

# Work-Life Balance

## Taking steps to enhance my well-being

Work-life balance isn't about splitting your time equally between work and leisure but finding fulfillment in both areas. A key to better balance is learning a new pattern based on what is meaningful to you, not to someone else. If you want to grow, it will take practice.

Take some time to reflect on your own situation. Are you building the life that you want? Use some or all of the questions and strategies below to help identify your priorities and then find space in your life to start shifting away from doing the things that do not matter to things that hold meaning. Being more balanced doesn't mean entirely changing your life. Small investments in areas that are important to you can change the quality of your relationships and the quality of your life.

### Exploration of Priorities

**1. What makes your life a purposeful one?**

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**2. What aspects of work/relationships/self are going well?**

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships: \_\_\_\_\_

Self: \_\_\_\_\_

**3. What aspects of work/relationships/self are most stressful?**

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships: \_\_\_\_\_

Self: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What habits and routines do you want to keep, and what do you want to change or adapt?**

Keep: \_\_\_\_\_

Change/Adapt: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. What boundaries do you want to set and enforce in work/relationships/self?**

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships: \_\_\_\_\_

Self: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. What has been helpful when dealing with increased pressures in areas of work/relationships/self?**

Work: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Relationships: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Self: \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Fast forward to later life. What would a life well lived look like?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**8. What are you doing with your time that you like/don't like?**

Like: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Don't like: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What inspires you or sparks excitement?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Generate a list of what you would do if you had an extra half hour, hour, half day, day.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Time Calculation**

There are 168 hours in a week. The average person spends 40 hours working and 56 hours sleeping each week, which leaves 72 hours for things that matter to you. What is your weekly time surplus?

Task	Total time/week
Sleep	
Self-grooming	
Meals	
Commuting	
Work	
<b>TOTAL of above:</b>	
Subtract from 168:	

Task	Total time/week
Sleep	56 (8 hrs x 7 days)
Self-grooming	7 (1 hr x 7 days)
Meals	15 (.5, .5, 1 x 7 days)
Commuting	2.5 (.5 x 5 days)
Work	42.5 (8.5 x 5 days)
<i>Kids sports</i>	13
<i>Friends outing</i>	5
<i>Shopping/errands</i>	3
<i>Exercise</i>	3
<b>TOTAL of above:</b>	147
Subtract from 168:	21 hours left as surplus (reading, TV, etc.)

EXAMPLE

## Strategies

- Track your productivity. Week one, follow your usual routine, and at the end of each day, rate your productivity on a 0-10 scale. Week 2, take a one to five-minute purposeful break every 60 minutes or so, and at the end of each day, rate your productivity on the 0-10 scale. Compare your productivity rating across the two weeks.
  - Check out the **Take 5 R.E.A.L. Goal**.
- Complete a time study for a week. Track what you are really doing during the day, how long it takes, and how often you are off task. Without judgment, analyze your findings. Where can you plug in more meaningful activities?
- Look at the flow of your day and your week to see what you can do to create what you need vs. waiting for things to settle down.
  - Check out the **Self-Care Approach to the Workweek R.E.A.L. Goal** or [webinar](#).
- Take a few moments after work to let things quietly settle before transitioning to the next thing. This can help you leave work at work and refocus your attention on what matters in the next moments of time.
  - Check out the **End of Workday Checklist R.E.A.L. Goal**.
- Take two minutes to just be present when you are in the bathroom, car, making meals, before bed, in the shower, before sleep, etc. Sometimes, it's that moment of space that provides the clarity we need to respond differently to a situation or provides the motivation to keep moving forward.
- Develop some realistic goals. Do something regularly — even small actions and accomplishments move you towards your goals. Instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable, ask yourself, "What's one thing I know I can accomplish today that helps me move in the direction I want to go?"
- Act as if you are on a vacation – what would you be doing?
- Set boundaries. When you are out of the office or done with work, set your out of the office to indicate that you are offline and will respond during work hours. If you are scheduled to be off, only respond if it is an emergency.
- Look at the whole of your time and identify where the things that you want to do can fit. Be intentional about how you spend your time. Be focused, genuine, and present.
- Use bits of time for bits of joy instead of mindless time on social media, apps, and watching TV.
- Everything you do is your choice. When you are asked to use your time for something, consider if it is a bigger priority than what you would have been doing. Think of the acronym B.U.S.Y. which stands for: **B**ecause **U** Said **Y**es.
  - Check out the **Say No R.E.A.L. Goal**.
- Add your priorities (work/relationships/self) into your calendar before things get busy. Oftentimes, Friday afternoon is a good time for future planning. Recognize this as highly important. If a higher priority trumps the time you selected, move it to a new time within an acceptable timeframe.

## Remember:

- Having a purpose is what drives us.
- Quality over quantity. Ten minutes of focused time is more effective than an hour of unfocused time.
- "I don't have time" = "It's not my priority."
- Taking care of yourself doesn't mean me first; it means me, too.
- You do not see things as they are but as you are.

## My Work-Life Balance Plan:

**Work**

One thing I am going to do cultivate balance is:

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**Relationships**

One thing I am going to do cultivate balance is:

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**Self**

One thing I am going to do cultivate balance is:

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**Explore more [Real Goals and Supplemental Resources](#)**

For help translating or understanding this, please call (800) 635-9233. (TTY dial 711)