

EPISODE 001: WORK AND PLAY

BY NANCY RAY

Intro

You're listening to Work and Play with Nancy Ray, Episode 1.

Much of our daily lives can be divided into two categories: Work and Play. Simply put, that is where our life and our legacy take place. This is a podcast all about learning to work and play well, which leads to a healthy soul and a fulfilling life.

Let's dive in!

Content

Hello and welcome to the very first episode of Work and Play with Nancy Ray! I am so excited to extend to you a very warm welcome, I am so incredibly grateful you are listening. My name is Nancy Ray, and I'm so honored to have this little space in your life to hopefully speak some encouragement. Now I don't know about you, but I have really come to love podcasts. I'm a busy mama and business owner, and I also value learning and listening to words of wisdom, but sometimes it's just hard to fit it all in. That's why podcasts are so great! So I hope you can listen while you're driving or cleaning the kitchen after the kids are in bed or when you go on a walk or run. I've found it's something that can really build your life and encourage your heart even in the midst of the mundane things we do all the time anyway.

One thing I've learned in life is that the words I allow spoken into my mind and my heart can really affect who I am, the atmosphere in my home, even what I determine to do during my days. It's all about our mindsets, right? If we are discouraged or down, our mindset affects how we parent, how we work, how we live. But a word of life, or a practical tip that is helpful, or a scripture at the right time can literally turn it all around. It is so important to filter what we are listening to and choose wisely because of how it affects our hearts, but also how it affects our home and our work. That is my hope for this space - that you will find content that will lift you up, that will inspire you to live a life that is not numb or sleepy or unaware, but that we, together, will learn to live life FULLY AWAKE, embracing all the goodness that God has for us, every single day. I firmly believe to be the best wife, parent, entrepreneur, and friend, you have to fill your mind and heart constantly with uplifting words of truth, empowering messages, sermons, and podcasts. It's an opportunity we have today that hasn't always been available, so we should absolutely make the most of it!

So in case you are thinking, “who is this girl?” here is just a little bit about me : I am a wife to Will, a Mama to two little girls and a baby boy, Milly, Lyndon, and Beaufort. I own and run a photography business and have been for 11 years, and it’s been such an incredible journey. In addition to photographing weddings and families, I lead a team of photographers and I educate other business owners and mamas on how to run successful businesses and fruitful lives. Above all of that, I am a follower of Jesus, and my faith impacts and influences every single area of my life.

In this first episode, I want to share some encouragement about the work and play in your own life. We’ll cover the secret to putting work and play in their proper places so that you can live from a place of abundance.

NOW LET’S COVER WORK!

What is work? The definition of work is “an activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result.”

- You can’t do life without work. That’s not how God designed it. He set it up so that it’s fulfilling when we set out to do a job and we see the fruitful results of it.
- Now I want to make one thing clear: If you are a stay at home mom, you absolutely WORK. Do not disqualify yourself from listening to this podcast or applying principles because you don’t “work” outside the home. You are doing some of the hardest work there is to do. Trust me - I’m just coming out of maternity leave with my third baby, and I feel like going back to work is getting a break!
- So we all work. But here’s an interesting thing I’ve been observing lately: The wealthy work, even when they don’t have to often times they choose to. Why? Because it gives us purpose. There’s often a reward at the end of starting a new endeavor. I don’t know about you, but whenever I get back from a long vacation, I am thrilled to get home, to get back into the routine. I love the rest, I love the checking out mentally and extra sleep and lack of routine, but goodness there’s something so good about getting back to it.
- Work is inherently good. That’s simply the truth.
- God created work in the garden for Adam and Eve before they messed up
- There’s a natural sense of satisfaction when we finish a project or complete a job we are proud of
- But there’s a downside to work: it can easily become an obsession. It can cause everything else in your life to get out of whack and off balance if it’s your number one. I’m 32 years old at the time I’m starting this podcast, and if I’m honest, I feel like much of my 20s was me obsessing about my work. It took up all of my time, and that was my choice - not my work’s fault. Friend, don’t idolize it. Don’t make it your everything, or it will steal from you. Psalm 127:2 says, “It is useless for you to work so hard from early morning until late at night, anxiously working for food to eat; for God gives rest to his loved ones.” So we have to be careful, and put work in its proper place.

