

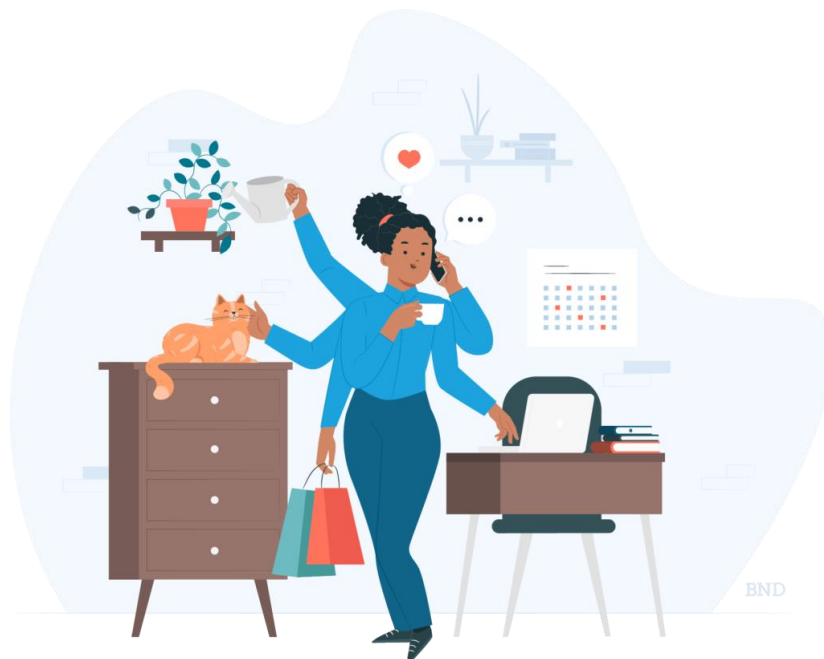
# HOW TO HAVE A GOOD WORK-LIFE BALANCE



# ABSTRACT

These days, work-life balance can seem like an impossible feat. Technology makes workers accessible around the clock. Fears of job loss incentivize longer hours. In fact, a whopping 94% of working professionals reported working more than 50 hours per week and nearly half said they worked more than 65 hours per week in a Harvard Business School survey. Experts agree: the compounding stress from the never-ending workday is damaging. It can hurt relationships, health and overall happiness. Work-life balance means something different to every individual, but here health and career experts share tips to help you find the balance that's right for you.

## WHAT IS WORK-LIFE BALANCE?



Work-life balance refers to the level of prioritisation between personal and professional activities in an individual's life and the level to which activities related to their job are present in the home.

The ideal work-life balance is open to discussion. Freethinker Paul Krassner said that anthropologists often define happiness as having little or no differentiation between an individual's professional and personal lives.

Work-life balance is a topical issue due to the increased amount of technology that removes the importance of physical location in defining the work-life balance.

Previously it was difficult or impossible to take work home and so there was a clear line between professional and personal.

The increase in mobile technology, cloud-based software and the proliferation of the internet has made it much easier for employees to be 'permanently' at work, blurring the distinction between professional and personal. Some commentators argue that smartphones and 'always-on' access to the workplace have replaced the authoritarian control of managers.

Stress is a common feature of a poor work-life balance. In the information economy mental stress has been identified as a significant economic and health problem, causing by a perceived need of employees to do more in less time.

A key issue in the work-life balance debate is where responsibility lies for ensuring employees have a good work-life balance. The general feeling is that employers have a responsibility to the health of their employees; apart from the moral responsibility, stressed-out employees are less productive and more likely to make errors.

## **EFFECTS OF POOR WORK LIFE BALANCE**



Due to the increasing pressure of modern life and despite the adverse effects it has on our health, we tend to get less sleep and work more. A new study shows that a poor work-life balance in midlife may have negative consequences decades later.

Several studies have shown that long working hours are bad for one's health, with adverse effects on cardiovascular and mental health.

Conversely, flexible working hours and schedules that employees have more control over have been shown to have positive effects Trusted Source on health and well-being.

