

dot calm

the
search
for
sanity
in a
wired
world

Debra A. Dinnocenzo & Richard B. Swegan

An Excerpt From

*DotCalm:
The Search For Sanity In A Wired World*

by Debra A. Dinnocenzo and Richard B. Swegan
Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

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Foreword

We swing between extremes like the pendulum of a grandfather clock. At one end of the pendulum's arc, we see an exclamation point. At the other end, a question mark.

Swinging toward the exclamation point, we fling ourselves headlong into impossible work schedules fueled by fast food, motivational tapes and books on positive thinking. The idea is to win, to get ahead, to “unleash the giant within.” But as the heady rush of adrenaline fades, we lose momentum and begin to fall back toward the question mark. Swinging past the center-point, we slip quietly into misty-eyed reflection about the meaning of life and start using words like *Zen*. The next step would be to shave our heads and start dancing in orange robes at the airport!

This book is for that reader who can hear the wind roar as the pendulum of their life swings wildly toward the exclamation point. Be of good cheer, gentle reader, for you'll find these pages to be filled with practical, how-to advice from the world's happiest and most successful executives—step-by-step formulas for finding your equilibrium, maintaining your symmetry and keeping balance in your life.

Things are about to get much better.

Read on.

Roy H. Williams
Williams Marketing, Inc.
www.wizardofads.com

Special Foreword

Why It's Good to Not Work Too Much

1. If you work too much on your computer, it might break down.
2. If you work too much, you may not get to spend enough time with your children.
3. If you talk on your cell phone too much, the batteries might run out.
4. If you work too much and make too much money, you might have to start another bank account to fit all the money in.
5. If you work too late at night, you might be tired in the morning.

Jennimarie Dinnocenzo Swegan
Age: 7

Preface

D*ot Calm: The Search for Sanity in a Wired World* will help you understand the realities of various forms of overload and guide you in your search for solutions to the problems created by overload. The overwired, frenzied, non-stop world in which we live impacts your life, your work, your health, and your relationships. We suspect, however, you need less help with understanding these realities (you're *living* them daily!) and more help on ways to handle them. Therefore, our main focus is on solutions to the problems created by overload, and on actions you can implement quickly and easily to make important changes in your life.

Our contributors provided many of the solutions and creative approaches we discuss here. The hundreds of people we surveyed or interviewed are probably much like you—overworked, tired, torn between conflicting priorities, and increasingly aware that something is missing in life. While many of the issues addressed are unique to the cultural dynamics of the U.S. society and workplace, the problems discussed can serve as a preview for those in other industrialized societies. Increasingly available and affordable technologies, increased access to information, and the globalization of electronic commerce will facilitate the transfer around the globe of opportunities—and problems—associated with a truly wired world. Therefore, readers beyond our shores can anticipate this reality and take steps to minimize negative consequences in their societies and their lives.

It is no coincidence that this book is in your hands (or on the screen of some electronic tool) at this particular moment. Whether you found it on a bookshelf or a website, received it as a gift from a concerned friend or loved one—or are lucky enough to have had it provided by an insightful employer—we trust that it has made its way to you because there's a need. And when there's a convergence of need, opportunity and information, wonderful things—and meaningful change—can occur. Therefore, we're delighted to be your guides on the path to greater calm, balance, focus, and congruence in your life and work. We can't think of a better way to invest our time or identify a more important contribution we can make to you, our readers—as well as your children, your communities, your organizations, and our society.

Thank you for reading our book, joining us on this important journey, and trusting that we can all find a better way to live and work.

Debra Dinnocenzo and Rick Swegan
Wexford, Pennsylvania, USA
2001

Problem/Opportunity

It begins almost imperceptibly. A small voice within quietly whispers. Its persistence becomes somewhat familiar—a soothing sound that both nudges and nurtures. Words are not formed, though the feeling becomes clearer. And you slowly begin to understand. It is like a radio signal that is garbled by static, though the station is unquestionably transmitting. And as you travel forth, the static dissipates, the sounds emerge into words, and the small voice within is heard clearly:

Something Is Not Right!

This is the often slow and circuitous route by which you come to realize that your life is out of balance and that any semblance of control is only a distant memory, having long since been replaced by an overwhelming sense of O-V-E-R-L-O-A-D.

Throughout this book you will find sections set off by large quotation marks. These are direct quotes from respondents whose comments, provided via interview or survey, were especially relevant or poignant. We did not create any of these quotes. Each is an authentic—and sometimes instructive, provocative, or sad—statement from a real person. The authors are grateful to these contributors who offered such valuable insights, ideas, and wisdom.

