

James A. Cusumano, PhD



*“Kites rise highest against the wind,  
not with it.”*  
Winston Churchill

- Arianna Huffington, founder and President of the world-famous, free, online newspaper, The Huffington Post, has committed to globalizing a new platform that she has developed for redefining success. She calls it the **Third Metric**.
- She asserts that the old **Two Metric** system which is based exclusively on **Money** and **Power** is antiquated and cannot address critical world issues, and it will not survive.
- She adds a third leg to the proverbial “Success Stool” to produce long-term stability. It is **Gratitude** and is created by living **Balance** between your **Personal** and **Professional** lives.
- The complementarity between the **Third Metric** and the tenants of the author’s recent book on **Balance** is discussed.
- An insightful, some may say arguable, gender issue is raised by **Third Metric** supporters. “*Could feminine intuitive decision-making leadership be precisely what is needed to address many of our critical global issues?*”

I attended Deepak Chopra’s annual conference, “**Sages & Scientists**,” held in August at La Costa Resort & Spa, home to his Wellness Center in Southern California. It was my second year in attendance and both times it was an amazing experience. Deepak invites leading scientists and wise thinkers (“Sages”) from around the world to discuss the most challenging global issues, with the intent to develop viable solutions.

It was a rewarding and enlightening experience to be part of the conversation. Attendees included Vicente Fox, former President of Mexico; Tim Shriver, CEO of The Special Olympics; Ray Chambers, successful entrepreneur and U.N. Special Envoy; Rudolph Tanzi, Harvard Professor and Nobel Award nominee for his discovery of the Alzheimer gene; Vishal Sikka, Member of the

# BALANCE:

## THE BUSINESS-LIFE CONNECTION

### PART II: REDEFINING SUCCESS<sup>A,B</sup>

Executive Board of SAP A.G.; Dean Ornish, world authority on preventing and curing heart disease; Ervin Laszlo, Founder of The Club of Budapest; General Wesley K. Clark, author and former Supreme Commander of NATO Forces in Europe; Leonard Mlodinow, California Institute of Technology physicist and author of popular science books; and many others.

There were numerous stimulating presentations and discussions over three days, but one that especially touched my soul was given by Arianna Huffington [Figure 1], founder and President of the Huffington Post [www.huffingtonpost.com/]. The Huffington Post is an amazing free publication and is considered one of the most widely-read and influential online newspapers in the world. As a consequence Forbes Magazine voted Arianna one of the most powerful women in the world, up there with Angela Merkel and Hillary Clinton.

She is passionate about a new platform she has developed called the **Third Metric**. Arianna points out that most of society defines success based on only two metrics, **money** and **power**. She uses a two-legged stool metaphor to paint the picture, maintaining that in our current complex, online, connected world, there is instability without a third leg, which she calls **gratitude**, which is the basis for a fulfilled life of purpose.

In my discussion with Arianna, I realized that we were in total alignment as laid out in detail in my new book, **BALANCE: The Business-Life Connection**. I gave her a copy of **BALANCE** so that we could compare notes. I asked Arianna

how she came to be so passionate about **Third Metric** concepts. She said that a few years ago, she accompanied her daughter on a trip to assess several colleges her daughter was considering to attend. Knowing her mom to be a hard-driving entrepreneur, her daughter made her promise to be totally present during their travels; so there were to be no e-mails or cellphone calls during the time they were together. As a consequence, Arianna did her work in the wee hours of the early morning, getting very little sleep during the trip. At the end of her travels with her daughter, she was thoroughly exhausted. On her first day back at work, she fainted and required several stitches to close a wound on her cheekbone. That’s when she knew things had to change. There was something wrong. She was burning the proverbial candle from both ends and following the antiquated **Two Metric** model.

There is much to be said for Arianna’s campaign. Most of us have been subjected to what Carl Jung termed “collective unconscious.” This subjective force, based on ideas and values created over the years by others, has influenced us since early childhood: “*Work hard, put your nose to the grindstone and aim for success, for a great job.*” Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution over 200 years ago, success has been defined by great pay—money—and great position—power. In our modern complex society this often leads to personal “burnout.” You have likely seen cases around you. Perhaps you have had a taste of it yourself. I know I have in years past.

Arianna rightly points out that because of the **Two Metric** value system, long propagated and admired by the majority of society, healthcare costs continue to escalate. Anti-depressants are growing at nearly 10 percent per year,<sup>1</sup> soaring more than 500 percent over the last 20 years.<sup>2</sup> Prescriptions for sleeping pills are skyrocketing.<sup>3</sup> Most of this increase is due to stress and high blood pressure in the workplace. Women in particular are experiencing the impact with a 40 per-

Figure 1: Arianna Huffington, founder and president of the Huffington Post is considered one of the most powerful women in the world.



<sup>A</sup> EDITOR’S COMMENT—This is the second article in a new series based on the author’s latest book, “**BALANCE: The Business-Life Connection**, SelectBooks, New York, 2013.” The book is based on three decades of personal experience on how to achieve success and long-term fulfillment in both your personal and professional lives. Details concerning the book and points of purchase can be found at [www.JamesCusumano.Com](http://www.JamesCusumano.Com).

