I can teach you to manage your time more efficiently.

Put all of your high priorities on one list and your low priorities on another.

Then do everything on both lists even if it kills you, otherwise you're a freakin' loser.
Work-Life Balance: Stop the Obsession

Megan M. Palmer, PhD & Emily Walvoord, MD
August 2019
“Do as I say, not as I do.”
Think-Pair

• Have these issues been on your mind recently?

• Were you surprised by your answers to the survey?
A Look at the Facts
Physician Satisfaction

Career Satisfaction 69%*  
Work-Life Satisfaction 49%*

U.S. Physicians  
(includes academic medicine faculty)

*Reported mean average  
*2 studies (n=7288; n=6,590)

Correlates of Work-Life Balance for Faculty

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>1059</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latina/o</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>1023</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean differences in work-life balance by race/ethnicity (N = 2953)

Denson, et al, Res High Educ, 2018
CHORE WARS
Let it go. Make peace. Men and women, it turns out, work the same amount
50% of married male faculty have partners who work outside the home.
90% of married female faculty have partners who work outside the home.
BREAKING STEREOTYPES
“We bring clarity to the literature ... there is little evidence for substantial gender differences in WFC. Although the association between gender and WIF and FIW was statistically significant in the direction of women experiencing more conflict overall, the correlations were very small in magnitude and may be considered negligible for practical purposes.”

Shockley, et al., 2017
Figure 15: Percentage of fathers and mothers in dual-earner couples working at least 20 hours per week report work-life conflict (1977–2008)

- Men in dual-earner couples with child(ren) under 18
- Women in dual-earner couples with child(ren) under 18

Source:
- U.S. Department of Labor, Quality of Employment Survey, 1977
- Families and Work Institute, National Study of the Changing Workforce, 2008
This is serious business.
Lose Your Balance, and YOU COULD FALL HARD

SHORT-TERM

BAD WORK/LIFE BALANCE CONSEQUENCES AT HOME

- 38% Lack of focus/engagement
- 51% Missed important life events

BAD WORK/LIFE BALANCE CONSEQUENCES AT WORK

- 36% Poor productivity
- 68% Poor morale

- 40% Ruined time spent with family/friends (conference calls, called away from activities)
- 50% Less time with family and friends
- 41% High turnover
- 41% Feeling burnt-out/fatigued

LONG-TERM

Employees working over 55 hrs/week are at higher risk of coronary heart disease and stroke

Employees working over 55 hrs/week are at higher risk of depression and anxiety than those working 35-40 hrs/week

Employees expected to be available to work in their off-hours leads to higher stress and cortisol levels throughout the day

1.66x higher risk of depression
1.74x higher risk of anxiety

About this Balance Stuff
Work is NOT in opposition to life.
The concept of work-life balance is a recipe for guilt.
Balance, like multitasking, is NOT possible.
Work-life thinking is exclusive.
What Can We Do?
What Employers and Governments Can Do

Employees say employers should...

- 69% offer flexible schedules
- 55% allow remote working
- 27% offer unlimited paid time off
- 27% restrict email responses (e.g. can only respond 9-5)
- 24% establish meeting-free blocks of time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meaningful work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenges match skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We need new ways to think about being happy, healthy, and whole.
“Start where you are.”

— Pema Chodron
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>• Gratitude practice (Happyfeed App)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Acknowledge emotion and move on (just like your yoga teacher says)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>• Run with BFF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Orange Theory Fitness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual</td>
<td>• Meditate daily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gardening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>• Read NYT on Sundays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Educational travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>• Grow a vegetable garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Closet cleanout &amp; email unsubscribe blitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>• Date nights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sunday dinner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational</td>
<td>• Submit work to present at meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Variety in a job (or 3) that I love!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>• Periodic budget reviews with partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Auto move funds to two different savings accounts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.”

– Lao Tzu
“There is no such thing as work-life balance. Everything that is worth fighting for unbalances your life. “

- Alain De Botton