This overload of information, communication, and the demands of work is beginning to take its toll. How often do you:

- Feel inundated by the volume and pace of information that relentlessly streams your way each day?
- Yearn for the days when taking a vacation meant that the office didn't travel with you?
- Let phone calls interrupt precious time with family and wonder where to draw the line on the intrusion into your life that technology enables?

“ Access to information is so fast now that I try to get done as much as I can as fast as I can. Therefore, I try to put more on my plate because I can get it done quicker, which leads to more stress and shorter deadlines. Add in e-mail and having to manage that—and it can cause havoc in your life. ”

- Feel that “the faster I go, the behinder I get” as you satisfy the demand to operate at net speed, while seeking the elusive work/life balance you so desperately desire?
- Wish you could simplify your life, slow your pace, feel more sane and balanced?
- Feel the desire to be connected—not to networks or databases or message systems or wireless access, but to something deeper, higher, greater . . . and to others?

“ I close the door to my office and leave it all behind. I focus on family. Work comes and goes, things come and go, but family is eternal. I am going to focus on the eternal things, because they are the important things. All this fuss we make about our livelihoods stops after we die. The family doesn't. ”

WHAT TO DO? This is, of course, the operative question. While we can enumerate the virtues of technology and the myriad advantages we all enjoy as a result of nearly limitless

access to information and communication resources, let's face it—most of us are exhausted, stressed out, frenetic, and often-times unfocused. Further, regardless of the technology tools we currently use to stay informed, connected, and tethered to our work, expect them to be replaced by newer, faster, and more intrusive tools aimed at increased productivity or accessibility. Improved technological tools and resources will not inherently minimize related problems without a conscious effort to manage the ways you deploy that technology in your work and life.

In the spirit of the simplicity everyone seems to crave, we have made every effort throughout this book to be efficient in the way information is provided and the ways you can access and apply it. Our hope is to transform the voice so that the calm, persistent message within you evolves to:

It Will Be All Right!

The wealth of ideas and solutions we have compiled were gathered through interviews, questionnaires, conversations, and e-mail messages involving people from a wide variety of jobs, industries, and career stages. From hundreds of sources, we have distilled the essence of their searching—the challenges, choices, and solutions for managing overload and achieving balance. So, as you read, bear in mind that we wrote according to the “rule of reality,” recounting the struggles and successes shared with us by so many contributors. The stories are real, the frustrations authentic, and the solutions rooted in real-world questions that beg for answers. Out of these myriad suggestions and solutions, we trust you will find a kindred voice that speaks to your needs and offers solutions for which you, too, have been searching.

***Everything should be made as simple as possible,
but not simpler.***

—Albert Einstein

Take Heed of Net Speed

Imagine a world where noise is everywhere. Not just surrounding you, but following you wherever you go. Some of that incessant clatter may be pleasant—bursts of music, laughter, sound of water. And some may be jarring—atonal, harsh, discordant. The constant din and jumble of sound seems to press on us, creating a brooding sense of tension, anxiety, and overload.

For most of us, this world doesn't really exist (although, as you walk through a busy city or a crowded airport, you may think so). If we substitute the image of noise for the reality of our daily lives, the accuracy of the image becomes clear. We live in an increasingly fast-paced, high-energy, constantly moving world where outside events intrude on our privacy and personal life. Everything around us shouts faster—faster connections, quicker service, and even faster fast food. No one is saying let's work more slowly and take our time. Whether you work in a "new economy" or "old economy" firm, run your own business, work in education, operate in the public sector, or attend school, the demands to make every minute count, to eke out every precious second for maximum multitasking, are constant. We now live in a 24/7 wired world bombarded by information that reaches us at lightning speed.

Prove the premise yourself. For a block of time, say, two weeks, notice how many articles, TV segments, radio spots, and advertisements address the issue of our increasing state of busyness. You'll be amazed by the results! We did a similar study and found:

“ *I carry an AA card, not because I drink, but because the 12 Steps remind me of the need to take one day at a time.* ”

- Articles in two weekly news magazines about children being overscheduled;
- A TV segment about the increasing number of business people who stay in touch with the office while on vacation;
- Articles about people disconnecting from their everyday work world;
- Several articles about rudeness associated with the use of cell phones;
- Countless articles about one aspect or another of Internet usage; and
- A variety of print ads and commercials targeted to those who are burdened by overload and/or those who seek more and faster connections.

