

Six Secrets For An Incredibly Balanced Life

1. Build a super-efficient support network. Delegate what you can and get help where needed. You can't do everything by yourself, so why even try? The overextended trap is deadly.
2. Define your relationships pronto. Which ones are your backburner? Start easing out of relationships or obligations which are not mutually supportive and add more stress to your life.
3. Jump into life big time. That doesn't mean rushing around from one thing to the next. Take a yoga class. Learn to spin. Take up Tae-Bo. Find an activity you love to maintain a healthy sense of balance. The perks will pay off.
4. Learn how to go with the flow. Stuff happens so be resilient and roll with the changes. There's no use being hard on yourself and over thinking what you "should have done." Realize it and move on.
5. Make time for yourself a priority. Create some alone time to help you develop a stronger, deeper more precious relationship with yourself. Mediate, read, listen to music, take a long bath. Just remember to leave the guild behind and bliss out.
6. Work is work. Play is Play. Both are necessary, but keep them separate. Don't take work with you on vacation. Or worse, don't forget time off because you're too busy. Remember the old "I wish I had spent more time at the office" epitaph. Enough said.

HOW DO I CONTACT THE CWFL?

If you are a USC staff or faculty member and are interested in scheduling an appointment with a counselor or receiving information regarding resources and referrals, phone the SFCCC at (213) 821-0800. If you are an immediate family member of a USC employee, you may also phone the Center directly to request services. SFCCC services are available at all USC sites by special appointment.

The Center for Work and Family Life is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

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BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY

Often, the pressures of family life and work responsibilities conflict, creating anxiety and/or stress for the working adult. Finding a way to gain some control, can help us reduce stress caused by such conflicts. You can take more control of this situation by becoming more attuned to the duties and responsibilities associated with your work and family life. Would you say you are “Balancing” all these responsibilities, or merely “Juggling” them? Often people are not able to recognize a difference, but yes, there is a difference!

- Balancing** Allows us to control the different aspects of our lives.
- Juggling** Involves constant energy; a level of anxiety as we try to keep “all the balls in the air.”

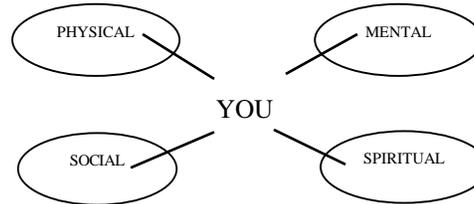
We would all like to have enough time in the day for our family and for our work responsibilities. Finding a way to Balance our responsibilities, rather than Juggle, would be the best solution.

When we are balanced, there is more satisfaction and pleasure in work and in the process of accomplishing things in the outside world. The process of developing balance is never complete. There is always a gradual improvement and a growing comfort in the degree of balance a person may have in their life. The feeling of being balanced is not constant; your life will always produce new challenges and responsibilities. The effort you use to find balance can be a stimulating process. This process involves discovering what really matters to you, or what things you Value.

In order to start this process there are certain Goals and Objectives in this process:

- Clarify what you really want out of your life.
- Discover what motivates you to make the choices you make.
- Set and achieve goals that enrich the harmony in your life and improve your relationships.

LIFE SYSTEMS MODEL



People are internally driven to meet their needs in all these areas. We innately recognize when this system is out of balance. If you want to change something about your life, you must notice the effects this change has on your total life system. You must keep in mind the “whole picture” (or system). Try to understand how your system is structured.

- **Social**—Who affects you? (i.e. mother, husband, kids, pastor etc.) Whom do you affect? (i.e. friends, co-workers etc.)
- **Physical**—Exercise, nutrition, grooming etc.
- **Mental**—Work, learning, self-development, planning etc.
- **Spiritual**—Goals, aspirations, meditation, religious practices, spiritual reading etc.

Next we must consider three different areas that affect the way we balance or juggle the items within our life system.

- **Values and Goals** - These are strong beliefs and attitudes about people and things; internal motivators; the most important things in your life. You must ask yourself, what can you do without?
- **Roles and Relationships** - These usually arise from a life event or from forming a new relationship. For example, you are a parent because you have a child/ren; you are an employee because you have a job.

You can have personal roles or professional roles.

- **Duties and Responsibilities** - The way we function in or various roles or the responsibilities we have that are associated with those roles.

* Make sure not to confuse the duties and responsibilities that are expected of you with those YOU may expect of yourself (e.g. you can leave work at 5:00 p.m., but you don't like to leave until your desk is clean and the work is done.)

Daily Priority List

Now, you will have to design a priority list with a list of duties and responsibilities. This list should reflect duties and responsibilities that are associated with your list of values and goals, including those items that are not as highly valued (in comparison). Those items at the top will probably be associated with items that you cannot do without (e.g. going to work, paying bills, picking up kids from school etc.). If confused between whether a duty or responsibility item is one you can or cannot do without, ask yourself, “who is imposing these responsibilities or to do items?”

To Do List

We can now make a “To Do List” that will assist you in working towards finding balance in your life. The list you make should reflect those items of top priority as well as those items that are associated with your personal values and goals. You may need to sacrifice some items that you may value or have placed as a goal, but this is part of balancing.

With this plan, you should begin to see a clearer picture regarding your daily responsibilities. As long as you base your daily work and family responsibilities on those items that are of high expectations and high values, you should begin to feel more in control.