

# Finding solutions for your personal and professional lives

## **BUSINESS IS PERSONAL**

by Julie McLaughlin and Dee Duggan from Solutions Ltd

### **Do any of the following situations sound familiar?**

*As a manager in your company, sometimes it seems you're spending entire days dealing with conflicts between your team members regarding their personal issues when all you want to do is get on with your work.*

*Your teenage son is rebellious and won't listen to you. He's always in trouble at school and you end up spending hours of your workday trying to figure out what to do.*

*Financially, your family is doing fine, but you keep hearing cutback rumours at work which has led to increased anxiety about your job, sleepless nights and marital strife.*

*Your husband is physically and emotionally attached to his Blackberry and it's driving you crazy. He doesn't get how angry it makes you when he checks emails in the middle of a dinner party. Or your daughter's school play. Or church!*

Most likely all of us have experienced situations similar to these in which the so-called line between "work life" and "personal life" has blurred. When your personal problems affect your work or you are unable to keep work problems at the office,



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you may be left feeling inadequate or unprofessional and find yourself asking, "Why can't I just respect the line between my personal and professional life?"

At Solutions Ltd., we believe that separating work problems from personal problems is unrealistic and the

stress created while trying to do so is unnecessary. People's lives do not divide neatly along the line that exists between "work" and "personal." In fact, we'd go so far as to question if that line even exists.

Our work identity is a major component of our personal identity and vice

versa. Since the workplace is the environment where most of us spend the majority of our time, it's nearly impossible to not be affected personally by undesirable issues in the workplace. Conversely, as most of us would agree that our family is our top priority; it's unfair to assume that family concerns would be off limits during working hours.

Instead of trying to separate concerns or problems that are so inextricably tied together by all facets of our lives, we think that it is more appropriate to address the underlying issues and look for solutions that work for our clients both professionally and personally. For instance, you may find that at times your co-worker is just as difficult to talk to as your rebellious 12 year-old child. If so, improvements to your communication skills can actually help when speaking with both.

Solutions Ltd., formerly Workplace Solutions, is a professional counselling and mediation service provider. We provide counselling, mediation, training and consultation to assist clients in resolving issues they face at work, at home and in the community. In this column we will be exploring such topics as solutions to relationship breakdowns at work and in your personal life; strategies for dealing with stress and anxiety that may be created by work issues, family issues, politics or even weather concerns; and creative problem solving techniques that can be useful in resolving issues with your boss, your co-workers, your spouse, your neighbour or an unruly teenager. **Bottom line:** Our goal is to provide you with tools that are relevant and helpful in all areas of your life.

*Next month we are going to discuss Owing your problems.*