

CHARLOTTE CONNECTIONS

Charlotte Chapter - International Association of Administrative Professionals

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International Association of
Administrative Professionals®

Charlotte Chapter



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President's Message...

MERRY **CHRISTMAS!**

I can't believe we are already at Christmas. It seems I and the rest of the Board of Directors were just installed when in fact, our IAAP year had reached the half-way point. It is true what they say...Life IS like a roll of toilet paper. The closer to the end you get, the faster it goes.

We have had a wonderful year in the Charlotte Chapter so far, but there are still some things we want to get done before it ends in June. We have added some new members, met some great guests and learned from some awesome speakers. Regretfully, we have said goodbye to some members who, due to the economic downturn, are no longer employed and who have had to cut back for a while. Hopefully we'll be able to welcome them back when their situations improve.

I, like some of the rest of you, are working hard on the Biggest Loser contest. I had Thanksgiving at my house for the first time in a long time and thoroughly enjoyed it. I cooked way too much, ate way too much and enjoyed every calorie laden minute of it. The great thing about the second season of Biggest Loser is that there are no major eating holidays included. I don't know if I'll reach my goal of pounds lost, but I do know I'll still be trying when June rolls around. I want to encourage you to participate with us. It is a great way to treat yourself for the hard work you do and the stress we are all under these days.

If you haven't already marked your calendar for Leadership & Education Forum in Cary on February 24 & 25, do so now. Registration information and hotel information will be arriving with the New Year. As close as Cary is, the Charlotte Chapter should be very well represented. Also mark your calendars for the NCD



December Celebrations

Birthdays

11

Karen Burgess

23

Dianne Hughes, CPS/
CAP

26

Michelle Davis

31

Madeline Schuler

IAAP Anniversaries

1979

Paula Veazie, CPS/CAP
2003

Barbara Porter

Annual Meeting the weekend of June 15-16 in Asheville. That is where new officers are installed and all the business of the Division is conducted. We will be following up with carpools and room shares as we get closer.

As we wave good-bye to 2011 and welcome 2012, remember those in your area who are less fortunate and share the blessings of the season. It is not about the gifts or about Santa Clause. It is about love, sharing and helping each other. Remember, the reason for the season is the most celebrated birth in the history of mankind.

I love you all and from my heart to yours, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and all the blessings you need for a healthy New Year.

Holiday Cheer

Whether you are a Santa, Scrooge, or Grinch the holidays and the unique challenges they present come every year. However, there are also many opportunities available to you that can make a difference in your life or the life of someone close to you. With so many demands on our time, our wallets, and our energy it is important to minimize the stress and maximize the satisfaction and joy. Here are a few tips on how you can endure the holidays and end the year with a bang:

Control the budget – Everyone loves to give but setting a limit and establishing a budget will give you ultimate peace of mind and reduce financial stress.

Look for meaningful ways to give – I know we would all like to shower our loved ones with extravagant gifts, but sometimes a simple handmade card or item means more. Gifts with true meaning touch the heart and warm the soul.

Attitude is everything - Everyone strives to be a joyful giver, so why not give joy as a gift. Maintaining a cheery attitude provides your co-workers and family with an abundance of energy, and gives them a sense of comfort and security.

Conserve your energy – Shopping, baking, cards, family visits, parties, and the list goes on, can drain your energy and affect your attitude. When planning your week include quiet time for yourself and budget time towards the additional activities that are important to you. Just say “No” to an over abundance of activities. No one really expects you to become Martha Stewart at the stroke of midnight on Thanksgiving. Choose the activities and areas you wish to spend your time and plan accordingly.

Focus on what’s important – Have your priorities in order and when you are working on those priorities stay focused on them one at a time.

Be present in the moment – As you are going through your day-to-day activities and participating in special celebrations, be there in mind, body, and spirit. I am sure you’ve heard this before but the meaning may not be clear. For me it means while you are in that moment take the opportunity to really listen to others, to notice the little things like the smells, sounds, and environment around you and store them in your heart.