These results provide a quick and compelling sense of the issues that are causing increasing discomfort for all of us.

Dot Calm: The Search for Sanity in a Wired World provides strategies for living and working well in the increasingly complex world in which we all live. We discuss both the speed and pace of our evolving e-world, and the serenity and calmness we all seek. The desire for calmness is a search—a journey that holds challenges, choices, and consequences. It is a never-ending process as each of us adjusts to new issues, challenges, and technologies.

The challenges we have faced, individually and as a couple, in efforts to balance the demands of work, relationships, family, and faith are also reflected in *Dot Calm: The Search for Sanity in a Wired World*. Our experience serves as a frame of reference for the gathering and retelling of the collective experience of others on a similar search.

Our research reveals there are three major trends that impact your life in today's highly connected world:

- **Access Overload**
- **Information Overload**
- **Work Overload**

What defines these types of Overload, how they've come to exist, and what you can do about them, comprise the major focus of this book. But, before proceeding with that discussion, let us offer a word of clarification. It would be easy to dismiss what we say as the ranting of anti-technology Luddites who yearn for the "good old days." However, that's clearly not the case. We own and use many of the technology tools available and discussed in this book. These tools provide us with numerous benefits, both in terms of our ability to stay in touch with others and to share information. In reality, neither of us invests energy yearning for a return to simpler times. We don't think that will happen. The world will continue moving faster, with more tools and more information streaming your way—in multiple forms and at faster rates. The real challenge and focus of your search is learning how to maintain your sanity, a sense of balance, and the essential points of nontechnological connectedness in this constantly evolving high-tech world.

Access Overload

The proliferation of technology tools—designed to keep us informed, connected, and accessible—is creating a growing sense of Access Overload that threatens the balance and

serenity that we seek and need in our lives. The simple truth is that there's not only more information, communication, and knowledge being shared, but it's also reaching us via an expanding array of ever-present—and potentially always ON—technology tools.

Access Overload is probably best described by contrast. Think back to twenty or twenty-five years ago, when most of us lived without voice mail, cell phones, paging, answering machines, and call forwarding. What was our world like then? Certainly the pace was slower. You could not assume that someone received your message when you called. If they returned your call, there was no guarantee you would be available, thus starting the much-dreaded round of telephone tag. At the end of the day, you couldn't check messages unless you could speak directly to someone in your office. And you certainly couldn't return calls, because there was no one there to answer them. Spending an hour every evening listening and responding to voice mail messages simply did not occur. Certainly, people could and did work in the evening, but they weren't directly accessible, whether at home or on the road.

Then came the new technologies. While it was, in reality, a gradual process, it seems that almost over-night everyone was *connected*, in touch around the clock. Consider how quickly we've moved to a world that expects twenty-four-hour access and response. Think about the last time you had a complaint or a technical problem and couldn't reach a "live" customer service or technical support person when you needed help. Our guess is that you wanted

“ *The technology, although great, makes you almost too accessible. I find myself constantly checking e-mail, voice mail, or forwarding my number to a cell phone, to make me accessible during time that I used to consider private or wind-down time. Since I spend a huge amount of my day on the Web, I get massive amounts of information. Lots of it gets filed for later review, and most of what I file is never looked at again.* ”

assistance immediately, but not via a website or fax service. We all want help when the need arises, regardless of the hour showing on the clock. It seems that all of us, at times, want and expect a 24/7 world.

You may recall a time when you had to ask someone if they had a fax machine. Now, of course, a fax machine is standard (and, some suggest, a soon-to-be-outdated technology), and few business cards today are printed without a fax number. What's more, now we can fax to each other over the Internet, at airports, in hotel rooms, directly to computers, and at home. It follows that these exploding and expanding fax capabilities (and the inherent levels of access that result) are not unlike the expanding uses and impact of wireless phones.

Beware: The Learning Curves

While some emerging technologies may contribute to your sense of being overwhelmed, there are hidden aspects of technology that also contribute to this dynamic. Specifically, this has to do with the learning curve associated with any piece of new technology. While it can be as simple as a new voice mail system or as complex as a software program, it takes time to learn. Often it may take several hours or more to “get up to speed” on a single application. When you combine this with the number of mistakes that will naturally be made and the multiple systems (for example, a home voice mail, work voice mail, and cell phone voice mail) a person may be using, the learning curve itself may contribute to Overload.

