

# What About Us?: Teacher Renewal Strategies

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While being a school or studio teacher requires commitment, sometimes the pace and interpersonal aspects of teaching can lead us to question the purpose of our work. This interactive session is designed to provide strategies that will help you identify professional and personal priorities; implement specific lifestyle and occupation-related changes; and create personal growth goals. Drawing on the work of Matthew Kelly, Adam Saenz and others, this session will attend to music teachers' need for support and renewal.

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## 1. Introduction

- Being a performing arts educator: A blessing (and a curse??)
- ~~Work/Life Balance~~.....Personal/Professional Satisfaction
- Activity: *Off Balance Priority Exercise Worksheet*

Notes

## 2. Music Teacher Career Satisfaction

- Activity: *What are your top 5 sources of stress?*
- Lack of time: extracurricular responsibilities, teacher musical growth [Russell 2012; Vartanian, 2001]
- Positive impacts: psychological factors (teaching commitment, enjoyment, self-efficacy), work culture (collaboration, support, influence, autonomy), students [Russell, 2012]

Notes

## 3. Develop Wellbeing

- Nurturing your wellbeing = improved instruction, relationships AND decreased stress
- Activity: *Teacher Wellness Inventory* (Saenz)
  - occupational, emotional, financial, spiritual, physical areas
  - Change Organizer: setting priorities and an action plan
- Activity: MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction) Techniques

Notes

## 4. Create a Weekly Schedule

- (big and little) personal and musicianship growth goals
- Strategic scheduling (plan for the important, but not urgent)
  - Consider *Off Balance Priority Exercise* and *Teacher Wellness Inventory*

Notes

## 5. Closing Thoughts

- Creating realistic expectations based on career stage
- Professional development opportunities
- What are your dreams? [Kelley, 2007] OR....Begin with the end in mind [Covey, 1990]
- Make a commitment: In the next week I will \_\_\_\_\_

## References

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- Priority exercise worksheet:  
[http://floydconsulting.com/documents/2014/7/OffBalance\\_Priority\\_Exercise\\_Worksheet-2.pdf](http://floydconsulting.com/documents/2014/7/OffBalance_Priority_Exercise_Worksheet-2.pdf)
  - Work/life balance (personal-professional satisfaction) score:  
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### *Peace*

*It does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work.  
It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.*

# OFF BALANCE



## Priority Exercise Worksheet a resource from OFF BALANCE by Matthew Kelly

### Identify the priority order of a list of options, features, ideas, values, or possible actions.

- Write your list in no particular order in column 1. What are the qualities, values, options, or ideas you want to compare? Simply list all of your items on this worksheet in column 1.
- Work with two options at one time and select the more important option. Ask yourself one of these questions when comparing options: "Which one of these options is more important to me or which one of these options would better serve my need?" Place a checkmark or tally in column 2 next to the option that you select for each comparison.
  - Compare option "a" with "b", then "a" with "c", then "a" with "d" and continue for all options.
  - After comparing option "a" with all of the options on your list, work with option "b" for your second round of comparisons. Compare option "b" to "c", then "b" to "d" and continue for all options.
  - Your next round of comparisons works with option "c." Your work with "a" and "b" is complete. You will now compare "c" to "d", then "c" to "e", and continue through your list.
  - Follow this pattern until you have systematically compared each option to every other option on your list.
- Count the checks or tallies you have next to each option and place the number in column 3.
- In column 4, re-write your list of options in priority order.

	1. Write your list. What are the qualities, values or options you want to place in priority order? List them here in no particular order.	2. Use checks or tallies to mark selections when comparing options.	3. Count checks or tallies.	4. Use the numbers from step 3 to build your priority list. Begin with the option that had the most checks or tallies and work in decreasing order.
a.				1.
b.				2.
c.				3.
d.				4.
e.				5.
f.				6.
g.				7.

*Instructions***Step One: Answer True/False**

Respond to the ten items in each of the five areas being assessed. Total the number of true responses at the bottom of the response page. Thus, for any given area, you will have a maximum score of 10 and a minimum score of 0.

