

Go from feeling taxed to relaxed



The demands of career and personal life are challenging every day. Even more challenging is finding ways to reduce stress and maintain balance in these key areas. Whether you focus on work too little or too much—either way, your mental and physical health can suffer.

Consider these reasons why the boundaries between work and personal life have blurred:

Pressure packed

Most companies are looking to do more with less. As a result, today's workforce is feeling the squeeze of working longer hours to ensure job security in a competitive marketplace.

Internationally speaking

Employees who work for an international organization may be required to be on call 24 hours a day for consulting or troubleshooting.

The technology leash

Technology has opened the ability for employees to work from home, their cars and even on vacation. Some feel pressured to stay connected to work through technology, wherever they are.

Family affair

Today's married workers are often part of dual-career couples. When both spouses work outside the home, it can be difficult to meet commitments to family, friends and community.

Help balance your work and family time with ideas on the following page.



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Draw the line between work and personal life



Track your time

Track work-related and non-work-related activities for a week. Decide what is necessary and enjoyable, and ask for help with any activities that someone else could do to free up your time.

Determine if you have options

Talk to your employer about a flexible work schedule. Check to see if your company offers a compressed workweek in which you could put in the same number of hours in four days as you now do in five, for instance. You may also be able to telecommute or job share with another coworker.

Time difference

Practice time management and take a new approach when organizing household chores. Wash one or two loads of laundry every day rather than saving it all for your day off. Or run errands in batches rather than going back and forth several times. Keep a weekly family calendar of important dates and a daily list of to-dos to help avoid deadline panic.

Dust—only if you must

Accept that your house may not be sparkling clean like the ones you see in TV commercials. Ask everyone in your home to help with household chores. Do what you can and then relax.

Make your day

Work a little harder to complete your routine chores during the workweek so you can enjoy your days off and have some fun. Encourage everyone else at home to do the same.

Help wanted

Create a support system so you have a friend, coworker or family member to talk with when you are stressed or feeling down. Also, look for help and support from community and religious organizations.