



Five Tips for Creating a Healthy Balance in Your Life

My mother once said that “The older you get, the faster time will fly.” How true that is! Perhaps this is why people try to cram as much into their day as possible. However, when you become too busy and forget to set aside adequate time for yourself, it will take its toll on you physically, mentally, and/or emotionally. Signs that you should slow down can include, but are not limited to, frustration, anger, a short temper, exhaustion, depression, skin rashes, and illnesses. This article provides five tips on how to create a healthier balance in your life.

1. Prioritize what is important in your life. Is it your job, family, children, quiet time, traveling or something else? As you only have 24 hours in a day, develop a plan as to how you want to spend those hours. Of course, you will need to set aside time for sleeping (at least seven hours), eating, and working. If you work full time, make sure that you are only working a 40 hour a week job. Yes, I said 40 hours a week, not 50, 60, or 70. Remember, we are talking about striking a balance in your life; working beyond a 40 hour week creates imbalance. It is also important to reserve some time for yourself each day, to recharge your mind and body.
2. Once you have set your priorities, jot them down on a piece of paper and display them where you will see them every day (e.g., on your bathroom mirror or refrigerator). Communicate them to your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and supervisor. The more you communicate your priorities to yourself and others, the more you will live and adhere to them, and the more others will hear and remember what is most important to you.
3. Learn how to say no in an assertive manner. One of the reasons why people have an unbalanced life is because they can't say no. They say yes to everything, and then can't understand why they are totally exhausted at the end of the day. So, if something doesn't fit into the priorities you have set, learn how to say no without offending anyone. For example, if your boss wants you to work a weekend and you already have plans or working weekends is not in your job description and you have already communicated this to your boss, remind him/her of prior conversations and state that you are unable to work weekends. There will be times when you have to use the “broken record” approach and repeat saying no, as some people do believe you'll change your mind if they keep reiterating their request.
4. Monitor your progress at least once a day so you don't go back to old routines/behaviors. Initially, implementing the changes needed to balance your life may be difficult. However, consistently work on

adhering to your priorities. Within a couple of weeks, they will become a habit and you will begin to feel healthier and more balanced in all aspects of your life.

5. If you have children, ask them what is most important outside of school. If they would rather be home with you and your family in the evenings and on the weekends, avoid trying to enroll them in every activity or sport. If your children do want to take a dance class, pick up an instrument, or play in a specific sport, then consider limiting the number of activities or sports in which they are involved. If you are carting your children to and from activities and events every night, you will not have the balance you desire. Plus, wouldn't you rather spend more quality time with your children?

By setting your priorities, reviewing them daily, learning how to say no, and monitoring your progress to make sure that you don't slip into old habits or routines, you will begin to attain the balance in life that you desire. You will also begin to see that you're more relaxed and mentally alert, that you have more energy and feel better, and that you have more time for yourself and those you love. All of this will result in a more balanced and, thus, happier life.

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If you want to make positive changes in your professional life, and create the job or career you desire and deserve, then working with Executive & Life Coach, Sharon L. Mikrut, is the solution. Although her specialty is in partnering with nonprofit executive directors and managers to maximize their resources in a competitive environment, she is passionate about working with all individuals committed to personal and/or professional growth. Visit her website at <http://www.createitcoaching.org> or Nonprofit Professionals blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.com>, and sign up for her free monthly newsletter that provides information and resources designed to help you manage your nonprofit organization in a more effective and efficient manner. You can also visit her Empowerment blog at <http://www.createitcoaching.net>, and sign up for her free monthly life coaching newsletter.