Despite this, many of us still have a poor work-life balance, and we tend to sleep less. In 1910, a "normal" sleeping schedule was considered an average of 9 hours per night, while today, this has fallen to around 7 hours Trusted Source.

Damaging effects include a higher risk of stroke, coronary heart disease, and mental disorders, such as anxiety and depression.

Some studies have shown that individuals who work 55 hours or more per week have a 1.3 times Trusted Source higher risk of stroke than those working standard hours.

Sleep deprivation has also been linked to cardiovascular disease and an increased risk of death, causing myocardial infarction and stroke.

Long working hours have also been associated with a higher risk of anxiety and depression. A 5-year study found the risk of developing depression in healthy individuals is 1.66 times higher in employees working more than 55 hours a week. The risk of anxiety was 1.74 times higher.

Despite the known adverse effects of sleep deprivation and prolonged working schedules, no study has examined the combined effect of these two factors on health-related quality of life (HRQoL).

## **How work-life balance in midlife affects health in later life**

Researchers at The University of Jyväskylä in Finland wanted to determine the effects of midlife sleep deprivation and long working hours on physical functioning and overall HRQoL in later life.

The study looked specifically at the relationship between working hours and sleep duration.

Researchers monitored the HRQoL of 1,527 businessmen born between 1919–1934. They gathered data in 1974 and then again 26 years later.

The results of the study were published in *Age and Ageing*, the scientific journal of The British Geriatrics Society.

The study used the RAND-36 score to assess the HRQoL of white businessmen who worked more than 50 hours per week and slept less than 47 hours per week in midlife.

The RAND score is a simple, general survey tool comprising of 36 questions that medical care professionals and researchers use to evaluate care outcomes in adult patients. It relies on the respondents' self-reporting.

The study surveyed working hours, sleep duration, and self-reported health issues.

Considering normal work hours as 50 hours a week and normal sleep hours as 47 hours a week, researchers combined work and sleep patterns to come up with four categories: normal work and normal sleep, long work and normal sleep, normal work and short sleep, and long work and short sleep.

In older age, participants scored lower on the RAND scale for physical functioning, vitality, and general health, compared with those who had normal work and sleep patterns.

Businessmen with long work hours but normal sleep patterns still had lower scores for physical functioning in older age. Even taking into account midlife smoking, and other unrelated health issues, the negative effect on physical functioning remained significant.

# WHY IS WORK-LIFE BALANCE ESSENTIAL?



In today's fast paced business world, the ability to achieve work life balance is becoming more and more difficult. With the constantly changing nature of work, employers expect more from staff, and we are increasingly putting additional pressure on ourselves to achieve greater results. But when did it become acceptable for our 9am to 5pm working day to become 8am to 7pm?

Despite the importance of work life balance, many of us have allowed this to happen, whether it is through conforming to the workplace culture, or feeling obliged to put in more hours. But this should not be the case. Ever since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, more companies are reducing hours in the office and letting employees work from home. Working from home provides additional challenges in finding that work life balance.

## **The importance of work life balance**

Maintaining work life balance is not only important for your personal health and relationships, but it can also improve the efficiency of your work performance. If you need further convincing – familiarise yourself with the below three reasons.

### **1. You become less susceptible to burnouts**

Whilst occasional stress is normal for every job, burnouts are certainly not. According to The Help Guide, burnouts occur “when you feel overwhelmed and unable to meet

constant demands". The negative effects of a burnout can impact every area of your life, including your personal and social life.

Work life balance is important as it allows you to separate work and home, meaning that any stress that comes from work should stay at work, and not follow you home outside of office hours. Allowing work stress to infiltrate your home life is one of the primary indicators that you are not achieving a healthy work life balance. If you find that this is happening to you, we recommend you take the time to talk this over with your manager, or come up with a plan to avoid a burnout as a result of your professional demands.

