URL: https://stvp.stanford.edu/blog/videos/worklife-balance

Hawkins discusses the balance between work and personal life. He mentions how different people will have differing balance cycles throughout various stages of their life. In this clip, Jeff shares a personal anecdote about balance in his own life.

Transcript

If I may clarify the question, how do you really make the choice with work and family balance type of thing? And maybe you're asking of somewhat a device, so how do you got about that? I'll give you a story, when we were trying to get the Zoomer out at Palm, the Engineers were working around the clock.. They were just slaving away.. They were sleeping on the floor and I didn't have anything to do.. My work was done, I already designed the stuff that I was going to design and I felt like, should I stick around here? Should I look busy? And I asked him and I said, "Nah if I feel a little guilty I'm going to go home and have dinner." And she gave me a great advice.. She said, "Look, everybody has their own point in their life and maybe when you're younger you want to work hard and when you're older maybe you don't.. And it's your choice.. It's a personal choice and you shouldn't feel bad if you go home because you've got your work done and someone else is working late because they want to work late and they set up for the schedule anyway.. They signed up for it and they like it and don't feel bad about it." Just don't feel bad about it.. So I tried it, it worked fine.. I didn't lose any respect..

As long as I was contributing my part, as long as I was there and the things I had to get done and the things I signed up for I got done, then that's all that mattered.. And really, it's almost a self-policing thing, where the way you manage teams is you don't tell them how long it's going to take to do something, you just say how long do you think it's going to take you to do this? And then you say, OK you sure you're signing up for that? Great, then you can do it.. They set their own schedule and people can balance their own lives.. So the point is not everyone has to be the same, not everyone has to have the same work and family balance, it is not always the same throughout your life.. You can do it at different times and different places.. I'm not saying I'm a slacker.. You know, there are times when I work really hard but those are the times I wanted to do it and there are other times I don't want to do it.. And as I've got a family, I just didn't want to do it as much.. And so I just don't worry about it.. I get my work done and I actually don't believe you're any less productive..

Sure, you're cranking out something at the end, you're writing some color and you really want to sweat away, great.. And I've done that too.. But in general, I'm not sure there's a correlation between companies that have this workaholic culture and companies that don't.. I'm not sure there's a correlation with success there.. It's not clear.. It would be an interesting study for some academic to do...