



# Whole-Hearted vs. Single Minded

*from balance to harmony to symphony*

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# Rites of Passage

- We have all heard of the 10 000 hours needed for mastery, and we typically achieve this during periods of intense study and challenge.
- Professional training is particularly committed to this model, because in this case mastery can save lives.
- In a uniform population of students, or professionals, survival of a crushing workload in order to gain certification is a time honored tradition, but perhaps it is time to revisit this.

# Our Colleagues in Medicine

- Research shows that surgeons who are sleep deprived are just as impaired as heavy equipment operators and pilots who are sleep deprived. 17 hours awake=blood alcohol of 0.05; 24 hrs=0.10.
- The high incidence of drug addition among MD's has forced the profession to revisit unintended outcomes of work culture.
- Internships and residencies are now more moderate.
- There is nothing noble about self-abuse.
- The CMA code of ethics now includes the statement:

*The professional has a responsibility to safeguard their own health and well being.*

## Crushing workloads:

*When does the pursuit of excellence become an exercise in self-indulgence (or self-abuse)?*

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*Intended and unintended outcomes in both BSc programs and the drive to tenure and promotion*

# Positive (Intended) Outcomes

- Build strength, endurance and resilience
- Cultivate independent strategic thinking
- Prioritization of work, team building, leveraging talents
- Healthy boundaries between work and play
- Balance of respect and skepticism toward authority
- Awareness of own strengths and limitations
- Mastery of the discipline, drive to excellence
- Clear, focused commitment to a goal

# Negative Outcomes

- Failure to meet own standards, shaming
- Overwork, burnout, bitterness and cynicism
- Health problems, intense anxiety
- Battered self-confidence and shredded self-esteem
- Compromised values and ethics (cheating)
- Broken or no personal life
- Toxic work environment, ruthless competition
- Compromised learning

## ...and worse.

- The extension of the “hard-work and dedication” as a primary measure of contribution can lead to statements like:  
*If you want to be valued in the organization, you have to put work ahead of family and personal needs.*
- In a traditional hierarchical organization with single income families, this plays out as a call for full-on commitment, with the promise of financial reward. Everyone can win.
- For parents who are part of a primary care giving team, this is not always a choice. The unintended consequence is constructive dismissal and loss of key talent.
- Focus and discipline in the workplace are critically important. So are appropriate boundaries.

# Can we do better?

- We WANT excellence, resilience, teamwork, passion, commitment and hard work!
- We NEED healthy workplaces!
- Some people pull this off – finding both a focused drive to excellence and a rich humanity in their relationships.
- What does that look like?