The challenge with the True/False format is that the most honest response to some items will depend on circumstances—in some cases, your answer would be true and in other cases, false for the same question. Test-takers often hope for a 1 to 10 scale, or some other response form that gives them wiggle room. Test developers, though, know that in certain test situations, forcing the test-taker to choose in an either/or format will most effectively measure what needs to be assessed. This is one such test. Choose the answer that seems truest of you most of the time.

**Step Two: Transfer Scores**

After you have totaled the responses in each of the five areas, transfer those scores to the corresponding section at the bottom of the Wellness Wheel page.

**Step Three: Plot Scores**

Each of the five spokes represents an area: a spoke for physical, a spoke for emotional, and so on. The spoke at the center of the wheel is 0, and the spoke at the outer edge of the circle (near the rim) is 10. Place a dot or mark along each spoke according to your score. For example, if you scored a 2 on physical, you would place a mark on the spoke closer to the center of the wheel; if you scored a 9 on physical, you would place a mark on the spoke closer to the outer edge.

**Step Four: Connect the Dots**

As you draw lines to connect the dots, the shape of your life wheel will emerge.

**Occupational Wellbeing**

	T	F
1. I am able to let go of frustrating or challenging situations over which I know I have no control, and such situations do not steal from the enjoyment of my life apart from school.		
2. I am confident in my knowledge of my content areas and my ability to teach it to my grade level.		
3. I am generally satisfied with my vocation as an educator.		
4. I am satisfied with the relational environment and community among my colleagues on my campus.		
5. I commit energy and time to professional and self-development, both on campus and at home.		
6. I access resources (e.g., books, videos, other professionals) to improve my performance as a professional on campus.		
7. I read more than ten books a year.		
8. I am happy with the balance between my work and leisure time.		
9. I adapt to change without complaining or blaming.		
10. My time on campus is generally characterized by positive thought.		
Total Number of TRUE Responses		

**Emotional Wellbeing**

	T	F
1. I harbor no unforgiveness in past or present personal relationships.		
2. I harbor no unforgiveness in past or present professional relationships.		
3. I have a positive self-image, and I have forgiven myself for all my past mistakes.		
4. I have requested forgiveness and sought to make amends in all relationships in which I know I've offended someone.		
5. I seldom experience periods of depression or significant anxiety.		
6. I am able to appropriately experience and express anger, happiness, sadness, and fear.		
7. I stick up for myself when necessary and am not a "doormat."		
8. I do not use strong emotion such as anger or fear to injure others by speaking ill of them, criticizing them, attacking them, etc.		
9. I do not use strong emotion such as anger or fear to withdraw from my responsibilities, blame others or refuse to accept my wrongdoing.		
10. I seek help and support when I need it.		
<b>Total Number of TRUE Responses</b>		

**Financial Wellbeing**

	T	F
1. My monthly income is budgeted to account for all expenditures, and I am faithful to that budget.		
2. I am not living on a paycheck-to-paycheck basis.		
3. I am satisfied with my current financial status.		
4. I have reserve finances to cover a) an immediate \$1,000 financial emergency and b) three-month's salary.		
5. I am confident about my knowledge of and ability to productively manage my income.		
6. I have less than \$1,000 of outstanding consumer debt (e.g., credit cards, car loan, etc.).		
7. I am confident about being on track for a financially-successful retirement.		
8. I regularly give some percentage of my income to a cause of my choice (e.g., religious, non-profit, etc.).		
9. In the past week, I have not experienced stress about my finances in general.		
10. I have read at least five books to educate myself about how to manage my personal finances effectively.		
<b>Total Number of TRUE Responses</b>		

