Q&A

Anthea Eleftheriadis

Senior Associate
ENS

Personal reflections and integration

The phrase 'work-life balance' can feel mythical in transactional finance. How do you personally define and manage the integration of a demanding career with your personal life?

I've learned to resist the notion that balance means giving equal time to everything; it doesn't and, in M&A, it often can't. The reality is that there are nights when the laptop stays open long after everyone else has gone to bed. I've made peace with that. What I do try to protect is an hour or so after leaving the office to be fully present with my family. It may be a short window, but I make it count. When even that isn't possible, I've learned not to guilt myself. It will happen, as that's the nature of this industry. The key, for me, has been discipline and honesty: discipline to carve out that time when I can, and honesty with myself when I can't. Hard work and dedication are non-negotiable in M&A, but so is giving yourself grace.

When the deal closes and the adrenaline drops, how do you intentionally disconnect, recharge, and protect your mental well-being?

Disconnecting is a discipline I've had to cultivate. After an intense transaction, I give myself permission to step away without guilt. Sometimes that's a quiet evening at home, or a nice dinner out with my loved ones – something grounding that has nothing to do with contracts or closing checklists. I've also learned the importance of honest self-reflection, namely, acknowledging when I'm depleted. Mental well-being isn't about being invincible; rather, it's about being honest with yourself about what you need. It's taken time to learn that rest isn't a weakness – it's what enables sustained excellence.

As an ambitious graduate, I measured success by external markers: titles, deals closed, recognition. Today, my definition is more nuanced. Success is the respect I earn from colleagues and clients through integrity and hard work.

How has your definition of "success" changed from when you were an ambitious graduate to who you are today?

As an ambitious graduate, I measured success by external markers: titles, deals closed, recognition. Today, my definition is more nuanced. Success is the respect I earn from colleagues and clients through integrity and hard work. It's the initiative I show in tackling complex matters, and the dedication I bring to every transaction, regardless of size. However, and most importantly, success is being present for my family, leading with honesty, and treating everyone with respect. I've come to understand that a brilliant career built at the expense of your values isn't success at all. The greatest achievement is creating a career that reflects who you genuinely are, not just what you can accomplish.

What is a daily ritual, habit, or boundary you protect fiercely that keeps you grounded amidst the chaos of deal flows?

That hour after I leave the office. It sounds simple, but in this industry, protecting even a small window of time is a victory. During that hour, I'm fully present with my family. It doesn't always happen, and some evenings the demands simply won't wait, but when I can protect it, I do so fiercely. This boundary keeps me grounded because it reminds me daily of what truly matters, even when I can't give it as much time as I'd like. It's a ritual of discipline and respect. In an industry that can consume you if you let it, having something you protect fiercely isn't just helpful, it's essential.