

Balancing Act

Mary Lou Schmidt
Extension Agent, Fayette and Nicholas Counties

Purpose

...to help participants discover ways they can create balance, reduce stress, and achieve more personal satisfaction.

Most people would agree that there is too much to do and too little time. Even with all the labor-saving devices available to us, we are still not getting it all done. Many of us have the feeling that things are out of our control. This lack of control makes us feel “unbalanced.” Often we are our own worst enemy when it comes to taking care of ourselves and keeping our lives in order. Often it boils down to setting realistic goals and then working to meet those goals. We can fail to plan or plan to fail. Some people have learned to manage their time, energy, money, and talent to have rewarding lives . . . and some of us haven’t.

Time-wasters are things that keep us from getting things accomplished. Several are often cited. List ideas on back for eliminating these time-wasters.

Clutter

Another problem we face is clutter. “When in doubt throw it out” is a long-standing hint for dealing with the stuff in your life. Excessive clutter could mean that you are having trouble deciding what to do about things. You may have a poorly organized storage or filing system.

In *Clutter’s Last Stand*, Don Aslett reminds us not to “love something that doesn’t love you back.” When you look at the things you have saved in that light, it may be easier to give it up and throw it away.

Tips for Balance

- Work toward harmony. When what you think, feel, and do are in harmony, you will be in balance.
- Do something for YOU every day.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- Smile.
- Make “to-do” lists to help you see accomplishments.

Ways to Be a Human “Being” Not a Human “Doing”

Be well
kind
at peace
resilient
grateful
here now
courageous
enthusiastic
with nature
silly and playful
compassionate
with great music and art

Some of the MAJOR Time-Wasters	Solutions
Lack of Priorities deciding what is important is easy, deciding what is unimportant is HARD.	
Overcommitment learn to say “no”	
Management by crisis putting things off until they become a problem	
Haste if you don’t have time to do it right... will you have time to do it over?	
Urgency vs importance just because it is urgent doesn’t mean it is important	
Telephone	
Unwanted visitors	
Lack of delegation the job might not be done as well as you would have done it; does it really matter?	
Procrastination break it down into smaller, more manageable steps	

Further Reading

Aslett, Don, *Clutter Free!*, Marsh Creek Press, 1995.

Aslett, Don, *Clutter’s Last Stand*, Marsh Creek Press, Writer’s Digest Books, 1984.

Time Management for Unmanageable People, Ann McGee-Cooper with Duane Trammell, Bantam Books, New York, 1994.

Programs and activities offered by the West Virginia University Extension Service are available to all persons without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation or national origin. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Director, Cooperative Extension Service, West Virginia University.