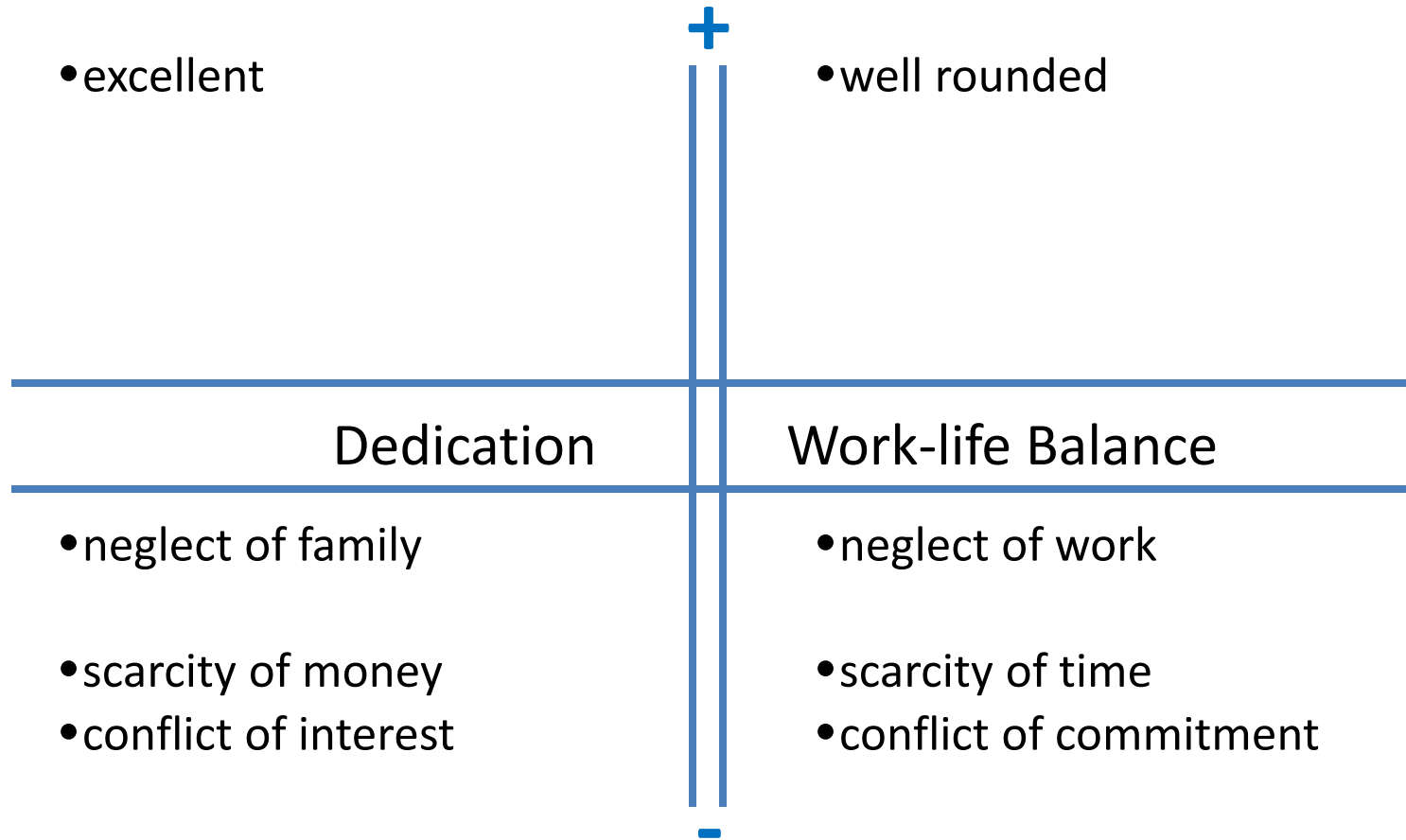
# Finding Synergy in Opposing Values

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*based on a tool presented in the workshop by Russ Gaskin,  
EWB National Conference, January 2013, Calgary*

*It isn't Either/Or, it's Both/And*

# Current Dialogue



There are negative biases and stereotypes here...

# Transform the two values...

## Dedication becomes...

- driven (more negative)
- hard working (more neutral)
- productive (outcome based)
- high performance  
(see Flow, Drive refs.)
  - all-in commitment
  - excellence as an outcome
- **single-minded focus**

## Work-life balance becomes...

- work-life harmony
- healthy boundaries
- 3D human
- **whole-hearted presence**

...better.



Strengths

# Opposing Values



Missed Opportunities

- passionate/purpose driven
- personal excellence
- strategic priorities
- competitive
- high efficiency/productivity

- joyful/value driven
- high performance teams
- self replicate/delegate/mentor
- collaborative communities
- embrace diversity/safety

