



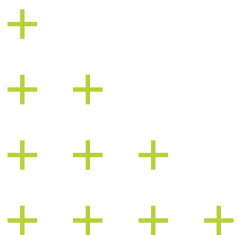
# INVISIBLE OPPONENTS

**THE BATTLE OF LEAVING  
WORK AT WORK**

# ENJOYING SUCCESS AT WORK IS ONE THING. BUT FEELING SIGNIFICANCE WHILE WINNING AT WORK? **THAT'S NEXT LEVEL LIVING.**

That's when the welcomed "F" word, **FULFILLED**, gets thrown around. Problem is, many executives are failing to bridge the gap between success and significance, especially those executives who once competed as an athlete. It's because the high-performance DNA and drive that once fueled their athletic success is now feeding a relentless work ethic as an Executive Athlete. Despite their greatest intentions to provide for their families, give generosity to their communities, and innovate in their industries, they're silently killing themselves, their families, and performance because of their struggle to shut off work.

The good news is there's an overlooked opportunity to leverage what the best pro athletes in the world do: master transitions. They have an uncanny ability to quickly process and move on from their last play, role, and season so they can bring their focus and best to what's next. If you're the type of Executive Athlete who wants to have generational impact on your family, community, and industry, then Priority #1 is mastering the most challenging transition: work to home. Master this transition and the rest get easier.



# THE SILENT KILLER: KEEPING YOUR WORK ALIVE.

In the marketplace, there's two sides of the competitive mindset coin. On one side, it's characterized by a high degree of drive, discipline, and work ethic—giving its owners a major competitive edge. But on the other side, it often results in a propensity towards workaholism<sup>1</sup> – a people and performance killer.

## **Workaholism** *noun/*

A compulsive need to work excessively and an inability to disengage from work, often at the expense of personal health, happiness, and relationships.<sup>2</sup>

### **It undermines your health.**

- **Mental:** Individuals characterized as workaholics showed significantly higher levels of anxiety and depressive symptoms compared to non-workaholics.<sup>3</sup>
- **Emotional:** Working excessively hard and long hours severely impacts emotional fitness, leading to feelings of helplessness, disillusionment, and a reduced sense of accomplishment.<sup>4</sup>
- **Physical:** The stress from failing to disengage from work can contribute to physical health issues, including heart disease, hypertension, and a weakened immune system.<sup>5</sup>

- **Sleep:** The inability to turn off work can lead to sleep problems, including insomnia and poor sleep quality.<sup>6</sup>

### **It disrupts your marriage.**

- **Marital Dissatisfaction:** Spouses of workaholics reported significantly lower levels of marital satisfaction compared to spouses of non-workaholics.<sup>7</sup>
- **Infidelity:** The emotional void created by present, but absent spouses can make one or both partners more susceptible to seeking emotional or physical intimacy outside of the marriage.<sup>8</sup>
- **Lack of Communication:** Continuous lack of spousal engagement can lead to a breakdown in communication between spouses, further exacerbating relationship issues.<sup>9</sup>
- **Spousal Stress:** Studies have shown that spouses of workaholics are more likely to report stress, depression, and anxiety, partly due to the emotional neglect and lack of support in the relationship.<sup>10</sup>

### **It affects your kids' growth**

- **Mental Health Challenges:** Research has shown that children with emotionally unavailable parents have a higher risk of developing mental health disorders, including depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem.<sup>11</sup>

- **Substance Abuse:** Adolescents with emotionally unavailable parents are at an increased risk for substance abuse.<sup>12</sup>

- **Identity Struggles:** A lack of emotional support and validation from parents can lead to lifelong struggles with self-esteem and identity. Individuals may constantly seek approval and validation from external sources.<sup>13</sup>

- **Unhealthy Relationships:** The effects of present, but absent parenting extend into adulthood, influencing the child's ability to develop and maintain healthy relationships. Adults who grew up with emotionally unavailable parents may struggle with intimacy, trust, and dependability in relationships.<sup>14</sup>

### It limits your performance.

- **Decreased Productivity:** Studies have shown that workaholism can lead to diminished returns due to factors like burnout and stress. Productivity is negatively affected over time because quality of work suffers with extended work hours and reduced efficiency.<sup>15</sup>

- **Increased Risk of Burnout:** Workaholism is strongly associated with higher levels of job burnout. Research shows that workaholics report significantly higher levels of burnout compared to non-workaholics. Burnout can lead to decreased motivation, emotional exhaustion, and cynicism towards one's job, all of which negatively impact workplace performance.<sup>16</sup> With burnout also comes lower attention spans and poor working memory, among other symptoms.<sup>17</sup>

- **Reduced Creativity and Innovation:** Stress and fatigue associated with workaholism can impair cognitive flexibility and creative thinking, essential components of innovation.<sup>18</sup>

- **Negative Impact on Teamwork:** Workaholics may contribute to a tense work environment due to their high levels of stress, potential for interpersonal conflict, and need to control. Their inability to delegate and tendency to micromanage can undermine team cohesion and performance and could lead to conflicts, reduced trust, and lower team morale.<sup>19</sup>





# DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHO YOU'RE BATTLING?

When it comes to excessive work, it's easy to put the blame on common visible opponents like:

- Workplace culture and expectations,
- The hyper-connected world of smartphones and digital devices, and
- A deep-rooted desire for promotion and rewards.

