they won't happen on their own. In order to achieve these goals, you may have to have a strategy for developing new habits. Write down your specific goals. Share them with someone else (a "buddy"). Keep daily records of how well you are meeting your goals, and review them with your buddy once a week. If you are doing well, plan small celebrations. If not, discuss how you can do better and recommit.

3. *Tone down your perfectionism* (Gray & Birch, 2008; Wehrenberg, 2008). It can take half as long to do something well as to do it to the utmost level of our personal best. As an example, productivity expert Meggin McIntosh talks about writing "award-winning" memos—only to remember that no one gives awards for great memos! We have written quite a few award-winning memos ourselves. That is, we spend 20 minutes writing the memo and printing the first copy. Then, we spend another 20 minutes wordsmithing it. We double the time we invest in the memo, *without doubling the quality!* Consider making "good enough" the standard for at least some memos, reports and other projects. As you approach each project or task, get in the habit of gearing your effort to the specific need and putting in extra effort only in those rare cases where it can make a big difference. Many tasks deserve to be done well—but most do *not* deserve to be done to the utmost level of our personal best. Besides, perfectionism is a "guaranteed prescription for feeling bad about yourself . . . because being perfect is impossible" (Hipp, 1995, p. 138).



4. *Just say "no"* (Gray & Birch, 2008; Luskin & Pelletier, 2005). One reason so many workaholics have so much trouble getting everything done is they take on too much. We know it's easy to justify why you are the "only" or the "best" person to do a given task at home, at work, or in the community, but we discourage you from doing so. Instead of trying to be "all things to all people," we encourage you to carve out a narrower range of activities that make sense for who you are and who you want to be (Luskin & Pelletier, 2005). Taking on additional responsibilities inevitably means not doing others, or spending less time on them. There is always a trade-off, so keep your life values and priorities in mind. When the time comes to say "no," use a simple response that doesn't invite argument. For example, "I'm sorry, but I can't take that project on right now; I have other projects for which I have made a prior commitment" (Drake, 2000, p. 50).

5. *Check your e-mail less often and keep your inbox empty.* Employees at most businesses receive 50 e-mail messages a day and need a minimum of two hours to answer them (McCorry, 2005). In fact, e-mail is like a black hole: The more you send, the more you get back; the more you get back, the more you need to send. Experts say you should set limits on the total amount of time you will spend on e-mail. And the less often you check your e-mail, the less total time you will spend on it (McCorry, 2005). So if you're checking e-mail every minute now, try checking it every other minute. If you're checking it every hour now, try checking it every other hour. If you're checking it four times a day now, try checking it twice a day. By reducing the number of times you check your e-mail, you will find you spend less time on it. And try to keep your inbox empty or at least at a manageable level (say, 10 messages). By having an empty inbox, you can focus on the messages that come in and not have them lost in a sea of other messages.

6. *Beware of home offices.* Working at home has some advantages: You can work in your pajamas, for example. In some homes, you can also work without as many interruptions. But in other homes, there are more distractions (Klein, 2005). Another problem with home offices is that they make the boundary between home and work harder to establish and more necessary (Dodd & Sundheim, 2005). Even after work hours, it's difficult to avoid popping in and checking your work e-mail every time you get the whim. It's harder to set work aside and have some time to relax. If you do keep a home office, you may want to try to establish some boundaries between your home and your home office by shutting the door during non-work hours and not entering the home office. This simple act helps avoid the problem of having a 24-7 office, where work

has no beginning time but also no ending time, making you feel like you work “all” the time.

7. *Downplay the Puritan work ethic.* The American work ethic teaches us that work equals virtue (Lazear, 2001). We too often translate this into the feeling that we should be constantly busy, that there is something wrong with us if we are not busy. The harder we work, the more virtuous we are. Try to send yourself different messages. Consider this as one possible message: The more balanced your life, the more fully human you are. We are, after all, human *beings*, not human *doings*. We should remember this when asked, “How are you?” Many people respond with *what* they are doing rather than with *how* they are doing. Try to keep focused on *how* you are doing, and try to stop thinking that being busy is a virtue.

8. *Plan margins in your life* (Swenson, 2004). Try to keep a cushion of time between yourself and deadlines and appointments. Prepare everything before the deadline. Think about it: Once you initially get a week ahead, it’s just as easy to run one week ahead as it is to run just on time, but it’s much less stressful. The same is true with appointments. It’s just as easy to get there 5 minutes early as right on time, except that you’re not breathless and stressed out when you get there.