Accessibility for emergencies, safety, or family connections has, of course, undeniable benefits. However, being accessible to others on a twenty-four-hour basis has, for many of us, led to Access Overload. Simply put, you can no longer escape. If you choose, you can be reachable anytime, anywhere in the world—and this takes a toll. Or, sometimes,

we don't even choose it. Think back to the not-too-distant past when it was relatively rare to receive a business call at home. Given cell phones and pagers, many of us are reachable even when we don't want to be. Therefore, at least one part of Access Overload is the loss of privacy as technology has invaded our personal time and space. To a large degree, a home is no longer a "castle," because anyone can breach the walls electronically. Telemarketers who interrupt your evening are an all-too-constant reminder of this.

If you assume that the loss of privacy is one outcome of Access Overload, it is also realistic to suggest that time, as a boundary, has become meaningless. It is not that the clock on the wall no longer has meaning, or that we don't, to some extent, order our lives by it. Rather, it suggests that with a 24/7 mentality comes the reality that the eight-hour workday is now artificial. Not only do time zones cease to exist as a barrier to communication but also, as those walls have broken down, the premium on speed of response has gone up exponentially. We are more accessible in our own country and just as accessible to others around the world.

As a result, the eight-hour workday has become distorted, as has the workweek and the distinction between work and vacation. One direct result of Access Overload is the assumption on the part of some managers, customers, and co-workers that you will be accessible all the time, and that you'll use your personal time to stay connected. The fact that, for many people, there is literally no "down time" is creating a toll on relationships, families, and emotional well-being.

At its most basic level, Access Overload interferes with our ability to interact with others. Along with a rise in mobile phone use, there's been an increase in articles about the rudeness of cell phone users. More restaurants are now restricting cell phone usage just as they restrict smoking. Or on a more personal level, how many of us have had romantic evenings with significant others or family activities interrupted by cell phone calls and/or a beeping pager? Of course, some jobs

require that people be accessible, due to the life-and-death nature of their jobs, and we're certainly not suggesting that on-call doctors and others in critical jobs turn off their pagers for the sake of romance! However, what constitutes URGENT has become redefined by technology that confuses urgency with *accessibility*.

For many of us, and our anecdotal data support this, high levels of access are overwhelming. While this book is not specifically about stress or stress management, it *is* stressful for many of us to live under the constant tyranny of access. The fear that something important might be missed, the

“ *You have to stop imagining that, just because you have access everywhere, you need to use it.* ”

desire to connect with others, and the simple anxiety created by a ringing phone may overwhelm some people. At a minimum, constant access, when combined with the other

Overload factors, creates the very real sense that the world is moving ever faster and becoming more out of control.

The Overload Response

Throughout this book, Overload issues are addressed, along with their effect on each of us. Clearly, the way each of us responds to Overload varies tremendously. Some of us, for example, crave access. We want and need to be connected, while others shrink from access and find it oppressive. And, while our individual response may vary based on a wide variety of factors, the effect of Access Overload has negative consequences for most of us.

There are certain business situations, of course, where work will be intense. Proposals must get out overnight, urgent projects must be completed, production crises demand our

attention, or a host of other legitimate issues arise, creating intensive work situations for short periods of time. This is a reality of life. When, however, this is the constant state of the work environment, the cumulative impact of work, access, and information Overload becomes destructive.

Constant access can be daunting and, at a minimum, represents an invasion of our psychic space. When you add the avalanche of information to this equation, the burden placed on people to manage and control their lives becomes even more extreme.

Information Overload

The speed at which information is created and bombards us causes a pervasive sense of Information Overload. This accompanies an overwhelming, defeated feeling of being perpetually unable to process everything. While information, communication, and knowledge are being shared at a vastly greater rate than ever before, so many of us feel woefully incapable of handling it all. Even before the advent of the Internet, most of us felt buried in data and information. Consider the media, for example. Where once there were three basic TV channels, now we have access to hundreds of channels. Multiple channels offer a dizzying array of programming—all news, all sports, movies, education, history, science, and the list goes on.

The same explosion of offerings extends to radio, magazines, and other printed media. To get a quick sense of this, just browse for twenty minutes in a mega bookstore. Stop at the magazine section and scan the range of titles and subject matter. Notice the number of magazines and/or topics that wouldn't or couldn't have existed ten years ago. If you want to feel even more overwhelmed, stop and look at the number of topic areas for books and the incredible number of books that exist in each area. Multiply the number of books in a bookstore by the number of new titles published each year (esti-

mated to be as high as 150,000), and the colossal volume of available information becomes staggering.

