Work-Life Balance

Achieving a successful work-life balance amidst the current disruptions to our lives can be challenging. However, it is important for our mental well-being that we try to establish a healthy balance, where possible.

It should be noted that when we talk about ‘work-life balance’, it doesn’t necessarily mean that there is an equal balance between your working life and your personal life: 'balance' can mean different things for different people. A ‘healthy’ balance for you may look different now during this challenging time than it usually would, and that’s ok.

What it does mean in practice is that there are times set aside for when you work; and there are times set aside for when you rest – or mentally ‘switch off’.

Below are some tips to assist you in achieving an improved work-life balance. In addition, there are also some additional resources listed where you can find out more about this subject.

1. **Set your priorities.**

What is more important to you? Work time? Or personal time? Is it time with family? Is it health – and keeping fit? Pursuing a hobby? Identifying priorities requires you to know yourself well, which might be easier for certain individuals more than others. If needed, seek help from a loved one or a mentor. Remember: there is no ideal template for work-life balance; what works for one person will almost never work for another: so the task of recognising your priorities should be done by you, for you.

2. **Concentrate on one thing at a time.**

Forget multi-tasking. It can be difficult enough to focus on one task, let alone two things at the same time. Instead, try to devote your full attention to the task at hand.

When you are working, work. When you are exercising or resting, simply exercise. Or rest. And when you are spending time with your family, focus solely on them.

3. **Schedule one thing you look forward to each day.**

This doesn’t have to be work-related. The activity doesn’t have to be time-consuming, complicated, or expensive. Put aside some time in your schedule to read a book. Or to take a walk (while remembering social distancing). Or: just to be alone.
This change of pace and level of stillness can help your mind and body rest and be re-energised.

4. **Take a break; take a vacation.**

A lunch break doesn’t have to be for only consuming lunch; maybe some of that time can also be taken to do a quick exercise session. Also: consider taking smaller breaks during the day in order to recharge; this will allow you to stay productive during the day as opposed to slipping into a lull as the day progresses.

And when, after the lockdown has been lifted, we start to think about holidays, it may be that those far-flung exotic breaks that we had in the past, may not be readily accessible. So what can done then?

On the Andrew Marr Show on 3.5.2020, Michael Palin, the comedian, travel writer and documentarist, has talked about people considering taking holidays within the UK; and with four different countries within our borders, there may be many new places worth exploring.

(https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000hyq2/the-andrew-marr-show-03052020)

5. **Ask for support**

Tell your family, friends, colleagues, and anyone else involved in your life that you are seeking a better work-life balance. Tell them what your plan is; and ask them how they can help you achieve it – and respect it.

At this time, the O&PD Team are running a weekly programme aimed at supporting staff at this time. Information can be found at [CPD bookings](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000hyq2/the-andrew-marr-show-03052020) by searching for “wellbeing series”.

More tips and information are also be found at our [Remote Working webpages](https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000hyq2/the-andrew-marr-show-03052020).

**Additional Resources**

- [5 Reasons Why Maintaining A Work-Life Balance Is So Important](https://coburgbanks.co.uk)
- [Work-Life Balance](https://mentalhealth.org)
- [14 Steps To Achieving Work-Life Balance](https://salary.com)