## Single-minded Focus

## Whole-hearted Presence

- damaged relationships
- compromised health and basic needs

- lost opportunities
- compromised standards



Blind Spot



Visible Risks

# Opposing Values



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**Whole-hearted Presence**

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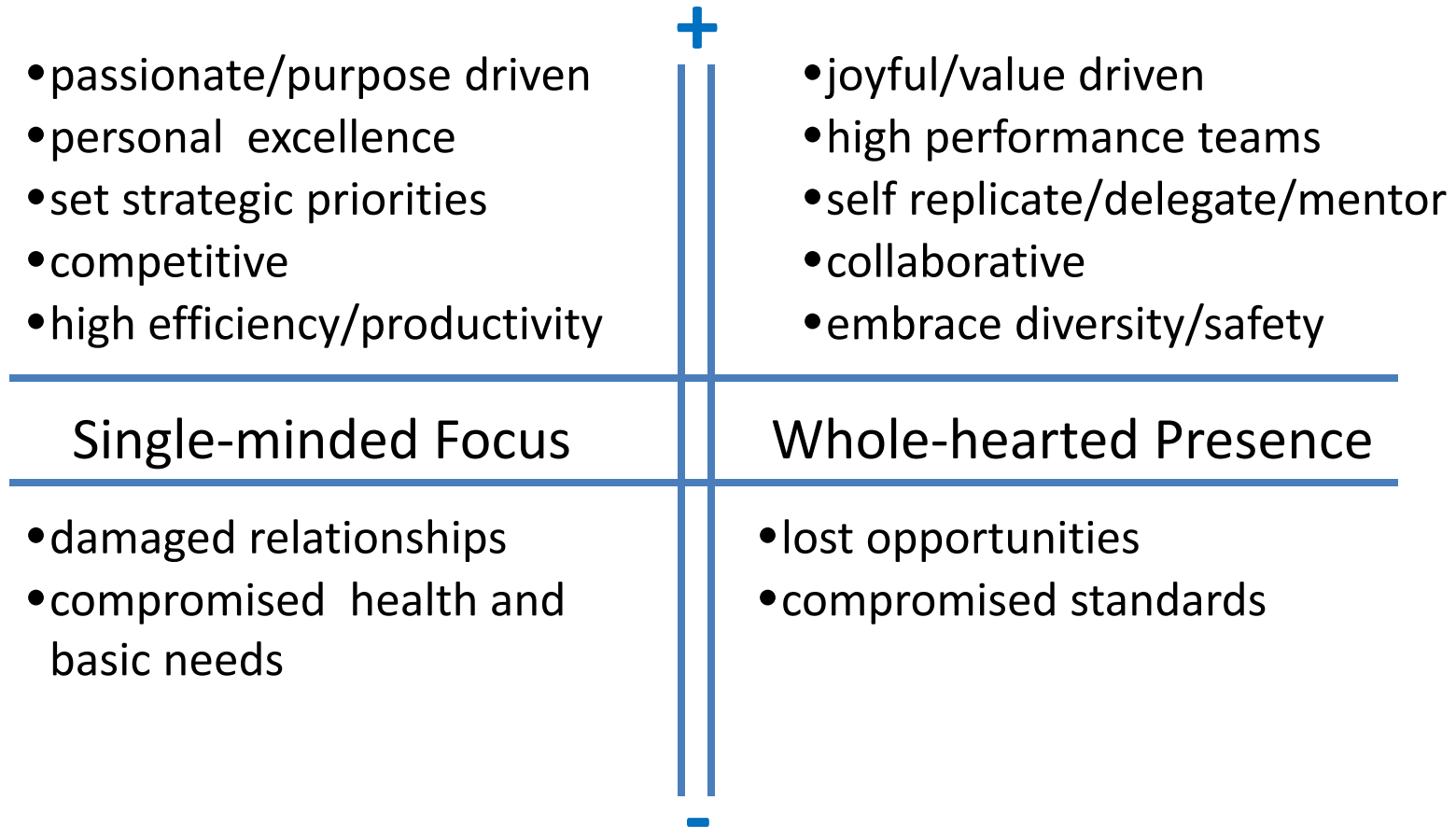
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# Where does this model lead?

- No way to win.
- There is no work-life balance.
  - Work-life harmony is as good as it gets.
  - No problems is not one of the rules of the game.
- The best we can do is aim to live in joy, confidence and clarity, not anxiety, fear and guilt – or an overwhelming sense of responsibility.