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cent increase in the threat of heart disease and a 60 percent increase in the threat of diabetes. At the first conference on the **Third Metric**, organized this past year by Arianna in New York City, mainstream corporate attendees agreed.<sup>4</sup>

“When your work defines what your work-life balance is, you’ve lost control,” warns, Mark Bertolini, CEO of Aetna Inc. “When you’re under chronic stress, your life is shorter,” adds Dean Omish, world-renowned heart health physician. George Stephanopoulos, journalist and advisor to former U.S. President Bill Clinton exclaims with enthusiasm concerning his experience with meditation, “It’s been a lifesaver. I’ve been meditating for about two years now—consistently. I did it ... to manage a frenetic life ... I was always overly tired, over-stressed, feeling a kind of constant low-level impatience, and I didn’t like it.” And as for those who think they are efficient because they are constantly multitasking, well-known neuroscientist Amish Jha warns, “Multitasking is a myth—what we actually do is task-switching ... Out of all of the things our mind does, that switching function is the most depleting.” Perhaps the current **Two Metric** system is why in the U.S. 75 percent of healthcare costs are due to preventable chronic diseases!

I am not making a case for perfect work-life balance. There will be times you will miss your son’s soccer game or your daughter’s ballet performance because of a critical meeting that could not be missed without damaging your company; or perhaps in the other direction, you missed an important but not so critical business meeting with a customer to attend your son’s graduation. Over the long haul, in order to achieve long-term personal and professional fulfillment it is important that when you look back over a month, a year, a lifetime, you can say, “I did it with balance between my personal and professional lives, and I feel good about it.”

I know of only one practical way to achieve this goal. You must first find out what you’re good at and then connect it with a need in the world that makes it better place. At that point, you will have found your life purpose. Everyone has one inside them. That discovery will generate enormous levels of passion to succeed. You will find creative solutions to challenges you face and before you know it you will get a return for your effort—financial, emotional, psychological, perhaps a combination. The result will be a strong sense of **gratitude**, the basis for long-term fulfillment. However, as discussed in great detail in **BALANCE**,<sup>5</sup> to maintain this sense of fulfillment, it is necessary to create a life plan that is solidly based on your personal values, i.e., a **Balanced Values-Based Life Plan** [Figure 2].

In my study over the years of people who have pursued this path of **Balance**, I have found that employees, partners, and family members not only feel a sense of fulfillment, but they function with a strong increased sense of wisdom. They make great decisions. They solve tough problems. They are team players. They love to serve rather than demanding that they be served. Everyone wins, and the old way of doing things – “Put your nose to grindstone and work hard,” – is seen as ineffective.

**Figure 2:** In creating a Life Plan, it is critical that you identify with complete honesty, the values that underpin the decisions in your life. There is no right answer, only your personal truth.



Healthy, wise and fulfilled employees achieve not only **employee engagement**, but **employee enjoyment** as well, and their capabilities to perform increase exponentially. That’s why, as Arianna points out, 25 percent of corporations in the U.S. have now instituted some kind of mindfulness program, e.g., meditation, yoga, etc. And I am not talking about cutting-edge Silicon Valley firms. This includes the likes of, multibillion dollar companies like Target, Aetna and staunch Midwestern firms like General Mills. They understand that companies which embrace **Balance** and the elements of the **Third Metric** not only do good, but they also do very well on the bottom line. There have been numerous studies to demonstrate this is unequivocally true.<sup>6</sup>

Arianna is fond of saying somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but not entirely, that “Men created the current model for success, perhaps it will take women and a ‘few good men’ to put the **Third Metric** on sound global footing.” I think there may be something to this. Allow me to share a story. Several years ago, my wife Inez and I were vacationing on the big Island of Hawaii. While there, we were introduced to a shaman, the Hawaiians say, “Kahuna.” His name was Hale Makua. He was a huge virile man, probably weighing more than 175 kilograms. I say “was” because sadly, Hale was killed in an automobile accident a couple of years after we met. During our visit he drove us to the peak of a large active volcano on the island. It’s a place that Hawaiians say emanates a special spiritual energy. It was a magnificent experience.

**Figure 3:** There is increasing discussion that feminine intuitive decision-making and leadership may be what is needed to deal with today’s critical global challenges.



Afterwards, we were having tea together in a lovely grass hut on the mountain top and I asked Hale, “What is the one thing that could happen that would go a long way to solving many of the serious global challenges we currently face?” Without any apparent thought, he said, “When women have more to say about the direction of the world.” I immediately asked him, “Why is that?” He said, “You know when men and women are born, they both have an energetic connection of **Cosmic Consciousness** between their mind and their heart. Nearly all women maintain that connection for their entire life.” “But we men,” he continued, “We are taught early on by our family, our friends, the media, and society in general, to sever that connection. We are hunters. We are protectors. We don’t cry. And that’s too bad because the challenges we face today require the kind of balance and intuition created by that mind-heart connection [Figure 3].”

I thought for a long moment and then declared to Inez, “You know, maybe there is more than a grain of truth to what soul singer James Brown had to say!” – “It’s a man’s world but it wouldn’t be nothing, nothing without a woman or a girl.”

Enjoy your journey!

James A. Cusumano, PhD ■

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/news/2012/08august/Pages/becoming-nation-of-happy-pill-poppers-fears.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2356902/Prozac-Nation-Use-antidepressants-UK-soared-500-past-20-years.html>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2012/may/11/nhs-spending-sleeping-pills-50m>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/redefining-success-takeaway\\_b\\_3444007.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/arianna-huffington/redefining-success-takeaway_b_3444007.html)

<sup>5</sup> James A. Cusumano, **BALANCE: The Business-Life Connection**, SelectBooks, New York, NY, 2013.

<sup>6</sup> Rajendra S. Sisodia, David B. Wolfe, Jagdish N. Sheth, **Firms of Endearment: How World-Class Companies Profit from Passion and Purpose**, Pearson Prentice Hall, February 10, 2007.

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