

HOW I CURED MY WORKAHOLISM

A KATIE JAMES

I was promoted and my workload doubled. I started putting work before my family and becoming preoccupied with my job. I realised I had to change, so I did three things: I only went to essential meetings to make me more efficient, I never worked more than one hour beyond office hours, and I asked my boss to employ an assistant for me. I gave him a detailed job description of the new assistant's post and a proposed salary for the position, and he agreed.

B MARK SPENCER

My last job dominated my life. I got over it by finding the most productive way of working, sorting the urgent from the important, and the important from the trivial. Often, urgent things aren't urgent at all. I'd usually have meetings that were really just gossip sessions, but I had convinced myself I was working hard. There's pressure on people to work late, but I don't need to because I can close a deal twice as fast as younger managers because I have more experience.

C ALISON PARKER

In a previous job, I worked very hard, and, as my social life centred on work, I became very boring. If I had to make small talk that wasn't about my job, I was lost. It took up so much of my life that I even chose a colleague as my husband. The way I solved it was to start evening classes in something completely unrelated to my job, where I could meet people outside work.

D TOM HARRIS

I had set up my own business and really worked hard, doing 12-hour days, bringing work home and even taking my mobile phone on family holidays. Recovering from workaholism was really difficult for me. I didn't think the business could survive without me. You have to be honest and discover why you work so much. In my case, it was self-importance, not efficiency or productivity. Once I realised that, I was fine.

E KAREN JAMES

I got to the stage where I was depressed and my health was suffering. I decided to hire what's called a 'life coach', someone who helps you sort out your life! My coach made me realise that by being a workaholic I was not accepting responsibility for other areas of my life that needed attention. Now I never work at weekends, and I concentrate more on the other areas of my life.

Which of the people:

- 1 did a lot of work at home?
- 2 feels that they can work more quickly than their colleagues?
- 3 married a fellow worker?
- 4 made themselves ill because of working too hard?
- 5 found out that they have to consider every aspect of their life?
- 6 realised that many of their meetings were unimportant?
- 7 decided how much someone should earn?
- 8 could not even relax on holiday?
- 9 couldn't have a normal conversation with people?
- 10 was convinced people couldn't manage without them?