9. *Put your job in a box* (Fassel, 2001). Establish boundaries around your work, including time each day that you will *not* work. During these times, you will absolutely, positively, not work. Don’t let the flexibility of the academic job become a burden because work spills over into all available time. Work should have a beginning and an end. It should have boundaries. For one of the authors, the off-work time is after 5 p.m. in the evening. This time is sacred to her, and she very rarely works instead of relaxing in the evening. It takes a major crisis to interfere with her downtime. When is your daily downtime?

10. *Take vacations without a phone, e-mail, or even TV* (Lazear, 2001). Consider taking vacations without your phone or e-mail. It’s hard because you may need your phone, but if you are traveling with other family members, consider using another phone in the case of an emergency. Take your traveling companion(s) and your books. See how restful it is to leave work behind for one week, or even two.

11. *Read more about workaholism and work-life balance.* One excellent book about work-life balance in the academy is *Advice for new faculty members: Nihil nimis* (2000), by Robert Boice. There are also two excellent books about workaholism generally: *Working Ourselves to Death: The High Cost of Workaholism and the Reward of Recovery* (2000), by Diane Fassel, and *The Man Who Mistook His Job for a Life: A Chronic Overachiever Finds His Way Home* (2001), by Jonathon Lazear. Each of these books will help you lead

a more balanced life.

12. *Consider joining Workaholics Anonymous* (Fassel, 2000; Lazear, 2001). If you're seriously worried about your workaholism, consider joining Workaholics Anonymous (<http://www.workaholics-anonymous.org>). This organization puts an emphasis on tools that can help move you away from workaholism. We hope these tools will sound very familiar to you after reading this article. They include listening, prioritizing, substituting (one task for another), under scheduling, playing, concentrating, pacing, relaxing, accepting, asking, balancing, serving, living in the now, attending meetings, and telephoning. Telephoning deserves special mention. Each person at Workaholics Anonymous has a sponsor whom he or she calls regularly (even every day) to report on progress and lack of progress. This is a wonderful way of staying on track with progress.

### **What Centers for Teaching and Learning Can Do**

Centers for teaching and learning can take action to reduce workaholism among faculty by becoming more aware of the topic and by sharing that awareness with others, including faculty, chairs, deans and upper administrators. We have found that being sensitive to these issues makes a difference in how we approach most of the services we provide, enabling us better to contextualize and balance the advice given to faculty. This sensitivity also helps us be more careful of whom we select and promote as role models and whom we invite to give presentations to faculty. For example, we no longer invite the faculty member who routinely starts his workday at 3:00 a.m. to speak to our entire new faculty! In addition, not all presenters need to be superstars; in fact, this may be sending the wrong message. As one of our faculty participants noted,

It was nice to talk with people who were not superstars. Some [presentations] were discouraging because we were listening to people who seemed to be so far ahead of us that we could never catch up. It was good to see colleagues struggling to keep everything in balance. I know that the superstars struggle, and that they are not perfect in all facets, but this was often not very visible, was ignored.

Our combined 26 years of faculty development experience have shown us that faculty members pay very close attention to advice on work-life balance, time-management, and living a more healthy, balanced life style. They may not be cognitively aware of the dangers of workaholism, but most of them have experienced and felt the effects of over-work, if not on the quality of their own work, then on themselves as individuals and on

their families. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to voice these concerns publically. Faculty members do not want to appear to be less dedicated to their work than their colleagues. But we do hear their complaints, especially on anonymous surveys. When we get complaints like the following, we know we need to retool:

- My anxiety level skyrocketed . . . how do we accomplish everything that's expected of us and have balance? How healthy is it to work 10-12 hours a day, go home and work until midnight or 1:00 am?
- If I had been a brand new assistant professor, [this presentation] would have scared me to death. . . . I missed a sense of balance.
- Very overwhelming. . . . My wife and children are more important to me than that.
- I . . . left feeling very anxious and overwhelmed.

