

Balance Your Life



Living a balanced life cuts down on stress and helps you enjoy life. A good balancing act helps prevent burnout at work and at home, and frees up energy to face life's demands. MVP Health Care wants to help you plan for a more balanced life—by prioritizing what's most important to you, and putting some simple time-management ideas into play. Our strategies are designed to help you work on striking the best possible life balance.

1. Decide what's Important

The first step in achieving balance is to look at the roles you play. Below are seven roles people often have in life. Think about which roles are most important to you:

- Worker: working for income, personal satisfaction, for a challenge or to learn things
- Family Member: spending time with a spouse or partner, children, parents, pets
- Friend: visiting friends, entertaining at home, joining a social club, chatting via e-mail or phone
- Community Member: Doing volunteer work, taking part in a professional organization, being active in a political group
- Growing Person: Becoming more fit, getting more education, meditating, reading
- Home Manager: Cooking or baking, yard work/gardening, decorating, handling family finances
- Fun/Recreational Person: Actively enjoying a sport, engaging in a hobby, doing art or crafts, reading for pleasure, going to parks or museums

2. Identify High Priorities

Of the items that are most important to you, choose three to five to which you'd like to give more time, in order to have a more balanced life.

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3. Find the Time

Here are some ideas for finding the time for these life-balancing activities:

- Look for unused time. If you commute to work, for example, enjoy a tape of language lessons, a book-on-tape, or music. If you're not doing the driving, write a letter or read a book.
- Try scheduling your desired activities. It may seem strange to pencil in your spouse, friends, children, or "go to a movie" on your to-do list - but it's exactly what busy, but balanced, people do.
- Consider watching less TV. TV can be a major time-user. Or, do something like ironing or mending while you watch.
- Bundle errands. Save errands in the same part of town for one day of the week, or for times when you know you'll be passing through that area. It helps to choose services, such as dry cleaners or grocery stores, as close to home or work as possible.
- Take part of your lunchtime for a walk, errands, or a relaxation technique.
- Make use of time you spend talking on the phone. Wash the dishes, or pack a lunch for tomorrow.

You have only so much time and energy. Know your limits. Don't exhaust yourself trying to live a balanced life! Start with one idea and try it this week. Which will it be?