## **2. Attention is paid where due**

When you achieve a healthy balance between your work and home life, you have greater control of where you are able to focus your attention. If you leave your work at the office, your full attention can be on your home life and giving your relationships the attention that they deserve. When spending time with your partner, children or friends, your mind should be solely focused on the experience you are having, rather than thinking of work concurrently.

Similarly, if you are in the office, greater focus should be paid on the tasks at hand. In turn, this makes you a more productive and effective worker, and demonstrates one of the many benefits of achieving a work life balance.

## **3. You experience fewer health problems**

It's no secret that when you are run down, tired or stressed; your immune system is the one to suffer. Healthline explains that "stress can cause a variety of symptoms and can affect your overall health and wellbeing". These can range from less serious conditions such as the flu, to more serious health issues such as respiratory or digestive problems. Either way, the fact that stress can impact your health so much is even more of a reason as to why maintaining a healthy work life balance is important.

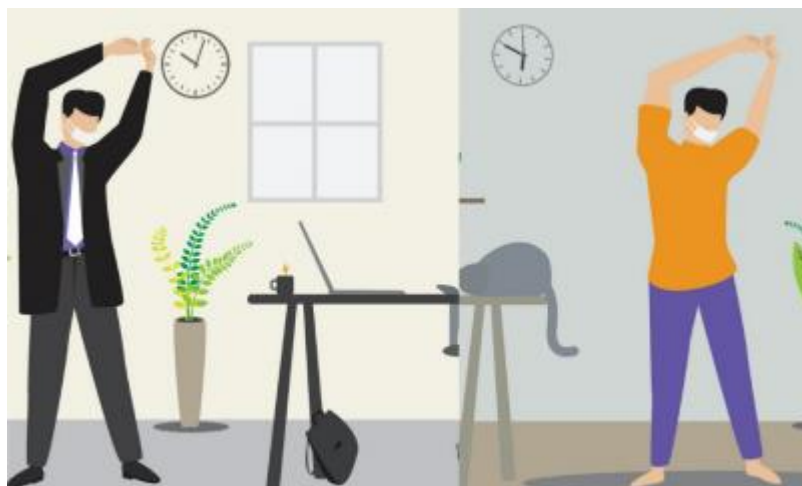
Taking the time to look after yourself by exercising, eating well and relaxing can contribute to limiting your health problems and make you a more efficient worker during business hours.

# **Don't underestimate the importance of a healthy work life balance**

Work life balance is certainly a topic of debate at the moment, but do you believe that it is possible to achieve a truly equal balance between the personal and professional

spheres of your life? I'd love to hear from people both for and against the importance of separating work and home, and delve into this topic further.

## **WORK-LIFE BALANCE WHILE WORKING REMOTELY**



Still, burnout is a real problem for hybrid and remote workers, as it is for in-office workers. Employers need to offer mental health benefits with online options to help employees address these challenges, regardless of where they're working.

Moreover, while they're better overall for wellbeing, remote and hybrid work does have specific disadvantages around work-life separation.

To address work-life issues, I advise my clients who I helped make the transition to hybrid and remote work to establish norms and policies focused on clear expectations and setting boundaries.

Some people expect their Slack or Microsoft Teams messages to be answered within an hour, while others check Slack once a day. Some believe email requires a response within three hours, and others feel three days is fine.

As a result of such uncertainty and lack of clarity about what's appropriate, too many people feel uncomfortable disconnecting and not replying to messages or doing work tasks after hours. That might stem from a fear of not meeting their boss's expectations or not wanting to let their colleagues down.



To solve this problem, companies need to establish and incentivize clear expectations and boundaries. They should develop policies and norms around response times for different channels of communication.

They also need to clarify work-life boundaries – for example, the frequency and types of unusual circumstances that will require employees to work outside of regular hours.

Moreover, for working at home and collaborating with others, there's sometimes an unhealthy expectation that once you start your workday in your home office chair, and that you'll work continuously while sitting there (except for your lunch break).

That's not how things work in the office, which has physical and mental breaks built in throughout the day. You took 5-10 minutes to walk from one meeting to another, or you went to get your copies from the printer and chatted with a coworker on the way.