However, those can be tamed with tactics such as:

- Creating and enforcing boundaries,
- Practicing digital discipline, and
- Acknowledging our deep-rooted human desire for affirmation and achievement.

But when The Invisible Four™ show up, the untamed competitor in you turns on overdrive. The competitive mindset that once fueled you in athletic arenas reignites, bringing with it endurance, resilience, and a relentless pursuit of excellence. Problem is, when these often praised traits blur the boundaries between your work and personal life, what ensues is the battle to disconnect from work. In many cases, the battle never ends.

Addressing this challenge is crucial to:

- Maintain your mental and emotional health,
- Nurture family relationships, and
- Ensure sustainable high levels of performance.

# MEET THE INVISIBLE FOUR™

## Why it's so hard to shut off work.

The Invisible Four™ are much harder to tame because many Executive Athletes are unaware they're fighting them.

1

### **Professional Identity and Self-Worth:**

Over-identification with one's role as an executive, much like the singular identity of an athlete, can lead to an overreliance on work for self-esteem. Many highly driven athletes-turned-executives derive a significant part of their self-worth from their career success. This strong identification with their professional role can make it difficult to mentally disconnect from work, as they may feel that being constantly engaged is crucial to their success and self-esteem.<sup>20</sup>

2

### **Perfectionism:**

The quest for flawless execution, although extremely beneficial and expected in sports, may lead to unrealistic expectations and dissatisfaction in the more nuanced corporate and entrepreneurial environments. The literature on perfectionism in the workplace suggests that individuals who are perfectionists or who set high standards for themselves may find it difficult to leave work unfinished, driving them to continue working at home.<sup>21</sup> This may be exacerbated by remote work arrangements where the physical separation between work and home is blurred.<sup>22</sup>

3

### **Fear of Underperformance:**

In many cases, you hear about elite athletes being driven by the fear of failure. However, The athlete's fear of not meeting expectations can translate into an unhealthy obsession with work performance. Highly driven Executive Athletes may worry about missing out on opportunities, falling behind their peers, or not being available for critical decisions. This fear can compel them to remain plugged into work even when they should be recovering or spending time with loved ones.<sup>23</sup>

4

### **The Adrenaline Rush of Success:**

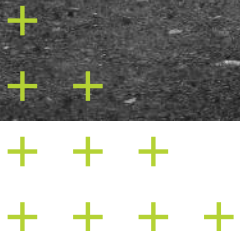
The highs from work achievements can become addictive, mirroring the thrill of athletic achievements. The big issue is, they can come at the expense of personal health and relationships.



# FROM BURNED OUT JERK TO ALL-AMERICAN

Entering 2013, I was the classic driven professional pursuing his dreams, accomplishing his goals, and showing up as loving and supportive husband and dad. Then I became obsessed with my work and role as an attorney and MLBPA-Certified Agent. Within a year, I was on the brink of a mental breakdown, divorce, and digestive system collapse. The Invisible Four™ were beating me down. Thankfully, a life-altering car accident gave me the wake-up call I needed to devote myself to identifying and overcoming them.

**Shortly after the accident, New York Times Best-Selling Author and Leadership Expert, Michael Hyatt, was writing about my turnaround in his book, *Your Best Year Ever*. I pulled a 180 in record time.**



# YOU CAN BEAT THE INVISIBLE FOUR™

Winning the battle against The Invisible Four™ and successfully from game time to home time is possible. Your plan of attack must include the same discipline and resilience that defined your athletic career, as well as four key steps:

## 1. Set Clear Boundaries.

Before you even think about going home, clear your head and draw a line in the sand between your professional and personal life by implementing something as simple as a workday shutdown routine.

## 2. Check-in with Yourself.

As an athlete, you had to constantly be in tune with your mind, emotions, and body in order to succeed. It's no different as an Executive Athlete. Before you leave the office, take a few seconds to check in with yourself.

## 3. Realign with Your Identity.

There's a version of you that you want to show up at home. ...that you know your family *needs* to show up at home. It's time to reconnect with him and, specifically, the beliefs, thoughts, and actions that align with him.

## 4. Decompress.

Incorporate simple exercises from the worlds of sports psychology, neuroscience, and human performance to boost your recovery and resilience.

