

From the Desk
of
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When I first read the letter from Mr. Gould, I wondered what words of wisdom a non- conventionally educated model could possibly impart to a future generation of smart, aggressive college graduates. Could anything I say ever really change the course of their lives-or even the course of just *one* life? It does make you think about if anything you have done in your life is worth taking up the time it takes to tell it.

So here I go, taking a stab at it. And really, what am I doing, but possibly telling you the mistakes *I* made and would not want someone else to make in the future.

So here it is:

You need Balance.

I know, I thought I would have many words to say and paragraphs expounding all the fabulous wisdom I've accumulated. But really, it simply comes down to balance. Balance your life.

Looking back on the life I have lead and the things that I have done, I realize that most of what I have done is fleeting. What I mean is: does the new generation of grads know that I was on the cover of 700 magazines? Can they name even one for certain?

Do they know I was the first person to do posters and calendars? Could they know? Many new young models in the business don't even know that. Many fledging models don't even know the names of the models that made the milestones and laid the ground work in the business where they are now reaping the benefits. Who is Cheryl Tiegs or Lauren Hutton? An answer on jeopardy?

I spent so much of my time on the road and focused on my career. Many people telling me that I only had so much time to do what I wanted to do in the business and then it would be over-in fact, in most businesses now it seems that twenty five is too old! Do it "now"! There may be no "later"

So I followed my dreams and left all who loved me behind. Because truthfully? There was no time for Easter with the family or birthdays- not even my own.

Now looking back, I see the folly; the mistake. In fact, I see the missed opportunities in my life. Not in my career which is a blur of studios and airplanes, makeup artists and cameras. Half of which I don't even remember. To the outside world it looks like a world of glamour and parties. That is the smoke and mirrors shown to the uninitiated.

It is the people who remained with me thru this time, who were in the background silently supporting me where I have my regrets.

Where was I when my sister had her child? Modeling in Paris. When my grandmother died? Shooting a movie in Miami.

I remember Easter on the Champs de Elysee calling home to say "hi"-a long distance voice on the wire.

Now my nieces are, like you, graduating college and they barely know me. And *I chose* it that way; my career came first: It came before my family, friends, lovers, and even before my health.

In fact, I am writing two books expounding the benefits of choice in our eating patterns. I chose to go RAW after a series of health problems threatened to destroy my career-the career I nurtured for years, that I suffered for-slipping thru my fingers.

So that's the point I had chose to balance out my life, to change my eating habits and to establish a balance and regain control-the choice was mine and I took it.

You will be pushed in the business world to make choices. And to make sacrifices. And sometimes we don't would know whether a choice we make is really a choice we made, or if we were pushed into it to move our careers forward. Have you jeopardized your soul for one small step ahead in business?

Next week will anyone remember the sacrifice you made this week? Or will they just push you one step further, to sacrifice just one more time, forfeiting one more second of your life.

Remember, there are no second chances and you don't get to chose again. You can't recapture your lost moments.

Your health-mental, physical, and emotional is predicated on balance. How much you give for how much you get.

A barter system if you will, where you pay with your life.

So when you become 45, which is really just around the corner, and you've worked your whole life for a company-sacrificing and martyring yourself for the good of your career- and they release you for a younger

“upstart”, will you regret missing that fax coming in or will you regret missing the birth of your child? Make sure you don’t regret missing the wedding of a friend or the simple pleasures of sitting around the fireplace on a cold winter night because you were at your desk earning “brownie points”: Points that don’t really matter when it comes down to the wire.

Because in the end, it is not how much success you have, but how much of your humanity you were able to keep in attaining that success.

Your choices and the control you have is the only gift you get to keep. The thing is, if I had it all to do over again? I would choose to have more balance.