



MANAGING WORKLOAD Pocketbook

2nd edition

A pocketful of tips, tools
and techniques to maximise
time, moderate workload and
minimise stress

Will Thomas

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Pocketbook

2nd edition

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Introduction

Welcome to this practical guide to developing a healthy and productive balance between your work and other aspects of your life.

This book, is full of sound, well-researched, tried and tested approaches to managing workload in a teaching context. Its aim is to help you to make well-planned and informed decisions about the challenges that present themselves.

If you're coming to this book because you want to make small modifications to the way you manage your workload, the contents page will help you locate the relevant material you need to change things.

If, on the other hand, you find yourself at a more critical point in your mental and emotional well-being and need to create significant changes, reading the book from cover to cover will help you get the fullest sense of how you can make positive, lasting changes to your approach to work. **THE GOOD NEWS: CHANGE IS POSSIBLE.**

Introduction

Teaching is an extremely challenging profession, but there are ways you can make it easier. To be the best we can be to our students, our school, our families, friends and ourselves we need balance. To get this you will need to be willing to:

- Be really honest with yourself
- Commit to removing sources of stress from your life, including thinking differently
- Try new (and old) ways of working
- Challenge some of the limiting thoughts and ideas that you have created in the past
- Make reading this book, and the actions you take from it, a turning point for you

By shifting your approach and thinking, you will create a more effective work-life balance. A few small changes can add up to big benefits over the mid- and long-term.

Introduction

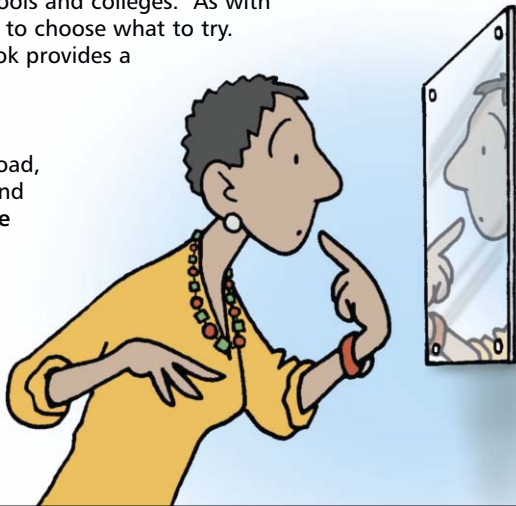
This book is for anyone who ever feels they could be using time better, working more effectively and enjoying life more. It is aimed at teachers, student teachers, education leaders and other education professionals who would like to understand the processes of stress, further enhance their abilities to manage it, and get more balance and fulfilment in their lives.

The following pages give you practical advice that will allow you to do the best for your students and be an even better teacher and leader. If you are **new** to the profession, how you set your boundaries and systems of working will shape your enjoyment of the coming years; if you are an **established** teacher, remember that appropriate change keeps us and our colleagues fresh and vital. Approaches you tried in the past that didn't work as well then, may actually be the right next step for you now.

Introduction

All of the techniques and suggestions I make here have been used either by me or by other teachers in schools and colleges. As with any set of advice, you have the freedom to choose what to try. The self-evaluation at the end of the book provides a framework for examining your current approaches to managing workload.

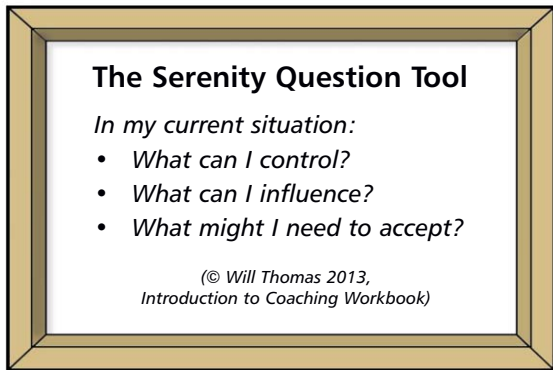
When it comes to managing your workload, it is a nonsense to separate your work and your personal life; your life is your **whole life**. On the next page is perhaps one of the most useful tools in the book. The 'serenity questions' can be used to help you make positive decisions about what to do next in any situation where you feel overwhelmed or uncertain.



Introduction

Serenity is a calm state of mind where you have taken responsibility for all that you have direct control over, and taken action to influence the things that you have no direct control over, by making requests, asking questions or offering suggestions. Serenity comes from learning to let go of that which you can neither control nor influence.

One of the most important distinctions to make in managing your workload is between these three aspects of your life.





**Work-Life
Balance**



**Winning
Attitudes**



**Great
Habits**



**Taming
Time**



**Looking
After Yourself**



**Self-evaluation
Framework**



Work-Life Balance

What is it costing you?



It's sobering to read the UK statistics about teacher workload:

- Since 2010 the average number of hours a week worked by teachers in England has increased by 9 hours for primary teachers and 6 hours for secondary teachers (source: DfE 2013)
- International studies show that UK teachers work the longest hours in the world, and spend the least amount of time in their classes (OECD 2013)
- 90% of teachers considered leaving teaching in the last 2 years (NUT 2014)
- 96.5% of teachers say that excessive workload has negative consequences on their family and personal life (NUT 2014)
- The UK has the highest percentage of teacher burn-out compared with 37 other countries surveyed (ETUC(E) 2013)
- Work-related stress amongst the teaching profession is double the national average for other professions except for social work (HSE 2013)

Stress is probably the most significant direct or indirect reason for teacher absence.