Yet this describes the volume of information that surrounds us at only one level. Add to this the explosion of information created by the Internet, e-mail, and other wireless tools, the amount of information now available becomes mountainous!

The avalanche of information currently provided on the Internet is almost incomprehensible. It's estimated that more than 1.5 million pages are added to the Web each day, and that

“ *The proliferation of e-mail allows for immediate exchange of thoughts and attached data, which carries with it an expectation of immediate response. I find I am reviewing more information and data in one day than I used to see in a month. Many e-mails now carry links to websites, which then lead me to additional information, and so on.* ”

Internet use doubles every one hundred days. However, the Internet, in and of itself, is not the major culprit behind Information Overload. At the same time, the way we search the Internet and gain access to important information can contribute to overload.

The real gremlin behind Information Overload is e-mail. While we are certainly users and advocates, e-mail clearly adds a different dynamic and a layer of complexity to Information Overload. As mentioned previously, e-mail is a major contributor to Access Overload. It is an even bigger contributor to Information Overload. Why? Here are a few reasons:

- It is very difficult to separate requests for information from the sharing of information. Certainly there are filtering systems available for most e-mail systems, but even the best don't stop the deluge of messages.
- e-Mail truly knows no time boundaries. Messages can be sent and received at all hours of the day. While this has many advantages, it is very easy to face a situation

where you have “emptied” your inbox at the end of the day only to find that it has filled with thirty or more messages by morning.

- Many e-mail messages include attachments, which can be voluminous in their own right.
- e-Mail grows exponentially. It is very easy in an e-mail system to copy several hundred of your “closest” friends or “most important” colleagues! Our experience tells us that as soon as someone does that, the responses begin to grow at a rapid geometric rate—not in response to the importance of the message, but simply because people now feel they are involved, need to be noticed or, in truth, really do have something to contribute.
- Just like voice mail, e-mail can serve as a substitute for face-to-face communication. Sometimes it’s easier and more appropriate to dash off an e-mail message, particularly when sharing information. In some cases, though, e-mail can unleash confusion and misunderstanding that would not have been created by face-to-face or voice-to-voice discussion. Aside from the resulting controversy, such e-mail exchanges can result in increased time to resolve a problem.

Information Overload can lead us to feel frantic and out of control. Try as we might, the tyranny of e-mail is inescapable. Once we complained about processing volumes of paper from our overflowing in-baskets. Now those paper in-baskets have been replaced by e-mail. The significant difference is that e-mail can follow us *anywhere* and can arrive *anytime*. Unlike “snail” mail, which is dependent on certain delivery times and schedules, e-mail is timeless and inescapable.

At its worst e-mail can overwhelm us. We can shut it off to go on vacation or transmit auto-response “out-of-office” messages. However, the e-mail messages continue to accumulate. For many, the feeling is one of treading water. Simply to keep

“ *I can't put more hours on the clock! It is my belief that the person most likely to lie awake fretting and worrying at night is the one who feels the need to answer the phone every time it rings, return every phone call to everyone who leaves a message, and type a response to every e-mail. May the Lord have pity on that poor soul. Amen.* ”

our head above water, we feel we must continually process e-mail just to keep from drowning. The impact can be exhausting.

While Access Overload may lead to an invasion of our psychic space, Information Overload adds a layer of frenzy to the mix. We seem to swim through an ocean of

information, and the ocean keeps getting wider and deeper.

Work Overload

The never-ending sea of information and access results in a “wireless tether.” We are constantly tied to the tools and information resources designed to free us and provide greater mobility, while subjecting legions of us to Work Overload. There is a growing sense, matched by a growing reality, that our work is always with us, following us wherever we go, demanding immediate attention and responses.

In Japan, it is estimated that over 10,000 people die annually from overwork, or *karoshi*. While *karoshi* is not a reportable cause of death in other countries, we need only look at the literature on stress to gain a quick sense that overwork is a major problem. Researchers from Australia, Canada, and Germany also connect overwork to heart disease and other illnesses. Articles appear frequently about overwork, as well as the sheer overscheduling of lives—including, as more people are pointing out, the overscheduling of our children. Many of us have seen others (or considered ourselves) dropping out to pursue something else, stepping off the fast track or in some other way changing lifestyles to a simpler or more meaningful choice.

Indeed, the whole “simplicity” movement can be seen as a

response to Overload issues and the pace of life. Certainly, there are some similarities between that movement and our research. But we are addressing the problem with a different perspective and a different set of solutions.

What is happening? A variety of forces are converging to create the problem of Work Overload.

