

# Finding a Balance: Ten Tips to Help You Begin

## 1. De-Stress

How do you react to the day-to-day pressures in your life? Though we sometimes wish that we could eliminate these things, it is difficult to do so completely. When properly managed, stress can actually enrich and motivate us; however, if it is not properly dealt with, it can be very detrimental. What brings stress to your life? Begin to take notice of the times that you feel overwhelmed. Can you eliminate these stress-producers from your life? If they can't be eliminated, in what ways could you possibly change your reaction to them?

## 2. Simplify

You don't need to be busy all the time. Relax and stay home with your family. Avoid making commitments unless something is important to you. Get in the habit of saying no to things you don't want to, or don't have time to do (and don't feel guilty about it.) Consider hiring household help if that's an option for you. Don't be a slave to the phone and let the answering machine do it for you. Remember your priorities.

## 3. Play

When we leave less time for leisure in our day-to-day lives, we may see that our relationships begin to suffer. Take time out to play. Read with your child, cuddle up with your baby, build with blocks, play an outdoor game, watch a favorite movie, or share a cup of tea and some good conversation with your friend or loved one. Focus on the moment and show your family with one-on-one time how important they are to you.

## 4. Share the Load

Partners and children – even toddlers – can help out with household chores. Sit down, decide as a family where the cleaning priorities lie, and assign jobs. Do you or anyone else in your family really care if your blinds haven't been dusted in a month? Giving your children age-appropriate duties helps them to develop self-reliance a feeling of importance. Sharing the load will result in more time for everyone, and keeping order adds to a calm, peaceful environment within your home.

## 5. Slow Down

What do you do when you are pulled in multiple directions and you feel that there just isn't enough of you to go around? Ask yourself, "What is most enjoyable and

rewarding for me and my family?" Don't continue to spend your precious time on activities that are meaningless to you. Instead, focus on what is important in your life. Avoid disappointment by creating realistic expectations for yourself and others.

## 6. Nurture Yourself

Taking proper care of your body makes it much easier to deal with the stresses of everyday life. Remember to eat nutritious and well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get the rest your body needs to function effectively each day.

## 7. Stop Procrastinating

When something needs to be done, just do it. Avoiding a project takes more energy than doing it. Even if you are feeling hesitant to begin, getting started should help you to forget your initial concerns. Try starting with the simplest part of the project to help you ease into the more challenging parts.

## 8. Focus on the Positive

Take a look around you. What are the things in your life that you are grateful for? Taking the time each day to think about at least five things that you are thankful for will serve as a powerful reminder of just how much is going right with your life!

## 9. Take Charge

Keep a journal where you can track the time you have spent on your daily rounds. Decide what parts of these routines are important and which can go. Plan ahead. Follow your body's rhythms by watching for your energy peaks and slumps. Try to work with and maximize your body's natural cycles. Before you go to bed each night, take a few minutes to think about the day and to review the day ahead. This is also a great time to glance at your list of goals; helping you to stay efficient and focused. Get started!

## 10. Now Start Enjoying Life

Finding a balance is an ongoing process. Your life is a work in progress, and it will inevitably change each and every day. Allow yourself the time to regularly reassess the direction in which you are heading. Are you on track, or have you temporarily derailed and lost sight of your goals? Be patient but steadfast. Work toward your goals. Follow your dreams

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