Practice empathy – So many people are in pain, and the holidays seem to amplify the hurt of illness, rejection, loneliness, homelessness, and so many other human conditions. You CAN make a difference to those around you by being empathetic and charitable.

Look for ways to reach beyond your immediate circle – We are set in our ways, and we often spend our lives within the same social circles. You have a regular church, your coworkers, and family, but satisfaction and happiness lies in helping others. You can’t fully appreciate the needs of others unless you are exposed to outside situations. This is a great time to budget time to spend on volunteer opportunities and open yourself up to new experiences.

Give thanks – For all the gifts we have; our health, our family, our jobs, our co-workers, warm places to call home, lights, water, clothes, etc... Let us give thanks! Your attitude of gratitude will have such a positive effect on others that you will be able to see a measurable difference in the way people respond to you, and to how you feel.

Share the love – One of my favorite Christmas songs is “Love Came Down At Christmas” It talks about ultimate sacrifice and all enduring love, and I know that this type of love exists within each of us. All we have to do is allow it to flow through us to others.

What ever you celebrate during this time of year my wish is that in return you receive love and joy!

“Gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect”.

-- Oren Arnold

Increase Your Passion for Work Without Becoming Obsessed

by Scott Barry Kaufman

Scott Barry Kaufman is a cognitive scientist at NYU. He is also Co-founder of The Creativity Post
Article first published in Harvard Business Review

Work brings some people intrinsic joy. These people feel in control of their work, feel good about themselves while working, find their work to be in harmony with their other activities. Psychologists describe these folks as having harmonious passion. But there's another kind of passion: obsessive passion. Those who are obsessively passionate feel an uncontrollable urge to engage in their work, feel more conflict between their passion and other areas in their life, and their work forms a large part of their often unstable and negative self-concept.

In my last post, I summarized Robert J. Vallerand's distinction between obsessive passion and harmonious passion. In the comment thread that followed, I noticed a couple of questions emerge: Is obsessive passion ever helpful? What should you do if you recognize that your passion for work is not harmonious, but obsessive? I'll address both of those in this post.

Some commentators argued that obsessive passion could be useful in the beginning stages of a new endeavor, such as when starting a new company. I disagree. Obsessive passion is rarely beneficial. It's not just that those with high levels of obsessive passion are committed, focused, and dedicated. Those who are obsessively passionate about their work are inflexibly, excessively and compulsively committed, finding it difficult to disengage. As such, they are setting up bad habits from the start, and risking burnout in the longer run. Note that

harmonious passion is correlated with flow — the mental state of being completely present and fully immersed in a task. Research shows that it's flow that is conducive to creativity, not obsessive passion. The positive emotions and intrinsic joy that is associated with harmonious passion is what propels one to greatness, not the negative emotions, compulsions, and unstable ego that is associated with obsessive passion.

All of us have at least a little bit of obsessive and harmonious passion for our work. The key for work productivity and for buffering against work burnout is to increase your harmonious passion while reducing your obsessive passion.

How can we turn down the dial on obsessive passion and turn up the dial on harmonious passion?

Unfortunately, there isn't a lot of scientific research on the practical side of passion (a state of affairs I seriously lament). I can think of a few things, however, that might help. I think it's a two-part process: first it's important to recognize that you are demonstrating obsessive passion, and then it's a matter of boosting your harmonious passion.

There are clear warning signs that you are obsessively passionate about your work. Here are some tests:

Do you have enough energy? Do you engage in your work with positive enthusiasm? Do you feel enjoyment doing what you do?

Do you define yourself by criteria other than work? If your self is a pie, how big of a bite does your work take out of it?

Do you have a positive self-image? Obsessive passion is correlated with a negative image of the self, including automatic subconscious associations between the self and the concept "unpleasant."

