

NCMEA In-Service Conference 2011

Quality of Life Issues for the Modern Band Director

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The Problem

Our profession seems to have a near-epidemic occurrence rate of...

Divorce

Criminal behavior

High Stress

Early career drop-out

Our purpose through this clinic/discussion is not to condemn or attack, but to deal with these issues openly – identify as best we can the contributing factors, provide some practical solutions, and hopefully provide a network of communication for teachers who are struggling with maintaining a healthy quality of life.

The Band Director's Life

Before we become official band directors...

- We chose our career-path early
- We learned to accept a disproportionate time investment as 'normal'...

As we were learning to become band directors...

- We learned how to do our jobs very well...
- We did not learn how to do our jobs *in relation* to other things

Once we became band directors...

- We had little or no help with maintaining life balance
- We had little or no foundation to draw upon

In other words: *we were left alone to sink or swim in very, very dangerous waters.*

As we started to swim (sink!), here's what happened...

- We spent a ton of time away from our family
- We found ourselves always at odds with our spouses
- Mothers found it increasingly difficult!

Good news! There is hope!

Things you can start doing *today* to improve your quality of life...

For your family:

- Home one day a week by 3:45
- Lunch one day a week with kids at school
- Come home between end of school day & extra rehearsals
- Supervise bedtime

Key! You must make it a top priority to spend time with your family.

For your spouse:

- Clear, continual, open lines of communication
- Regular 'date night' for just the two of you

Key! You must make constant effort to let them know they matter most.

For your employer:

- Clear, continual, open lines of communication
- Establishment of clear, reasonable guidelines

Key! You must take the initiative and educate these professionals.

For yourself:

- Remember why you chose this profession
- Recharge your batteries

Key! You must be purposeful and intentional about this.

Finally...

The most important take-away from this clinic:

*You Must Secure Your Foundation in an External,
Transcendent Source for Moral Right & Wrong*

This is absolutely necessary for success in:

- Relationships with those close to you...
- Resistance/self-discipline in areas of potential failures...
- Leadership & mentorship of other people's children...

Thank you!

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