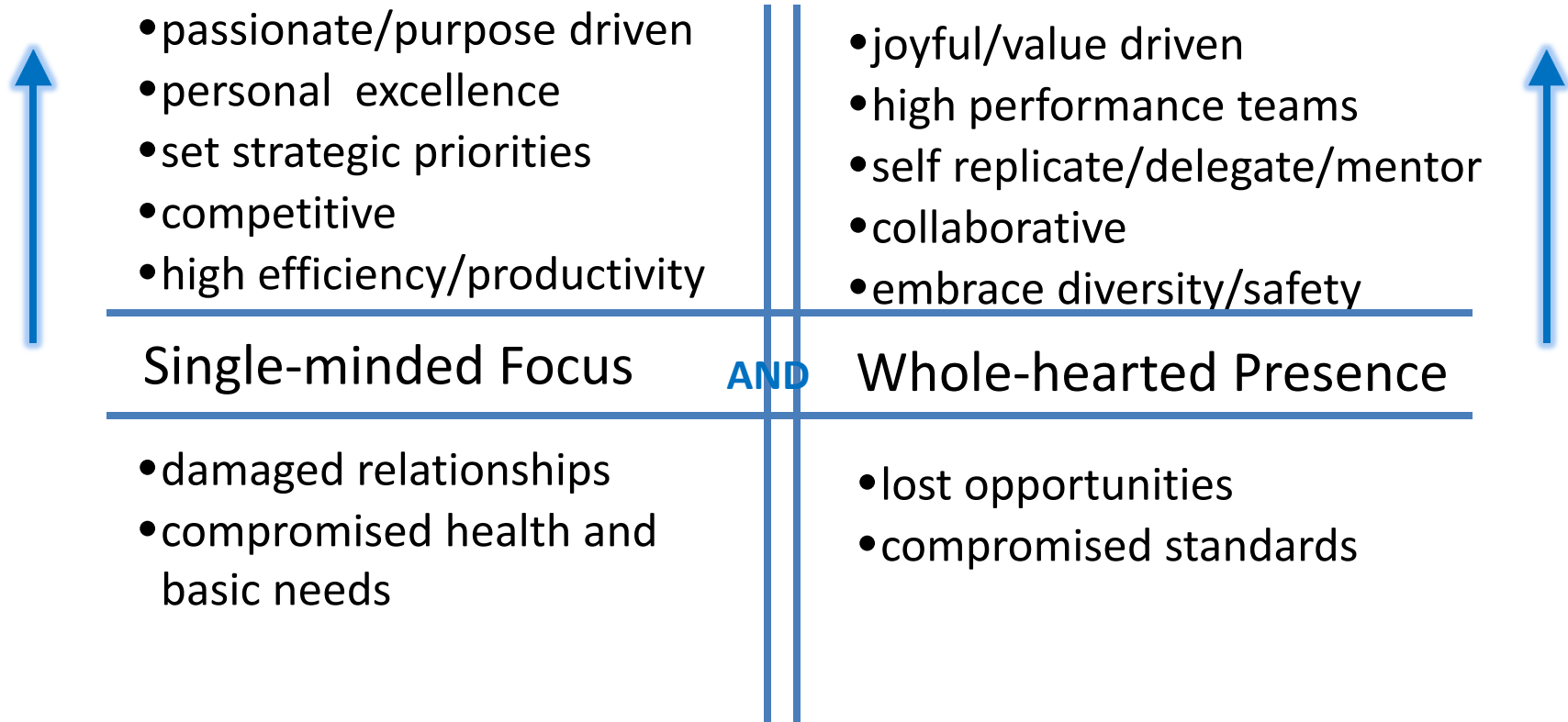
# Opposing Values



Look for the both/and solution.

# Take down the wall and look up!

*When opposing positive values are successfully paired a synergy emerges that can transform conflict into high energy value and potential.*





# Whole-Hearted Focus on Excellence

## *Stand in Integrity and Fearlessness*

work hard, debrief, celebrate, play  
practice collaborative competition

allow passionate vulnerability and joyful engagement

Move flexibly from high-focus to regroup to whole-heartedness,  
while managing teams, time, and self.

- set high standards
- focus on strategic priorities
- build endurance
- commit to productivity

- build high performance teams
- self replicate/delegate/mentor
- build resilience
- commit to community



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## Single-minded Focus

**AND**

## Whole-hearted Presence

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- attend to health and well being
- commit to important relationships
- cultivate an abundance mentality

- stand in integrity, under-commit
- build a life-support system
- do the things that excite you



*Live in Ways that are Sustainable and Grounded*

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## Single-minded Focus **AND** Whole-hearted Presence

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## *Live in Ways that are Sustainable and Grounded*

# Conclusions

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- *Look for the both/and*
- *Build on your own strengths and the strengths of others*
- *Be aware of your own blind spots and cover off your areas of weakness.*
- *Celebrate success. Live joyfully and with self-acceptance. Seek feedback and growth. Set healthy boundaries, but understand that the organization also has needs and boundaries. Mutual respect is essential.*

# Reading List

## A Strategic Sampling

- Brene Brown, *Ted talks on Vulnerability and Shame*, also **Daring Greatly, How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live**, 2014.
- Dalai Lama, **Beyond Religion, Ethics for a Whole World**, 2011.
- Pema Chodron, **Living Beautifully With Uncertainty and Change**, 2013.
  
- Stephen Covey, **7 Habits of Highly Effective People**, 1988 (25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition released 2013)
- Daniel Pink, **Drive, The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us**, 2009. *See the RSA Animates short version on YouTube.*
- Chris Hadfield, **An Astronaut's Guide to Life on Earth**, 2013.
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi , **Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience**, 2008. *There are many Ted talks and derivatives of this initial publication.*