Those and similar physical and mental breaks, research shows, decrease burnout, improve productivity, and reduce mistakes. That's why companies should strongly encourage employees to take at least a 10-minute break every hour during remote work.

At least half of those breaks should involve physical activity, such as stretching or walking around, to counteract the dangerous effects of prolonged sitting.

Other breaks should be restorative mental activities, such as meditation, brief naps, walking outdoors, or whatever else feels restorative to you.

To facilitate such breaks, my client organizations such as the University of Southern California's Information Sciences Institute shortened hour-long meetings to 50 minutes and half-hour meetings to 25 minutes. That gives everyone – both in-person and remote workers – a mental and physical break and transition time.

Very few people will be reluctant to have shorter meetings. After that works out, move to other aspects of setting boundaries and expectations.

Doing so will require helping team members get on the same page and reduce conflicts and tensions. By setting clear expectations, you'll address the biggest challenge for wellbeing for remote and hybrid work: work-life boundaries.

# HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOME ORGANIZED WHILE WORKING FULL TIME



Cleaning and organization go hand in hand. The more you keep things organized in your home, the less messes you have to clean.

## Home Management System

The very first thing you need to consider when trying to answer the question: "How do I keep my house clean and organized?" is creating a home management system.

The easiest way to do that is to put all systems and routines into a Home Management Binder. This will be where you have all the ways you manage your house nicely documented.

This is where you can keep track of what cleaning tasks were completed, where you keep important information about the house (like contact information for different specialists and warranties on different repairs), and schedules for kids activities for the school year.

Having all those things in one spot will make running your household and keeping things organized much easier.

## **Home for Every Item**

One of the best way to keeping the surfaces in your houses clutter free is to make sure that every item you own has its home. It means that you have to decide where each thing will be put away. Otherwise items end up cluttering our drawers, cabinets, and surfaces because we don't know what to do with them.

However, if every item has a home, it makes it much easier to keep things clean and organized.

## **Have a Catch-All Basket**

Now, this sounds contradicting to the previous tip. However, the idea behind the basket is to temporarily store things that you don't have time to take care of right away. Think bills to pay, items that need a home, things you have to return.

See what types of things tend to accumulate on your counters or office desk the most throughout the day. Those are typically things that as much as you would like you don't have time to put away right away.

So instead of them piling up on your surfaces, get them into a bin or a basket – or at least one common spot in the house – and put them away each evening.

## **Family Command Center**

If you want everyone in your house to stay organized and be aware of what is happening each day, you need to set up a family command center in your house.

That can be as simple as having a monthly calendar on the wall where you write down all the important appointments and kids activities.

The idea is to make it simple for all family members to clearly see what is happening each day so they can prepare ahead of time.

# **HOW TO MANAGE YOUR HOME CHORES WHILE WORKING FULL TIME**

Finding it stressful trying to balance your family and work? Read five ways you can make it MUCH easier.

When you're trying to balance work and a family, it can often feel there's just not enough time in the day. And juggling the two can seem like an un-ending and un-winnable struggle.

But it doesn't have to be hard. With some simple changes to your daily routine and your mindset you'll find it easier to keep everyone happy – including yourself (and hold onto your sanity).



### **Five ways you can make balancing your family and work MUCH easier**

To help you achieve this, here are five things that have worked for us. Please feel free to try one or all of them, and see what works for you too.

#### **1) Get up one hour earlier**

Let's start with the most painful! As a mother, sleep is one commodity you just don't have enough of. But trust us, if you can manage it, getting up one hour earlier a day will really repay your sacrifice.

Having that quiet hour before the rest of the house stirs (and chaos ensues) can help you to set your mind for the day. It's also valuable quiet time, and gives you a sense of routine (or at least having some control over it).

Use this time wisely. You could spend it preparing for your day ahead to give you a head start – make school lunches, prep for dinner, do the ironing (you know, all the fun things...). Or you could get an hour's uninterrupted work in.

