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Diane R. Randall, whole living consultant and educator, travels the world leading workshops, guiding audiences, and conducting 1-1 sessions with a goal: to help more professionals with demanding schedules live healthier, while simultaneously creating lifestyles they truly love. You can visit her website at DianeRandallConsults.com.

The American Holistic Health Association has compiled a collection of self-help articles to support your efforts to enhance your own health and well-being.

This article is part of the Article Category **HOLISTIC PERSPECTIVE FOR DEALING WITH AN ILLNESS** The Sub-Category **Holistic Approach**

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Practical Steps for Creating a Balanced Life

Five Simple Steps You Can Use to Reclaim Control

by **Diane R. Randall, MA, HHC**

I don't have any balance in my life; and I'm too busy to find it anyway. This is the No. 1 complaint I hear from people who have concerns about their quality of life.

When considering a vital question like *What is a balanced life?* the first thing to establish is your position in your life. A well-balanced life means that you are in command of all the aspects of your life—your career, your relationships, your health, and your finances. Your entire personal world. Is this the position you presently occupy in your life?

Many of us feel that everyone around us controls our lives. Trapped by the demands of others and running non-stop, people live as if they are stuck on a treadmill locked on “marathon.” The pressure of all this “doing” leads to a lack of life balance that adversely affects you at work and at home.

You can create more balance in your life by working through five simple steps that will break the cycle of lack of control and free you to live a balanced, satisfying life. These practical steps allow you to clearly identify your priorities, set boundaries and delegate, let go of unnecessary activities, and pursue good health. You can also use a “technology intervention” to free yourself from your electronic devices and learn to spend your time and energy wisely on what really matters.

WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES?

First things first: you must decide what is important to you and clearly set your priorities. Figure out what really matters in your life. Honestly assess what you want your priorities to be, not what you, or everyone else, think they should be. Is your job interfering with your personal time? If so, you may want to reassess your priorities at work. The key to a well-balanced life is to understand that true balance comes from both home and work.

REGAINING CONTROL. DO YOU DO EVERYTHING?

Remove yourself from the do-all position. Set boundaries for what you will do and delegate what you will not do. Ask for help and accept it, especially when you are tackling a large task. By clearly communicating how you will allow others to interact with you, you reestablish control in your life. Setting boundaries and delegating often lead to greater satisfaction, productivity, and creativity in your work and personal life.

CLINGING TO UNNECESSARY ACTIVITIES?

Once you have a list of what really matters, cut out any activities or tasks that do not support your priorities. Then adjust your schedule to include only the activities that help you achieve your priorities.

TOO TIRED TOO OFTEN?

Constant exposure to stress can lead to exhaustion and burnout. To minimize the effects of stress on your health, adopt the following plan. Get thirty minutes of sustained daily exercise, eat healthy foods high in antioxidants, drink plenty of water, and make sure that you get seven to nine hours of sleep each night. Focused relaxation, such as meditation or daydreaming, is another great stress reliever and energy booster. Find time for relaxation every day. If you suffer from poor health, this is a clear sign that your life is out of balance.

CHAINED TO YOUR CELL PHONE OR TABLET?

Do a technology intervention! Laptops, cell phones, tablets, and other electronic gadgets have created an “on-call” mentality that can gobble up all your personal time. These hyperaccessible devices keep people tied to work 24/7. If your high-tech tools have turned into a leash that keeps you bound to work, consider these tips to detoxify your life:

- Email through one electronic device only.
- Don’t make or accept phone calls while driving your car.
- Leave your work-based laptop at work.
- Never take work of any sort—on a tablet, laptop, cell phone or paperwork—to bed with you.
- Make your time off work as much of a priority as work time.
- Create a “work-is-over” ritual that ends your working time and allows you to transition to personal time. This can be as simple as shutting down your work laptop or changing into comfortable clothes as soon as you get home.

Give yourself the opportunity to achieve life balance. Take the first step and discover a simple, practical pathway to a more balanced, happier life.