## WHAT'S ON THE OTHER SIDE OF VICTORY

When my pro and executive athletes face The Invisible Four™ head on and employ the aforementioned four steps, in addition to a better home life, they report:

- MORE CLARITY
- RENEWED ENERGY
- FULFILLMENT
- HIGH LEVELS OF CONFIDENCE & CONVICTION
- RESPECT FROM FAMILY, FRIENDS, & PEERS
- CONSISTENCY
- GETTING IN THE ZONE MORE FREQUENTLY
- MORE MOTIVATION
- LESS STRESS AND OVERWHELM

# YOUR GAME PLAN FOR SUCCESS

**Employ the following four steps to beat The Invisible Four™ and confidently transition fully from work to home.** Collectively, they'll take you 15 minutes to complete and save you and your loved ones from endless hours of heartache.

## STEP 1

### **Implement a workday shutdown routine**

It will help you address any overwhelm and set clear boundaries. Celebrate a few wins, dump everything that's floating around your head, put tomorrow's Action Plan together. Be a team player and delegate a few tasks. Bottom line, process today and plan for tomorrow. Otherwise, your transition home is set up to flop.

**Estimated time to complete:** 5 to 10 minutes.

*Already have a routine? Great. What needs to be refined as you prepare to grow even more over the next 6-12 months? Think through the lens of the future you, not the current you.*

## STEP 2

### **Check in with your mind, heart, and body**

For example, ask yourself, "What are you thinking?" "How are you feeling?" "How is your body responding to how you're thinking and feeling?" That data will help you preemptively adjust your mind, heart, and body before you walk out of that office door. Play offense, not defense..

**Estimated time to complete:** 1 minute.

## STEP 3

### Declare how you're going to show up

First, get a mental image of the person you want to show up as at home. Then, fill in the blanks:

You are a [ ] [adjective] [ ] [role] who [ ]  
[connect with your core values and describe how you need to show up].

Here's how it may sound if you're a father:

*You are a present father who loves his kids, listens well to them, and wants to support them in any way he can.*

Notice you're using second person pronouns here. Studies show that using second person pronouns when talking to yourself can help calm you down and improve your performance<sup>24</sup>. It's like the best, future version of you is sending you a much needed reminder.

With that crystal clarity on who's showing up, your last step is to decompress so you can leave the workday behind.

**Estimated time to complete:** 1 to 2 minutes.

## STEP 4

### Leverage proven mindfulness strategies to decompress and fully transition from work mode.

Complete the following four strategies with your eyes closed to reduce stimulation and increase effectiveness:

- 1. Breathwork:** to calm down your nervous system, complete a 4x8 breath while inhaling and exhaling through your nose (i.e. 4 count inhale, 8 count exhale).
- 2. Confidence Conditioning:** repeat out loud five times the declaration statement you came up with in Step #3.
- 3. Mental Recall:** reflect on the last time you showed up like you wanted to as if it's happening right now.
- 4. Visualization:** play a mental movie of yourself showing up exactly how you described it in Step #3.

**Estimated time to complete:** 1 to 2 minutes.

Want extra insight into how to execute these four steps at a high level, no matter what the workday throws at you?

SIGN UP FOR MY **FREE TRAINING** DESIGNED EXCLUSIVELY FOR YOU, THE EXECUTIVE ATHLETE.



## **Bring Home Your Best:**

**How to Confidently Transition Home  
After a Tough Day At Work.**

In this 60-minute training, I'll walk you through the simple workday shutdown process my Executive Athletes use to consistently leave work at work. Additionally, you'll learn how to leverage the Clutch Recipe™ - my proven process designed to help you master your transition home, especially after a tough day.

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE TRAINING](#)

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



"J.R." is the Founder of the J. Reid Group and an international human performance strategist, podcast host, and author. His work is designed to help relentless pro athletes, public figures, and leaders master life, business, mental, and emotional strategies so they can make winning a lifestyle.

Since 2005, he's empowered clients to excel in their pressure-packed careers while confidently upgrading their health and relationships. Some of his clients include World Series Champions, All-Stars, Hall of Famers, Fortune 500 Executives,

and award-winning entrepreneurs whose professional contracts have exceeded the hundreds of millions. By earning an M.B.A, J.D., and a 9.8 average client satisfaction rating, J.R. has put himself in an elite category of trusted professionals.

After a life-altering car accident gave him a major wake-up call, J.R. devoted himself to mastering human performance and showing up bigger for his wife and three kids. As a result, J.R. has been featured by Focus on the Family and New York Times Best-Selling Author and leadership expert, Michael Hyatt in *Your Best Year Ever*. He co-authored the book *W.O.W. Factor: How Defining Words Can Define Your Life* and regularly speaks to athletes, entrepreneurs, and executives on overcoming failure, winning in your career and at home, and maximizing human performance.

J.R. has unmatched levels of energy and experience that his clients and audience loves. Plus, he's real, trustworthy, and he goes to battle with you—a rare combination in sports and business.

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