In our experience, when faculty members are given the chance to discuss work-life balance issues and to learn from colleagues who are good role models, they are eager to learn. While still helping faculty to set and strive for high standards, our faculty appreciate advice that recognizes that no one person can or should try to "do it all" and the recognition that, in fact, even achieving tenure is not worth "any price." As this next comment suggests, they appreciate advice that helps them learn to rise to high expectations while dealing more effectively with the stress and work load: "The seminar did generate some new concerns and worries for me as I better understood the expectations, but strategies for dealing with stress and time management in the readings and sessions seemed to come just at the right time."

In addition to be generally aware and sensitive to issues related to workaholism and work-life balance, CTL staff can also provide programming that specifically addresses these issues. Here are a few specific strategies, most of which we have used and found effective:

- Discuss workaholism and work-life balance with administrators, deans, and chairs. Educate them about the risks of workaholism. Stress the benefits of better work-life balance in the organization. Suggest ways they can maintain or restore work-life balance in their own lives, and have them share ways they can encourage healthier life styles among their faculty members. Sharing ideas

in this article and from related books may be a starting point.

- Discuss work addiction and work-life balance at regular, logical points in faculty members' careers. This is especially useful when they are newly hired and when they receive tenure. Help faculty establish good habits when they begin work at the university. After receiving tenure, discuss getting tenure as a changing point in their career. Allow them to reflect on how well they have or have not managed their time and work-life balance and to make (better) plans for the future.
- Invite faculty members to join a discussion group that focuses on workaholism and work-life balance. Many faculty members know they do not manage their time well and welcome the opportunity to share ideas freely with other faculty. The group may also choose to read and discuss books or articles on the subject.
- Bring in an expert speaker/workshop facilitator who can guide participants in exercises that can help them to identify and work on areas that need improvement. You might even have experts among your own faculty and staff who you can draw on. Consider professionals from the campus counseling center as possible speakers. They may see this problem in their one-one-one consulting with faculty.
- Encourage faculty to share with each other ideas and strategies they have learned. Provide a panel discussion featuring experienced faculty who have had some success with work-life balance. Have them discuss how they address work-life balance issues and manage time now as well as how they managed those initial, intense years. Have faculty develop plans for how they will make concrete, measurable changes to bring more balance into their lives.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Some faculty and, unfortunately, even some administrators feel that

sacrificing work-life balance is the price for excellence in academe. We disagree, and we feel the literature supports our position. When one's devotion to work entails the sacrifice of everything that stands in its way, that condition is workaholism, and it is dangerous. It is dangerous to the health and well-being of faculty members and their families, sets a poor example for students, and ultimately does not lead to the highest quality of work. Faculty members, like all workers, do better when they are able to moderate their activities (Boice, 2000). They may not work as long or as obsessively, but the quality of their work can actually increase when they keep their work in balance with other life priorities (Boice, 2000). CTL staff would also do well to learn to moderate their work habits and maintain work-life balance. There are many ways they can help the institution and faculty to be aware of these issues and to make incremental improvement. In this article, we suggested 12 steps to help prevent or reduce workaholism, along with strategies CTL staff can use in their institutions. We believe that being sensitive to these issues can make a big difference in how we approach and deliver the services we offer faculty. If we wish to nurture institutions that support quality teaching and learning, then it should also be our goal to help faculty be more healthy, well-grounded, and well-balanced.

## References

- Adamson, E. (2002). *The everything stress management book: Practical ways to relax, be healthy, and maintain your sanity*. Avon, MA: Adams Media.
- Boice, R. (1997). Strategies for enhancing scholarly productivity. In J. M. Moxley & T. Taylor (Eds.), *Writing and publishing for academic authors* (pp. 19-34). Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Boice, R. (2000). *Advice for new faculty members: Nihil nimis*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Bridger, A. (1998, February 24). Message #1: Establishing your absence. Tomorrow's Professor Listserv. Retrieved June 1, 2010, from <http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/postings/1.html>
- Committee on Science, Engineering and Public Policy, National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. (2007). *Beyond bias and barriers: Fulfilling the potential of women in academic science and engineering*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.
- Dodd, P., & Sundheim, D. (2005). *The 25 best time management tools and techniques: How to get more done without driving yourself crazy*. Ann Arbor, MI: Peak Performance Press.
- Drake, J. D. (2000). *Downshifting: How to work less and enjoy life more*. San

- Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Elkin, A. (1999). *Stress management for dummies*. Foster City, CA: IDG Books Worldwide.
- Fassel, D. (2000). *Working ourselves to death: The high cost of workaholism and the reward of recovery*. San Francisco: Harper.
- Gray, T., & Birch, A. J. (2008). Ten ways to manage your time. *Journal of Faculty Development*, 22 (1), 67-72.
- Groves, D. (2004). *Stress reduction for busy people: Finding peace in a chronically anxious world*. Novato, CA: New World Library.
- Hipp, E. (1995). *Fighting invisible tigers: A stress management guide for teens*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit.
- Klein, R. (2005). *Time management secrets for working women: Getting organized to get the most out of each day*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks.
- Lazear, J. (2001). *The man who mistook his job for a life*. New York: Crown.
- Luskin, F., & Pelletier, K. R. (2005). *Stress free for good: 10 scientifically proven life skills for health and happiness*. San Francisco: Harper.
- Machlowitz, M. M. (1980). *Workaholics: Living with them, working with them*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- McCorry, K. J. (2005). *Organize your work day . . . in no time*. Indianapolis, IN: Que.
- Naggy, S., & Davis, L. (1985). Burnout: A comparative analysis of personality and environmental variables. *Psychological Reports*, 57 (3, part 2), 1319-1326.
- Peters, T., & Austin, N. (1985). *A passion for excellence*. New York: Warner.
- Porter, G. (1996). Organizational impact of workaholism: Suggestions for researching the negative outcomes of excessive work. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 1 (1), 70-84.
- Porter, G. (2001a). Workaholics as high-performance employees: The intersection of workplace and family relationship to problems. In B. E. Robinson, & N. D. Chase (Eds.), *High-performing families: Causes, consequences, and clinical solutions* (pp. 43-70). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Porter, G. (2001b). Workaholic tendencies and the high potential for stress among co-workers. *International Journal of Stress Management*, 8 (2), 147-64.
- Robinson, B. E. (1998). *Chained to the desk: A guidebook for workaholics, their fathers and children and the clinicians who treat them*. New York: New York University Press.
- Robinson, B. E. (2001). Workaholism and family functioning: A psychological profile of family members. In B. E. Robinson, & N. C. Chase (Eds.),

- High-performing families: Causes, consequences, and clinical solutions* (pp. 3-22). Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Robinson, B. E., & Chase, N. C. (Eds.). (2001). *High-performing families: Causes, consequences, and clinical solutions*. Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.
- Robinson, B. E., & Kelley, L., (1997). Adult children of workaholics: Self-concept, anxiety, depression, and locus of control. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 26, 223-238.
- Schuster, J. H., & Finkelstein, M. J. (2006). *The American faculty: The restructuring of academic work and careers*. Baltimore, MA: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Sorcinelli, M. D. (Summer 1992). New and junior faculty stress: Research and responses. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 50, 27-37.
- Spence, J. T., & Robbins, A. S. (1992). Workaholism: Definition, measurement, and preliminary results. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, 58 (1), 160-178.
- Swenson, R. (2004). *Margins: Restoring emotional, physical, financial, and time reserves to overloaded lives*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress.
- Wehrenberg, M. (2008). *The 10 best-ever anxiety management techniques*. New York: Norton.
- Wheeler, C. M. (2007). *10 simple solutions to stress: How to tame tension & start enjoying your life*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.
- Winner, J. (2003). *Stress management made simple*. Santa Barbara, CA: Blue Fountain Press.
- Yates, R. (1988, November 13). Japanese live . . . and die . . . for their work. *The Chicago Tribune*, p. 1.



---

**A. Jane Birch** is Assistant Director for Faculty Development at the Brigham Young University (BYU) Faculty Center. Among other programs and workshops, she directs the BYU Faculty Development Series, an intensive 18-month new faculty program, and the Scholarship Workshop, a semester-long program on scholarly productivity. Jane's passion is helping faculty make connections between their religious faith and their work as teachers and scholars. She also gets excited about helping faculty develop a broad vision of their work and encouraging them to assist students in making meaning, finding purpose, and connecting to what is important in the "bigger picture." **Tara Gray** serves as Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and as the Founding Director of the Teaching Academy at New Mexico State University (NMSU). Tara has been honored at NMSU and nationally with seven awards for teaching or service. She has published three books, including her most recent, *Publish and Flourish: Become a Prolific Scholar*. She has presented faculty development workshops to 5,000 participants in more than 30 of the United States, and in Mexico, Guatemala, Thailand, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.