What leads us to that conclusion is a number of trends, including:

- *More people report blurred lines between work and home.* All too often, people no longer feel they can separate themselves from work and, if they do, they risk falling behind. This is not only a daily work issue but it carries over into vacations, weekends, and other holidays. As a personal example, during the past five years we have not taken a vacation where one or both of us remained completely out of touch with the office. And it seems this is more typical of others, as well.
- *The very notion of the workday and workweek have come under siege.* With the possible exception of the thirty-five-hour workweeks legislated by some Western European countries, workdays and workweeks have gotten longer and less uniform. As Juliet Schor points out in *"The Overworked American"* (1993), most Americans are working the equivalent of at least an extra month every year. Further, the U. S. Department of Labor estimates that a significant number of Americans work 260 hours per year beyond the level created by the "normal" forty-hour workweek. A recent study by the International Labor Organization reveals that Americans annually work almost two weeks more than Japanese workers. The problem is described vividly and accurately by Alan

“ *I don't have any effective strategies for balance. In fact, my work "time" commitment has expanded to such an extent that personal time is secondary to work time.* ”

Ehrenhalt (*USA Today*, January 3, 2001): “There isn’t any official rest period. There’s no longer an hour on the clock when you can legitimately say, ‘Nobody in his right mind would still be working now.’”

- *The pressure to increase productivity and to do more with less remains constant.* In this age of downsizing and layoffs, the amount of work to be completed has not decreased. Rather, the same amount of work, or more, is expected of fewer people. Contrary to some views, we do not believe Work Overload is attributable solely to the fear of being downsized. People are working harder because they feel they have to in light of volumes of work, competitive cultures, performance expectations, or personal achievement goals. In some cases, the pressure to work longer hours is self-generated. People may be extending their workday as an escape from a problematic personal or home life, from a desire to feel important and needed, or to create an external sign of success.

“ *With phones and the Internet, you are always working when you leave the office. The work goes with you because you’re always accessible.* ”

- *Technology has presented us with the promise of increased freedom, time savings, and greater autonomy, but for many of us the promise seems hollow.*

Productivity enhancement tools such as e-mail seem initially to provide the solution. Over time, however, they simply add another burden of complexity, pressure, and time demands.

- *The promise of dot-com riches seduced many into the abyss of overwork.* The emptiness of that promise—and the unreasonableness of the tradeoffs—is increasingly apparent.

The convergence of Access, Information, and Work Overload leaves many feeling suffocated. It’s as though you

are slowly sinking into a pool of quicksand, where the harder you struggle, the more you sink. Further, you believe you should have the ability to manage your burdens and reach some degree of balance in your daily life. In truth, the ability to avoid drowning in our overloaded, overwired world is indeed attainable. Developing this ability involves knowledge, skills, and perspectives that are addressed in the remaining sections of this book. Bear in mind, however, that the elusive search for perfect balance is a futile effort. As our research and experience suggest, a more reasonable objective is a *congruent* life that creates opportunities for balance.

An integrated or congruent life accepts the ebb and flow of demands and seeks the benefits technology affords us. The ability to work anywhere, anytime, allows us to mesh our work role and commitments with our personal objectives and obligations.

Regardless of the semantics used or the specific ways you reconcile competing demands for your time and attention, one fundamental truth exists: **The choice is yours.** All of the pressures, demands, expectations, and require-

ments you experience in our evolving, wired world can only affect your time, energy, accessibility, and work/life balance to the degree that you choose. And, like so many other life choices, you must consider the consequences and tradeoffs that impact your job, career, family, relationships, health, and quality of life. The personal values underlying your choices

“ *I firmly intend, commit, and resolve to be the same person exhibiting the same core values and behavior when fulfilling each of my life roles. How do I do this? I don't pursue balance (a term that for me denotes scarcity) but instead I pursue integration. I strive to blend each part of me into each other part so that I am always a Dad, always a husband, always a writer, always a business man, always a whole person showing up. I consistently re-visit the foundational philosophy that I first authored about twelve years ago. It describes my life purpose, vision, current mission, and guiding principles. If I change, I change that philosophy.* ”

are best expressed if clearly understood and consciously applied throughout your life. Herein lies your true search for both sanity and a congruent life.

***It's not the pace of life that concerns me.
It's the sudden stop at the end.***

—Seen on a T-shirt

this material has been excerpted from

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The Search For Sanity In A Wired World*

by Debra A. Dinnocenzo and Richard B. Swegan

Published by Berrett-Koehler Publishers

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