

## My So-Called Life - Mort Meyerson

How Mort Meyerson has fought his work addiction.

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**Old Life** CEO of Perot Systems Corp.

**New Life** CEO of 2M Companies Inc., his private investment firm

I've run companies three times. Each time, it felt fun, satisfying, and meaningful. I also felt that I was dealing well with my obligations outside the company. That part feels different now.

At Perot Systems, I worked 16- to 18-hour days, six or seven days a week. I traveled on business an average of four days a week. It sounds crazy, but once I was essentially out of the country for 12 months, working on a major deal in Switzerland. Needless to say, that schedule didn't leave much time for a "life."

No wonder most CEOs give up on friends, hobbies - even family. Work becomes an addiction. It certainly became one for me. I still consider myself a "recovering" CEO. How did I change?

I retired. I couldn't figure out how to change while I still held that job. I now run my own firm - and have time to run my own life.

I've been surprised by which aspects of my new life I enjoy most. In high school and college, I sang in a cappella choirs. I've started singing again. I rejoined the choir of my alma mater for a tour of Europe. I also joined the Dallas Symphony Orchestra Chorus.

The emotional release I get from singing has made a huge difference in my life. A singing group is the purest form of community I know.

I've also joined the board of the Hebrew Union College, a seminary that trains Reform rabbis. Five years ago, you would have never found me studying the Torah on a Saturday morning. Today, when I discuss it with other people, I get the same satisfaction I got 30 years ago when I tackled complex software problems.



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