

9/1/2021

Work-Life Balance

Jennifer Polanz



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I've recently found my happy place is on a kayak in the middle of a lake (calmer waters preferred). I love to paddle around and watch the wildlife, feeling the sun and the splashes of cool water as I explore. It helps me to reset and reconnect. My second favorite is a hike, checking out flora and fauna while breathing fresh woodland air.

We all need these breaks to reconnect with nature and ourselves, whether it's on a beach, on a mountain or somewhere in between. And it's vital we recognize that everyone—especially right now with stressors at an all-time max—gets the time off to be able to enjoy these moments.

That's why I asked our Young Retailer Award Winner, 25-year-old Wyatt Page, if his generation is interested in having a solid work-life balance. His answer? "100%." As someone who loves the great outdoors himself (he has a doozy of a story about a shark encounter that didn't make it into my feature

on him), he stressed the importance of everyone, including managers, taking time off. He emphasized that supervisors have to lead by example, which can be tricky to schedule time-wise. It also challenges what an older generation of workers (I'm including myself in here at 45-years-old) was told early on: work hard and work often.

No one is suggesting anyone slack on the job. However, taking the days off you've earned isn't a detriment to the team and it shouldn't be viewed as such. I would encourage everyone to begin to prioritize vacation time when it's feasible (maybe not Mother's Day Weekend, for example) and work on getting everyone the time off they need to recharge and refresh. Part of that, too, Wyatt says, involves training so everyone feels comfortable taking time off. It's no vacation to worry what's happening back at the garden center!

You can read more about Wyatt and his role as assistant manager at Gill Garden Center & Landscape Co. in Corpus Christi, Texas. It was a pleasure to chat with him at our annual dinner for our nominees and for this story—I hope you enjoy getting to know him a little better through these pages, too.

In these pages, you'll also find new products and new varieties from a couple of in-person events we've been able to travel to this summer. First, check out new annuals for retail from the California Summer Trials (which will be reverting back to Spring Trials next year). Then, new products (and a few more varieties) we saw at Cultivate'21.

Lastly, I'd like to call out our columnists, who work hard every month to stay on top of where our industry is at and where it's heading. Special thanks go out to Bill McCurry (on making your newfound cash work for you), Amanda

Thomsen (providing ideas to reconnect on the “life” part of the work-life balance) and John Friel (closing out this issue with his take on the pros and cons of hybrid, well, anything).

I was able to take a week in July with my family to visit the beautiful town of Holland, Michigan, and my co-workers covered my *Green Profit* duties while I kayaked, swam and shopped to my heart’s content (my two favorite souvenirs are coffee cups and Christmas ornaments, and I found both in shops on 8th Street). It’s then I realized when you’re part of a team and everyone has each other’s back, that work-life balance thing becomes a whole lot easier. **GP**