

Work/Life Balance e-book

This e-book provides helpful tips to consider as you begin the process of balancing work and life.



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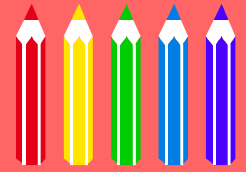
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Health Resources EAP provides you, your dependents, and household members assistance in dealing with a variety of personal and professional issues. The program's confidential counseling, information, and referral services are provided at no cost to employees. Call **1-800-451-1834** to speak with a specialist about these and other related services.



WORK/LIFE BALANCE

A Quiz For You



Use this exercise to measure the degree of balance you have between the demands of work, family responsibilities and personal time. Answer each question with a number from this scale:

ALWAYS					NEVER
5	4	3	2	1	

AT HOME

- Does your family complain that you don't spend enough time with them?
- Do you often feel anxious about the demands of your family?
- Do responsibilities at home make you resentful?
- Do you expect your family to adapt to your career needs?

SUBTOTAL _____

AT WORK

- Do you feel frustrated because your income is not enough?
- Do you feel guilty about the time you spend on your career?
- Do you resent having to bring work home?
- Do you worry that your work interferes with family needs?

SUBTOTAL _____

PERSONAL

- Do you feel there's never enough time for yourself?
- Do you feel guilty about taking a vacation?
- Do you wish you got more exercise?
- Do you feel you never get to do what you like to do?

SUBTOTAL _____

TOTAL _____

KEY:

A total score of less than 20 indicates that you have learned to successfully balance family, career and personal needs.
21-30 indicates a good balance with some need for improvement
31-40 indicates a fair balance
41-50 shows that you are barely managing the juggling act of home, career and personal needs.
 A high score in only one area indicates a need to organize your life so that area takes less of your time and energy.



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WORK/LIFE BALANCE

Setting Limits



Sometimes it's hard to learn to care for ourselves as much as we care for others. And it we tend to view other people's needs as more important than our own, it can be doubly hard. The following exercises will help you identify some areas in which you might be shortchanging yourself.

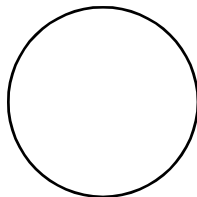
List a few of the demands on your life that absolutely must be done. Include the needs and demands from your work, spouse, children, relatives, church, other organizations, etc.:

Now think about your own needs. Do you wish for any of the following:

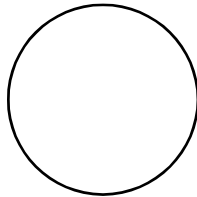
- More free time
- Space to do work
- More time with spouse, kids, etc.
- Help with household chores
- Someone to talk to
- More help with the kids
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Setting limits is a way of making sure you have time and energy to take care of yourself.

The "pies" below represent your life. Divide the first pie to show how your life is divided today between your needs and those of others. How big a piece are **you** getting?



My Life Now



My Life As I'd Like It

Divide up the second pie to show how your time would be divided if you were taking better care of yourself.

What limits can you set to guarantee that you will get your share of the pie? What are you willing to stop doing for others so that you can meet your needs?

It takes practice to be firm about your limits. When you allow others to step over your limits, what is the most common reason?

- I feel uncomfortable saying "no".
- I'm afraid of losing someone or something (my friend, my job, my spouse, my children's love).
- I feel guilty if I don't.
- Their needs seem more important than mine at the time.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

When you allow time for your own needs to balance out the time you spend doing for others you'll probably be surprised at how much more you accomplish all around.

Please call your Employee Assistance Program for further information and/or consultation.



WORK/LIFE BALANCE

What's Driving Your Work Habits?



Dedication or Addiction?

What's the difference between being dedicated to your career and being addicted to it? Use this checklist to help you decide who's in charge of your life: you or your career.

Do you . . .

- Feel a sense of being driven when working?
- Feel empty, depressed or panicky when you're not working?
- Often miss dinner or family celebrations because of work?
- Feel you'll never get your work done, no matter how hard you try?
- Have to always be "on call"?
- Feel you must be driving yourself to avoid disaster?
- Stay awake nights thinking about work?
- Often work more than 10 hours a day?
- Find yourself preoccupied at home with work-related concerns?
- Feel successful but not happy?
- Overschedule appointments?
- Have chronic physical problems, such as headaches, neck pain or colitis?
- Have family and friends who complain that you are obsessed with work?

If you answered yes to several of these questions, you may be more than just a hard worker. You may be on your way to full-blown workaholism. If so, it's time to take a long, hard look at your work life. Ask your family and close friends for help in assessing whether you are addicted to work. Recognizing a problem is the first step toward resolving it.

Reclaiming Your Life

Workaholics have lost control of their lives. There are many ways to get back in control.

Manage Stress: stress and work addiction reinforce each other in a vicious circle. You can break the pattern by learning tactics for managing stress. Yoga, exercise, meditation or walking are all helpful. Cutting down on alcohol and caffeine can make a tremendous difference.

Talk Yourself Up: low self-esteem is often behind work addiction. Use positive affirmations throughout the day to help make a cognitive shift in your thinking. You are what you think!

Reach Out: It may not be easy, but recovering from work addiction depends upon your asking for help. Ask those close to you to help you recover by giving you feedback and positive reinforcement on your progress. If you can't reach out to those around you, seek professional help by contacting your Employee Assistance Program. You'll be glad you did. And so will your loved ones.



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“You First” or “Me First”?



Most of us have many demands placed on our time and energy. Spouse, children, spiritual or community groups are important and make living worthwhile, but can make finding time for oneself a challenge. Balancing the time you spend on others with personal time for yourself can help you become happier and more productive.

Look Inside

Take a moment to think about how well you take care of yourself - both physically and emotionally. Do you eat three moderate meals a day, drink alcohol only in moderation, avoid smoking? Do you exercise each week, and get a check-up once a year? Answering yes to these questions means that you take care of your body.

Now think about your emotional well-being. Do you regularly set aside “quiet” time for yourself, meditating, writing or thinking? Do you make time regularly to enjoy nature and other quiet, restful places? All these activities can help you recover from life’s stresses.

Reach Outside

Reaching outside yourself can give your life great meaning and joy. Reaching out means sharing with others - your family, coworkers, friends, a nonprofit organization - virtually everything that’s not you! Sharing with others takes time and energy, but the rewards are worth the effort. Your self-esteem and sense of purpose in life increase when you share a common goal or bond with others.

Find The Balance

Reaching outside all the time would leave you exhausted. Living only for yourself would leave you lonely and empty. Finding the balance between the two is the key to a rich and contented life. To find your personal balance, look at how you spend your time and energy. Write down your main activities each day for a week or two. Then add up the hours spent “for me” and “for others.” You might realize that you would like to give more to others, or take more time for yourself. When you are creating balance for yourself, you need to decide what is most important to you.

Adapt To Changes

Finding your balance is a day-by-day matter. If you are able to change as your life circumstances change, caring for yourself and others will make your life healthy and satisfying.



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