

Achieve a Better Balance in Your Life

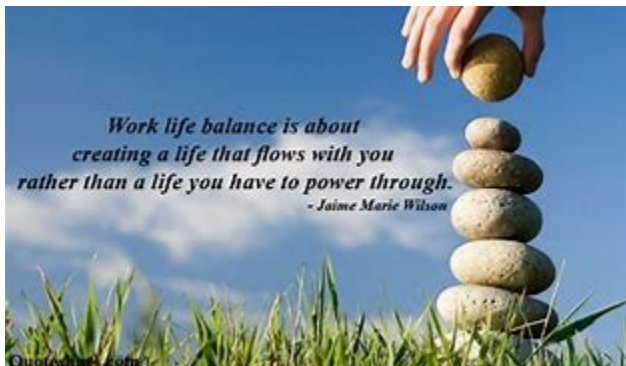
At times, short-term or permanent changes caused by family situations can make it difficult to find a balance between work and home duties. Changes in your child's school schedule, caring for an older adult, or expanding your family can be overwhelming, but small adjustments to your daily routine can help you regain the balance you lack.

Slow down.

Life is simply too short, so don't let things pass by you in a blur. Take steps to stop and enjoy the things and people around you. Don't make plans for every evening or weekend, and find some ways to distance yourself from the things that are causing you the most stress.

Learn to manage your time.

Avoid procrastination. For many people, most of the stress they feel comes from simply being disorganized and procrastinating. Learn to set more realistic goals and deadlines, and then stick to them. You'll find that not only are you less stressed, but your work will be better.



*Work life balance is about
creating a life that flows with you
rather than a life you have to power through.*
- Jaime Marie Wilson

Share the load.

Even though you may sometimes feel you are the only one capable of doing something, it's usually not the case. Get your partner or other family members to help you with all your personal and family responsibilities. Taking care of the

household, children, or parents should not be the responsibility of just one person.

Let things go (don't sweat the small stuff).

It's simpler said than done, but learn to let things go once in a while. So what if the dishes don't get washed every day or that the house doesn't get vacuumed every week? Learn to recognize the things that don't really have much impact in your life, and allow yourself to let them go and then not beat yourself up for doing so.

Explore your options.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with your family responsibilities, get help if you can afford it, or enlist family members and friends for some tasks. Find a sitter for your children, explore options for aging parents, and seek counseling for yourself. In many cases, you have options, but you need to take the time to find them.

Talk to your employer.

Find out if there is a way of modifying your employment to better handle your current situation. These changes might include flextime, job-sharing, telecommuting, or part-time employment, or just a temporary adjustment in your job duties.

Take charge.

Sometimes it's easier for you to allow yourself to feel overwhelmed rather than to take charge and develop a prioritized list of things that need to get done. You need to buck the trend. Develop a list. Set priorities. Then enjoy the satisfaction of crossing things off your list.

Simplify.

It seems human nature for just about everyone to take on too many tasks and responsibilities, to try to do too much, and to own too much. Find a way to simplify your life. Change your lifestyle. Learn to say *no* and to ask for help. Get rid of the clutter and baggage in your house and your life.

This month's
Online Webinar
Discussion:

MAKING A LIFE WHILE MAKING A LIVING: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Ways to achieve balance with personal, family and work responsibilities.

ONLINE SEMINAR
Available on demand
starting July 16th

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In the end, the key word is *balance*. You need to find the right balance that works for you. Celebrate your successes, and don't dwell on your failures. Life is a process, and so is striving for balance in your life.

Find Ways to Create More Time at Work

You'll find some time saving tips below that will help to restore some balance in your life!

- **Get organized.** How much time do you waste looking for files, phone numbers, mailing addresses, clients' business cards, etc.? When repeated dozens of times each day, these seemingly insignificant tasks gobble up precious minutes—and hours—in a week. Spend 5-10 minutes at the start of each day organizing your desk, files, or work area. Are there ways to automate repetitive tasks or software programs to make them less time-consuming?
- **Prioritize your most important tasks.** Create a to-do list and number your tasks in order of priority. You might set up categories A, B, and C. If you need help identifying the most important items on the list, ask yourself two questions: "If I could complete just one activity or task today, what would it be?" and "Is this activity the best use of my time?"
- **Block out time for the things that are most important.** You can do this at the beginning of each day or week, then focus on one task at a time, moving from the highest priority to the lowest. This is also an effective technique for combating procrastination.
- **Avoid interruptions.** It's important to learn how to resist attacks on your time block. Some examples are dropping by to talk, checking your e-mail every few minutes or even answering your phone. If somebody or something disrupts your time block, move the time block and recommit to it.
- **Learn to say no.** Once you know what is most important, you need to be willing to say no. Your priorities are most important. Having to say no to things that undermine your priorities is key to making sure you implement what is most important.

Article from CARE's WorkLife Solutions Website

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