Or, here's a really crazy idea – spend it on you. Love yoga? Do that. Behind on your favourite TV show? Watch that. Or simply spend it quietly sipping tea while listening to the radio and getting your head around the day.

Think of it as your sanity hour. You can use it catch up, get ahead, or just be 'you' before the rest of the world wakes up and expects you to cater to their needs.

## **2) Set specific times for housework**

A few years ago, we were struggling with balancing housework and our business. It felt like we were always behind on one or both, and the mental weight of the never-ending work backing up was exhausting.

But one simple thing changed this: we devised a housework timetable.

It was very simple. We divided up the key household chores between five half hour slots, Monday to Friday, making sure we grouped similar tasks together. Each half hour was to be done straight after the school run, before we sat down to work.

And the difference it made was amazing.

Having a half hour slot was mentally do-able. And we were able to power through the tasks quickly each day – often achieving more than we'd set ourselves. We could then mentally clear our head of housework and focus just on our business.

We also got the rest of the family involved too, allocating appropriate tasks to each member so they pulled their weight.

So if you're struggling under the weight of housework, consider doing something similar. Set a time and routine for your chores, and forget about it for the rest of the day.

Tired of housework battles with your partner? Find out how you can resolve them

## **3) Create boundaries for your work – and stick to them**

This advice comes up a LOT when we talk about working from home. Trust us, trying to please everyone, and do too many things at once just leads to stress and extra work.

Instead, define clear boundaries for your work – when and where you do it – and switch on and off accordingly. (If you work for someone else, you may need to sit down with them to negotiate when you do and don't check in with work.)

This means turning OFF your phone (or at least work-based notifications – including social media) when you're not working. It means NOT checking your email just before bed. And it means turning down 'quick coffees' with friends when you've set aside time to work.

The more you respect your own boundaries, the more they'll work for you. And they're worth protecting. When you're clear about when you work, you'll find it easier to switch off from everything else and work productively. And just as easy to leave work behind and really focus on the rest of your life when it's not.

It also helps having a defined workplace you can close up or walk away from at the end of the working day. Having your unfinished to-do list taunting you as you try and relax on the sofa in the evening won't help you get the mental space you need to come back refreshed the next day.

## **4) Plan meals and pre-cook**

If you're a mother and you have a stack of work to get through, you can't simply grab a sandwich or takeaway and carry on. Unless your partner is on hand to help out, you need to stop and feed your family.

But that doesn't mean you have to be chained to a stove every night. Or panic scavenging the fridge for something you can throw together into a heathy(ish) meal your kids will actually eat.

With a bit of advanced planning and prep, you'll easily be able to whip up an edible meal every night – and buy some extra time to work or spend with your kids.

If you really want to win, get your kids involved in coming up with meal ideas every week, then plan out a meal schedule and shop for everything you need. Some meals you may make fresh every night, but others (like lasagne, cottage pie, and stews) can be pre-made and frozen, ready to take out when you need them.

This may seem like a lot of work, but it really can make a difference. Once you get into the habit of planning for your week ahead it takes so much stress and work out of meal times. Plus it makes shopping easier and cuts down on wastage.

## **5) Know your limits (and respect them)**

You're not a robot, you're a human being. And this means that sometimes you just don't have the will or energy to do something, or simply need to take time for yourself. So recognise when you need to slow down or stop, and do so.

Forcing yourself to work harder or longer will just exhaust you and make you resentful. You won't enjoy your work or home life, and will manage neither particularly well (it's difficult to be creative if you're stressed and exhausted). Carry on in this way and you could start storing up a host of physical and mental wellbeing issues.

Be kind to yourself too. You can't be perfect all the time (or even most of it!). Accept that you're doing your best, and make peace with the times that doesn't translate into perfection.

Burned dinners and unwashed school uniform aren't disasters – and nor will they mentally scar your children. They're just something you'll deal with in the moment and get over. Life really is too short to sweat things like this; instead save your energies for bigger challenges and learn to laugh at the every day setbacks.