I was reading the Magnolia Journal the other day, and on the very last page there's the Magnolia Manifesto :

“We believe that newer isn't always better and that there is something inherently good in hard work.”

“We believe in doing work that we love and, in choosing that, nudging others toward doing what they love.”

Those words just hit me. When work IS in its proper place, you can do some amazing things. Work allows us to achieve our dreams, produce helpful products, solve problems, provide jobs, lift ourselves and others out of poverty, give dignity, be really good at something and boost our confidence, and expand God's kingdom on the earth. Most of all I think it's pretty cool that when we invite God into our work, He gladly leads us and provides all the wisdom, knowledge and tools we need.

NOW LET'S COVER PLAY!

The definition of play is “to engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.” Now for all intents and purposes, the word “Play” in this podcast is going to be the umbrella words that encompasses play, rest, and leisure. All of which are important, yet different, and we'll explore that in a later episode.

- Here's what I've come to learn in my 32 years of life: Play is not a luxury. Play is necessary. For our relationships, for our health - mentally and physically - play is absolutely essential.
- I'm going to confess: I'm better at the work part than I am at the play part. My default, and something that I'm learning to quiet in myself, is workaholic, earning, doing, going. If you are familiar with the enneagram, I'm an enneagram 3 with a 4 wing, so I love to achieve, produce, perform. But what I have learned is that in order to do those things well, I must rest. I must have fun. I'm my truest self when I play, laugh, and enjoy life. I have a feeling that you probably are, too.
- Here's something I've learned: Just as I write my work obligations and appointments into my calendar, I have to do the same with my play!
- Here are a few tips for you to embrace more play in your life and home:
 - Plan little family adventures, schedule date nights, and do your best to honor those commitments, knowing how life giving they are.
 - Do laundry, grocery shopping, meal planning, cleaning, emails, anything you can think of... ahead of time.
 - Block off your days of rest. Choose 1 day of your week, and just lay around with your family. No work, as much as you can control it. In Christianity this is called a sabbath, and for some reason we've really drifted from this practice that has been around literally since the earth was made!
 - Start your day with rest. Begin every morning in a quiet state of listening instead of a rushed state of hurry. It makes all the difference.

One of my favorite quotes by Shauna Niequist in her book *Present over Perfect* says this: "Let's find a new way of living that allows for rest, as much rest as I need, not just enough to get me through without tears, but enough to feel alive and whole, grounded and gracious. Things I haven't been in years."

I don't know about you, but I crave that. Alive and whole. Grounded and Gracious. And those things that some days seem unattainable actually are attainable for us if we make space to not only work, but to play.

So what are the two secrets to putting work and play in their proper places?

First, establish the right priorities in your life. In order, your priorities should be the Lord, your spouse, your family, your work, and your ministry.

Second, establish the rhythm that God put in place for us in the beginning: **6 Days of Work, 1 Day of Rest.**

- When working, work. When resting, rest.
- Don't get crazy about these guidelines, and know that LIFE happens, and there's a whole bunch of grace to cover it all. I'm in the thick of receiving a whole bunch of this grace. I'm just coming out of 3 months of maternity leave, so I'm exiting an extended season of raising a fresh tiny human with two other little humans to boot. I was not at all concerned with working 6 days and resting 1. I was keeping our family alive all day every day, and when I got to sleep or rest on any given day, I thanked the good Lord and often my husband who made it possible. It was a season of both exhaustion and lots of hard work, while I also rested from my normal, weekly work. There are seasons of grief, seasons of starting something new and working hard to get it up and running, there are seasons of kids getting sick, seasons of training for marathons and seasons of rest or sabbaticals. But for the most part, this guide of our day in and day out work, 6 days on, 1 day off, really works.

So that's it, friend! Work is good. Play is good. Both are necessary for living abundantly, and the 2 keys to taking hold of that abundance are, first, keeping our priorities straight and, second, embracing the rhythm that God created for us since the beginning of time.

You can find me at NancyRay.com or almost daily @nancyray on Instagram.

If this podcast resonated with you in some way, I would so appreciate a review on iTunes as well as some stars!

I'm going to close with words from a song that my mom used to sing to me at night, a song that my Papa used to sing to her:

In all we do in work or play, help us to be more loving every day.