1st speech

Personal Sustainability

Эпичный выход со шпагатом и 10-ти секундным осмотром аудитории

Probably now you are questioning “How this is possibly connected to a personal sustainability?” or even just an icebreaker speech?

I can assure you, it does and not in a metaphorical way. I will tell about the main principle or concept of my life that I am constantly developing and trying to follow.

It is the art of life balance or personal sustainability.

First of all, I would like to make clear what do I mean by personal sustainability.

“…. A person is sustainable if he takes care of himself and maintains a reasonable level of energy and spirit…”

In other words, if you ever felt exhausted, burnt out on a level that you don’t what to do a small single thing without any reasonable explanation – you, probable, have lost your internal balance and have been making unsustainable choices recently or not for a long time.

And as we all are different, we need different things to maintain internal balance as well. I have discovered that my personal balance requires 3 elements: sport, mental work, and art. My parents introduced me…hhhh…no they pushed me… into the sport when I was 4 years old. It was rhythmic gymnastics.

For the first 5 years, I could barely consider this sport as a normal human way of spending time…

… If you look at the picture you will understand why. After a while I fell in love with this sport

I did sport career at the same time as my school. And actually, doing gymnastics 4-5 hours per day 6 times per week for 11 years, I have developed the ability to appreciate each single moment at school when I could just seat at my desk, focus at my study and research and don’t move too much. That is how I developed my second key balance element- mental work in order to balance my extra sport activity.

Also, during my sport career I was introduced to the 3rd one – art. I fully realized it when I was working as a dancer in a musical theater back in Russia.

So far, sounds good. I have all what I need, and life is perfect.

But do you think it was easy to reach a crystal conclusion what I have in my life and what it means to me? No…

In my case, it took me 18 years, from 4 till 22 years old, to find and fully implement 3 key elements of my personal sustainability, but I fully realized them and understood that they are equally important for me when I went to an international tour in Israel with my musical theatre. I was 22 years old.

We had a performance every day or even twice per day. So, I was pretty overdosed with art and sport in in my life at that moment and of course I was physically tired by the end of each single day. But considering the fact that at that time additionally to my dancing career I was a full time software engineer, getting my first master in Automation systems engineering, I was working as a yoga instructor and gymnastic coach, being physically tired was normal for me.

But one morning when I woke up, I just could not move body normally. I felt burnt out and pain in each single part of my body without any reason for that. I did not have fever, cold, or whatever.

At that moment we still had couple of more days to perform before coming back. And instead of slowing when I could, I decided to push myself even harder.

As the result when I came back, I was completely exhausted. The next day I had to come back to work. You cannot imagine how much I was surprised when I felt energy coming back through veins in my hands with each single string of code, I wrote that day. At that moment I asked myself “Oh, Really? I needed programming therapy?”

From that moment at my working desk I am trying to keep these sustainable keys in my life in more or less equal proportions.

It helped me a lot, when I moved to the US, where not only language is different but people, mentality, and all the other small things. Obviously, here at NREL I have mental work in abundance. I am doing my favorite yoga slash gymnastics combination and recently I have conducted my first yoga class in English for my mentor Amal. And in order to maintain my art component, I started dancing argentine tango. Basically, the same key balance elements but from a bit different look.

And now I want to ask you:

” Are you personally sustainable?” “Are you taking care of yourself and maintain a balanced level of energy?”

If not, maybe it is time to slow down and do some changes at the level you can. If yes, how long you can maintain it?

Thank you!