



Nuts & Bolts

Restore Harmony to Your Life

Seven years ago, my life was out of balance. Work had taken the front seat, and my priorities were out of order. My relationships suffered, my spiritual well-being was non-existent, and I had forgotten how to have fun. It was not by chance that I was home watching Oprah interview author and personal coach Cheryl Richardson, who inspired me to *Take Time for Your Life**. I immediately began my 7-step program to creating the life I wanted.

I tackled my environment first, attacking the biggest drain on me. In time, overbearing mail became shredded and the filing system was organized. I conquered home and car repairs, donated clothes, sewed buttons on shirts, and updated my wardrobe. Once my home was in order, I landed a new job and applied a new quality of life mindset.

Next was to make up for lost time with loved ones. Sadly, my role as a daughter, sister, granddaughter, niece, aunt, neighbor and friend had been overlooked. I missed being part of loving family and supportive community.



To mend my relationships, I decided to create memories like surprising my niece and her second grade classmates for school lunch. Several ideas have become annual traditions like the father-daughter summer golf outing and the Kennedy Center dance subscription my sister and I purchase. I also finally tipped my mailman for taking such good care of my mess.

Slowly, life started to turn for the better as I celebrated a happier life. I got involved in sports and activities regularly, volunteered more, and I wasn't afraid to learn new things or travel alone. Keeping a journal or vision board encourages progress. I love looking back on items I crossed out in past years.

A live session with a personal coach is ideal, but if you are watching finances Richardson's book is helpful and worth rereading each year. Put yourself around like minded people to keep you on track of your goals. Feed your soul, put yourself at the top of the list, and enjoy a new way of living. •

**Richardson, Cheryl, Take Time for Your Life, Three Rivers Press, 1999*

*by Tanya Barrett, CMP
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The Rise of the Un-FAM: Trends in Supplier-Provided Education

We are all expected to do more with less these days, and that means inventive ways to accomplish our continuing education needs. To meet this demand, innovative suppliers have created unique learning opportunities that blend fun and education.

Team San Jose hosts an annual FAM trip with a very defined educational program. "We want to provide value to our clients," said Tamela Blalock, M.T.A., CMP, National Sales Manager, Team San Jose. "Silicon Valley has specialized expertise that isn't found anywhere else in the world. Informing clients about cutting-edge technology also educates them about our destination."

Caesars Entertainment hosts a three-day Educational Experience in Las Vegas each year. "Our event is not a typical FAM trip where planners play golf and have spa treatments between site tours and sales pitches," said Vice President of Sales Jordan D. Clark. "Our goal has always been to provide planners with a forum for education and networking first, and then let them learn more about us through the experiences they have over the course of the weekend. And, of course, we want them to have a little fun as well."



Creative, hands-on education is a refreshing change of pace from a tedious webinar or classroom lecture. During a recent education event at the award-winning San Jose Rose Garden, clients learned about the quick response (QR) codes attached to each flower and how they enhance the experience by providing additional information about what visitors are seeing.

Both Blalock and Clark agree that educational and professional development events result in better turnout than a typical FAM or sales event. Since its introduction five years ago, attendance at Caesars' Las Vegas Educational Experience has increased fourfold. Said Clark, "For our first event, we worked incredibly hard to get about 50 attendees. Our last three events have averaged 200 planners in attendance."

To other suppliers considering an education program Blalock advises, "You're doing yourself and your clients a disservice if you only focus on what's trendy at the moment. Look to unique and interesting resources that enhance the client's meeting – whether or not they choose your destination." •

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