## **HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOUSE CLEAN WHEN YOU WORK FULL-TIME**

Maintaining a clean and shiny abode can be tough when you work full-time. There is no denying that living in a metropolitan city like Perth is a real challenge. Of course the city offers unlimited career opportunities, but maintaining a work-life balance is tough. People, on average, spend 40 hours a week at their workplace. This means they don't get enough time to tackle stains, accumulated dust, dirt and grime from different surfaces.

It can be a worrying situation if you are at the end of your lease. According to the rental tenancy agreement, a tenant has to return the property in a clean and well-maintained state the way it was at the start of a tenancy.

So, you must take time out of your busy schedule or hire professionals for a stress-free vacate cleaning Perth. To claim your full bond after the rental inspection, do proper research and look for a company that can offer you detailed cleaning.

If you are busy and want to keep your house clean all day long, keep the following tips in mind and achieve sparkling results.

Let's Get Started!

## **1. Create A Regular Cleaning Schedule**

It is good to keep a house clean to keep germs, bacteria, viruses, and harmful diseases at bay. If you work full-time and need more time for regular cleaning, prepare a complete schedule. This will help you deep clean a house the fastest way if you follow a proper schedule.

Instead of creating chaos, you should focus on creating a weekly, monthly and daily cleaning routine that can help you keep dust, dirt, stains, mould and mildew away. This way, you will stay relaxed throughout the week and delegate tasks accordingly.

## **2. Keep Your House De-Cluttered**

Remember that maintaining a sparkling clean house is impossible if you have a mess. The more items you have, the more time you spend cleaning chores. So, it is always good to keep your house clean and de-cluttered. Get rid of unwanted things from your living room, bedrooms, kitchen, storage area and closets.

Approaching a minimalist lifestyle can help you save time, energy and money. You can spruce up your home more quickly and spend quality time with your family.

## **3. Decide Your Weekly Cleaning Tasks**

As mentioned above, creating a cleaning routine can make your work much easier, even when you are busy on weekdays. Prepare a weekly cleaning schedule to keep the germs and stubborn stains at bay.

You can clean a little each day according to your schedule and maintain a shiny abode. Follow this list or make changes as per your needs:

- Monday: Dusting Top-surfaces
- Tuesday: Vacuuming carpets
- Wednesday: Cleaning dirty white walls and kitchen surfaces
- Thursday: Bathroom walls and tiles cleaning
- Friday: Bedrooms
- Saturday: De-cluttering and cleaning a storage room
- Sunday: Scrubbing Toilets, tiles, floors and appliances.



## **4. Delegate Cleaning Chores**

This is one of the best ways to alleviate the cleaning burden from your shoulders. It is always good to encourage your kids to self-cleaning from an early age. This develops a sense of responsibility and makes them more stable in the future.

You can teach them simple tasks, such as dusting surfaces, doing dishes, folding clothes, keeping shoes in the mudroom, etc. Teenagers can do much more, including sweeping and mopping floors, removing stains, and cleaning bathroom surfaces. Etc. So, motivate your little ones and enjoy cleaning hours together

If you are preparing your rented apartment for an inspection, call the best vacate cleaners in Perth and retrieve your full bond money without any dispute.

## **5. Develop Simple Cleaning Habits**

Consistency is the key when it comes to keeping a house clean and shiny. Whether you are a working professional or an entrepreneur, make sure you have certain habits to keep your abode organised and germ-free. It is good to develop the following cleaning habits:

- Making bed every day in the morning
- Doing dishes after every meal
- Wiping Down your countertops and a stovetop after prepping your food
- Disinfecting contaminated surfaces
- Do not leave spills and splatters untreated
- Dusting hard surfaces
- Keeping shoes and slippers out of a house
- Create a laundry routine
- Clear out your trash can regularly
- Prepare a cleaning caddy

## **6. Clean Kitchen Appliances Once A Month**

Accumulated grime, grease, burnt food particles, stains and splatters can make your oven, microwave, and fridge look dirty and dull. It is good to clean your appliances once a month if you are too busy. Use white vinegar, warm and soapy water and lemon to create a spray. You can also use baking soda to remove stains, bad odours and germs.

