

As I speak to groups around the country I encounter regions of people who actually fear being away from their smart phones because they'll miss one vital phone call that could make their day, week, month, or year. Yes, giving yourself uninterrupted stretches, out of the information and communication shower is a little risky. In the course of a week or a month, occasionally you'll miss a key call, but is this your death knell?

Generally, the party calling will call back or leave a message, or get in touch with you via some other medium such as email or text message. Also, the greater the degree to which you have differentiated yourself, the greater the chance that the party trying to reach you will not simply go down the list and call the next vendor or provider. They want you because of the product, service, information, or insight that you offer.

Hard to Find Peace of Mind?

When you arbitrarily conclude that you have to be "on" all the time, beyond making it more difficult to meet the tasks at hand, you introduce a level of anxiety that need not be present. You ought to be able to eat your lunch in peace. You ought to be able to go to the bathroom in peace. You ought to be able to have a clear and uninterrupted stretch when you want to just sit and think.

So, establish your ground rules. When will you be available, and when will you not? When will you leave the cell phone in your desk drawer, or in the car, or some other place where it will not disturb your enjoyment of your current activity; be it dining out, going to a movie, attending a lecture and so on. You work hard, and you get a lot done. Now it's time to be gentle with yourself and realize that you could be even more productive by establishing some ground rules that work for you. You owe it to your organization, your customers or constituents, and most of all, to yourself.

About Jeff Davidson



Jeff Davidson "The Work-Life Balance Expert®," is a preeminent time management authority, has written 59 mainstream books, and is an electrifying professional speaker, making 806 presentations since 1985 to clients such as Kaiser Permanente, IBM, American Express, Lufthansa, Swissotel, America Online, Re/Max, USAA, Worthington Steel, and the World Bank.

Jeff is Executive Director of the Breathing Space Institute; a popular speaker; and the author of numerous books, including:

- *Simpler Living* (Skyhorse Publishing)
- *The 60 Second Innovator* (Adams Media)
- *Breathing Space* (MasterMedia)
- *Complete Idiot's Guide to Managing Your Time* (Alpha/Penguin)