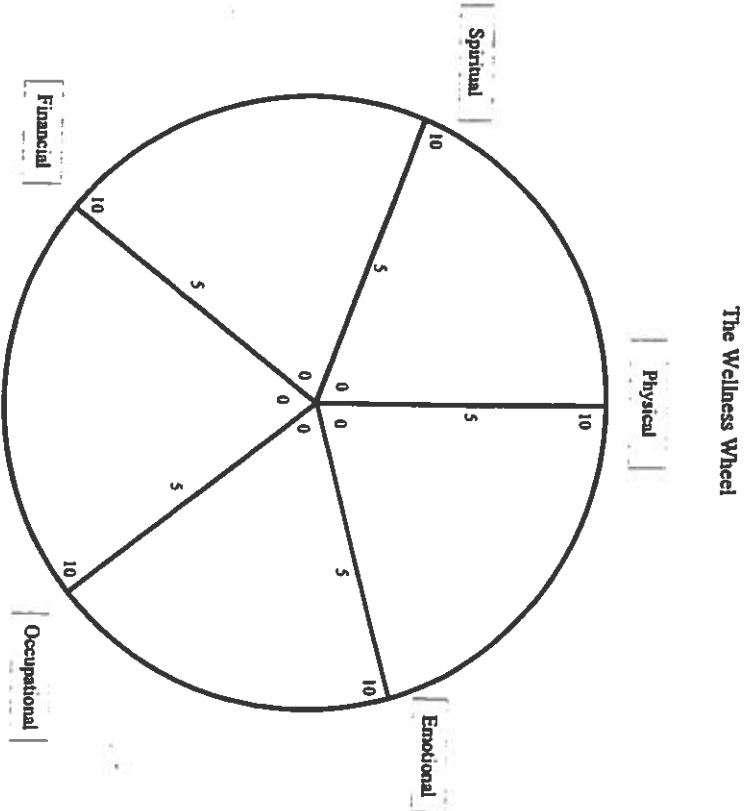
**Spiritual Wellbeing**

	T	F
1. I have a personal belief system (e.g., spiritual, atheist, religious, philosophical, etc.).		
2. I have a sense of belonging, meaning and purpose about my role as an educator.		
3. I am able to forgive myself and others.		
4. I participate regularly in activities with people who share my beliefs.		
5. I accept my limitations without embarrassment or apology.		
6. I practice asking trusted others about areas in my life that might need improvement or attention and I take necessary steps for improvement when it is needed.		
7. I freely give to others my time, money, emotional energy, and other resources.		
8. I continually explore how my personal beliefs, values, and priorities determine both my work ethic on the campus and my professional decision-making.		
9. I keep the purpose of my life clearly in mind and let it guide my decision-making.		
10. I prioritize maintaining balance among all areas of my life. (spiritual, physical, relational, emotional, and occupational).		
Total Number of TRUE Responses		

**Physical Wellbeing**

	T	F
1. I have exercised vigorously for twenty minutes for at least four of the past seven days.		
2. I eat a well-balanced and wholesome diet and follow healthy eating habits.		
3. I fall into the appropriate weight category for someone my height and sex (Use Resource 1 in the back of the book to calculate your Body Mass Index. The results probably will surprise you).		
4. I am satisfied with my current energy level.		
5. I drink less than eight ounces of caffeinated drink per day.		
6. I avoid smoking cigarettes, cigars, or a pipe.		
7. I generally get adequate and satisfying sleep, and I wake up refreshed.		
8. I follow recommended preventive health practices, such as self-examination and blood pressure checks.		
9. I am satisfied with my ability to relax without using excessive alcohol or tobacco.		
10. I am generally free from chronic or on-going illness.		
Total Number of TRUE Responses		

Interpreting Your Wheel



Inventory and Organizer

Changes I Am Making to Nurture My Occupational Wellbeing

Occupational	Yes	No	Priority #
1. Do I need to change the nature of my professional relationships?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
2. Do I need to set better boundaries to protect my time off campus?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
3. Do I need to seek professional development in any particular area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
4. Do I need to seek out a colleague for guidance in any particular area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1
5. Any other changes I would like to make to nurture my occupational wellbeing:			
<b>OCCUPATIONAL, OVERALL PRIORITY (RANK 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5)</b>			2

Possible Action Steps to Create Change

1. I am attending training at campus, district, or Educational Service Center level.
  2. I am scheduling a conference with a colleague experienced in my content area.
  3. I am discussing the morning and evening schedule with my spouse/children/roommates to create the boundaries that will allow me to disengage from work when I am home.
  4. Other:
- \* Reach out to other teachers at my grade level.*

