Achieving Balance

Each of us has the same 24 hours in a day. In these 24 hours there are a variety of activities from which you can choose. Some of these activities are more worthy than others. How you choose to use this time is important to your mental, physical and spiritual well-being. Achieving balance in your life is a lifelong process that requires your daily attention.

Use of Time Categories

This balance can be achieved as you come to understand the ways in which time can be divided and how your body uses energy. To be the most effective student and time manager you can be you will need to understand how your daily activities equate to achieving a balanced day. According to Steven Covey, this includes the four dimensions of your nature -- physical, mental, social/emotional, and spiritual/renewal.

Physical: This includes regular exercise, eating the right kinds of foods, and getting sufficient rest and relaxation.

Mental: This is the time spent intently using your mind to accomplish something for the purpose of work, school, etc. For example, when you expand your mind and apply yourself to plan, organize, analyze, or engage in academic or “real life” issues. An easy way to distinguish a mental activity is anything that you would put on your resume.

Social/Emotional: Renewing your social and emotional life is defined by time spent with friends, family, or acquaintances via phone, internet, or face-to-face. In other words, this is the time when you focus on our roles as friend, girlfriend/boyfriend, son/daughter, brother/sister, etc. For students this can also include volunteer time, when you are following through on commitments to various organizations.

Spiritual/Renewal: In this category, time is spent engaged in religious practices, meditation, yoga, reading, listening to music, playing an instrument, etc. Even though it is completely different for each person it is important that you find time for your own renewal. “Renewing the spiritual dimension provides leadership to your life. The spiritual dimension is your core, your center, your commitment to your value system.” (Covey, 1997).

“Balance is the mother of all practices, and it is never-ending. You continually find your balance, you don’t achieve balance. Even if you were able to find your perfect balance and hold it, life itself will throw you off balance continually. There is no state of motionlessness for a tightrope walker. It is constant adjustment.”

~Adam Khan, Author