## **7. Hire Professionals Cleaners**

If you are working full-time, hiring professional house cleaners in Perth is the best solution for you. Many companies offer cleaning services weekly, fortnightly and monthly to keep your abode sparkling clean. You can also choose the right one and maintain a healthy and hygienic abode. They use household chemicals safely and prefer using eco-friendly products for sparkling outcomes.

# **TIPS FOR BETTER WORK-LIFE BALANCE**

## **1. Know your values**

Spend time thinking about what is important to you in life. How much time do you actually spend on your priorities? Consider your passions and interests and make time for the things that make you feel alive.

## **2. Practise time management**

Calendars, apps and to-do lists are all useful strategies for keeping track of how you spend your time. Review your typical week and cut down on time 'wastage'. Shop online, reduce your commute if possible, avoid social media or cancel non-essential meetings.

## **3. Set boundaries**

Set limits on your work time and set aside time for other activities. Switch off the phone, limit your access to work emails or go internet-free for a few hours. Learn how to say 'no'.

## **4. Enjoy your work**

'Do what you love and love what you do' has become a popular catchphrase. While all work can be tedious or stressful at times, if you really hate your job or it's making life impossible, consider changing jobs or even careers.

## **5. Consider your finances**

Do you really need a new car? Could you be happy living in a less expensive home or location? Research shows that once our basic needs are met, a higher income does not necessarily lead to happiness. Spending less money could mean fewer work hours and more time for a rewarding life.

## 6. Nurture relationships

Positive relationships and social support help build resilience and help you cope with stress. But these take time to nurture and develop. Prioritise time with your family, friends, neighbours or loved ones.

## 7. Focus on your health

Regular exercise is proven to reduce stress, anxiety and depression. Get enough sleep at regular times, eat healthy food, drink alcohol in moderation and avoid illegal drugs.

## 8. Have down time

Rest periods are just as important to success since they 'recharge your batteries'. Schedule regular time off for yourself each week to read a book, play sport, spend time in nature or just do nothing. Choose any activity you enjoy.

# CONCLUSION

Creating work-life balance and integration is an ongoing and fluid process. You'll constantly be learning and adapting as your interests and circumstances change over time. It'll require honing key skills, like time management skills. Let it be fun! And don't forget to periodically revisit your priorities to see what's changed. You'll want to assess whether your priorities continue to line up with how you're spending your time and energy.

# REFERENCES

What is work-life balance? | Hr Zone | Retrieved Date - 5 Feb 2023

<https://www.hrzone.com/hr-glossary/what-is-work-life-balance>

Poor work-life balance leads to poor health later in life | Retrieved Date - 5 Feb 2023

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/313755>.

Why Work Life Balance Is So Important | Retrieved Date - 5 Feb 2023

<https://www.aib.edu.au/blog/balance-wellbeing/work-life-balance-is-important/>

Does Remote Work Hurt Wellbeing and Work-Life Balance? | Forbes.com | Retrieved Date - 6 Feb 2023

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/glebtsipursky/2022/11/01/does-remote-work-hurt-wellbeing-and-work-life-balance/?sh=4d1b51794b20>

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOUSE CLEAN AND ORGANIZED WHILE WORKING FULL TIME | Retrieved Date -6 Feb 2023

<https://imperfectlifebalance.com/keeping-your-house-clean-while-working-full-time>

Five ways you can make balancing your family and work MUCH easier | Retrieved Date - 6 Feb 2023

<https://www.talentedladiesclub.com/articles/five-ways-you-can-make-balancing-your-family-and-work-much-easier/>

HOW TO KEEP YOUR HOUSE CLEAN WHEN YOU WORK FULL-TIME | Retrieved Date - 6 Feb 2023

<https://www.bondcleaninginperth.com.au/how-to-keep-your-house-clean-when-you-work-full-time/>

Work-life balance | Health Direct | Retrieved Date - 6 Feb 2023

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/work-life-balance>