

Work/life balance for working parents



If you're a working parent, you're probably always on the go. Daily demands often require more than your batteries can supply, however, so how do you juggle work, family, and all the little surprises life springs on us, and still have time to recharge your batteries? The answer is good time management.

Here are a few tips on using your time more effectively and even freeing some up for yourself:

Analyse how you spend your time.

Write down a typical week's activities and objectives and be brutally honest. If you spend 25 hours a week watching television, write it down. This will help you identify important tasks and potential time-wasters.

Eliminate time-wasters.

Ask yourself, "Will anything bad happen if I don't do this?" If the answer is "No", then don't do it, manage it better or schedule another time to get it done. Be smart about work obligations too: let certain calls go to voice mail and only check emails at certain intervals during the day to save valuable time.

Have a routine.

A routine will help you to do things without much thought, and these routine activities will end up taking less time. Of course, things will still pop

up unexpectedly, but when you have a routine, you'll have more time and energy to deal with the unexpected.

Make a to-do list every evening.

Take some time each evening and jot down all the things that you need to do the following day. This will help you remember everything, and save some precious time in the morning.

Schedule time for yourself and your children.

Pay some undivided attention to your children every day by reading or playing. You'll find there will be less interruptions during other scheduled tasks when your children's needs are met. Also make time to relax and to do something you enjoy. It's very important that you enjoy the time you have off, and use it to recharge your batteries.

It might take some getting used to and a little practice, but time management will certainly reduce your stress and increase your quality of life.