When you work, is your interior monologue positive — filled with words like "want to," "get to," and "can't wait to"? Or are words like "must," "need," and "have to" rummaging around?

Are you able to stop working when you want to? Recent research found that online gamers who were very harmoniously passionate about gaming felt positive emotions while playing, while gamers with obsessive passion felt more negative emotions both when playing and when prevented from playing. Do you feel a compulsion to work all the time, even when you really don't want to?

Do you get into a state of flow? Do you feel as though time has receded into the background, or do you feel the weight of pressure on your back? Flow is an enjoyable experience, whereas obsessive engagement feels more urgent. If you're reading down that list and thinking, "no, no, no," these are signs that you may have obsessive, not harmonious, passion. If you do think your level of obsessive passion might be too high, there are some things you can do about it:

Schedule real breaks. If you recognize you are obsessively passionate about your work, force yourself to get out of that headspace by scheduling other activities during the course of the day (like lunch with a friend, or a break to hit the gym). Block out time after work or on weekends for family, friends, and activities you enjoy. Having a schedule will keep you honest.

Don't bring work home. If you can afford to, make it completely impossible to access your work once you leave work. Don't bring home your laptop. Leave those files on your desk. Keep separate email accounts for home and work, and don't check work email when you're at home (put up an out-of-office message if you have to). Obsessive passion is really just a bad habit, and habits can be broken gently.

Change your thought patterns when you work. Fake the mindset of the harmoniously passionate person until you make it. For instance, convert thoughts of "must" and "need" to "want" and "desire." At first, this may feel awkward, but eventually the obsessively passionate mindset will dissipate, and so will the behaviors associated with it. A recent study suggests that changing your explicit thought patterns may increase self-esteem and harmonious passion.

Commit to a new hobby. Often, investing too much self in one project is an indication of a negative core self. The more additional things outside of work contribute to a positive sense of self, the less space your work performance will take up in your ego, and the smaller your chances of burnout.

If all of this sounds incompatible with success, consider a case study: A young, very talented musician is trying to decide whether to launch his promising solo career, or to put it off a little while to learn more about the world around him. On the one hand, timing is very important in the music industry. There are many talented artists, and they could get a head start if he decided to postpone his career. On the other hand, talent isn't everything in music. Audiences not only respond to talent, but also to many subtle influences like sensitivity, expression, and wisdom, fed by experiences outside the musical realm.

The musician's name? Yo-Yo Ma. In the end, he chose to defer his career to expand his sense of self. Ma compares those years to an "emotional bank account in which you must draw the rest of your life." To be sure, that path wasn't all clear sailing for Ma; he earned a D+ in his music history course at Harvard. But if those years of undisciplined learning were detrimental to his career, I am hard-pressed to detect it. Yo-Yo Ma is one of the greatest cellists of all time, noted not just for his incredible talent and dedication, but also the breadth of his accomplishments, his compassion, thoughtfulness, knowledge, and positive enthusiasm. In other words, his harmonious passion.

Passion is one of our most important vehicles for performance, creativity, imagination, and ingenuity. By no means do I want to discourage passion. But we rarely realize how other important areas of life feed into our main passion. When one's life isn't in balance, passion can become obsessive and counterproductive. When a person feels good about their self and the work they are doing, and is capable of disengaging, passion becomes a wellspring of long-term success.

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Chapter Meetings

When:

2nd Monday of the month
5:30-8:00

Where:

Hilton Charlotte Executive
Park
5624 Westpark Drive
Charlotte, NC 28217

The meeting cost is \$22

which includes:

5:30-6:00 Networking Session

6:00-6:30 Dinner

6:30-7:00 Speaker

7:30-8:00 Business Meeting

You may make your reservation
to visit our next meeting

by contacting Hospitality

Director

Shari Cannon

shari@iverx.com

We welcome your
submissions for the
January
newsletter to
molly.rose.86@gmail.com

