

OBLIGATIONS & PLEASURES



Tips and Techniques for Balance

Ironically, the first step to finding work-life balance is accepting that there is no *perfect* balance between the two. Some days you may focus more on work and other obligations, while on other days you may have more time and energy for your hobbies and spending time with friends and family. Balance is achieved over time, not necessarily each day. There are many different ways to help protect your time and energy and find a realistic work-life balance that works for you.



One

Use journaling to assess how you spend your days. Finding balance begins with gaining a better understanding of how you spend your time, and journaling is one of the easiest ways to do that. When we write about our day, we can reflect on what we did, but also how we felt. This can help us begin to craft our *ideal*: the life that we want to live and the balance we want to find.

Two

Organize and prioritize what's taking up your time. Build on your journaling by examining each of the activities you do each day and categorizing them. What is urgent? What is important? What can be done later? What can be delegated? What can be eliminated from your list entirely? With this information, you can then create an *ideal* schedule that includes time for personal interests and downtime.

Three

Identify your balancing activities. Take time to identify the things you'd like to do that you never seem to fit in during a usual week. These are your hobbies and interests, things that you find enjoyable or relaxing: going for a walk, reading a book, meeting a friend for coffee, or taking a yoga class. Each week, choose 2 items from your list and schedule them into your week. As the weeks go by, these activities add up!

Four

Unplug. We need to separate ourselves from the technology that ties us to our work. It allows us to recover from weekly stress and gives us space for thoughts and ideas to emerge. Implement ideas that work for you: check email only twice a day, enforce no-screen time before bed, define office hours for chat apps. Taking time to unwind is critical to success and will help you feel more energized when you have to focus on work.

Five

Reduce time-wasting activities. Finding balance between work and play involves feeling fulfilled in both. Consider what you do to wind down after a busy day. Ordering take-out and binge-watching Netflix may be relaxing, but they rarely provide much meaning. Try using downtime to work on meaningful hobbies and prioritize activities that bring meaning into your life: playing sports, visiting friends, or learning a new skill.

Six

Prioritize your health. Your overall physical, emotional, and mental health and well-being should be your main concern. Prioritizing your health doesn't have to consist of extreme or time-consuming activities. It simply means you consciously make healthy choices and make time to care for the mind and body that will allow you to work hard and enjoy the activities that bring you joy.

Sources www.thehappynd.com/ | Images from Freepik.com