



Struggling to balance work and family

Today's parents are reeling from conflicting demands. Most men and women, single or married, are caught in a juggling act between fulfilling their duties at work and being the family members they want to be. Even when one parent remains in the home full-time, it can be a struggle to balance the demands of the household with the personal needs of those who live in the house – including yourself.

Following are some ideas shared by authors John and Cathy Bookser Feister that you may find helpful in your situation.

Keep Things In Perspective

Family, work, and personal needs fluctuate. At different times in our lives, certain aspects of our commitments will be more demanding. You may find times when the role of parent or family member is extremely demanding while other time the role seems quite manageable.

Believe in yourself and your abilities while remembering that things do in fact change. Opportunities to achieve in your career will present themselves throughout life, and one opportunity may turn out as well as another.

Strive for Efficiency and Teamwork

Being organized at work and home reduces stress. Know what your goals at work are for the week and write them down the Friday before you leave the office the week prior. Prioritize your activities and make sure that you are not only doing things right, but that you are doing the right things.

Turn Off the Bad Tapes

One of the biggest challenges adults face is sifting through the wisdom their parents role modeled and shared and choosing what ideals are right for their

family now. Parents need to rethink the message that they may have learned from childhood or the workplace: Achieve, achieve, achieve. There are seasons in life when family relationships rightly come before all else. We need to “turn off” the tapes that drive us to work compulsively against our own happiness and tune into the principles and values that are driving you and your family to success, to concentrate on the things that are important to you now.

Schedule Family Togetherness

Families need time together to develop family identity and healthy bonds. Family time doesn't need to be expensive. Realistically, the activities that cost the least can offer the greatest family experience such as: hiking, picnicking, riding bikes, video night at home, or game nights. Develop simple rituals to celebrate your family time together such as Thanksgiving, Christmas, birthdays, and other special events. Be intentional in what you do and do the same kinds of things every year. You may even want to use the same decorations or read from the same books.

Respect Your Body and Spirit

Identify those things which you need to replenish both your body and your spirit. It may be long walks, reading a challenging book or a light-hearted novel, indulging in a hobby, or spending time listening to music. Get regular exercise to help you feel good physically and increase your energy levels. By taking care of yourself, you will find you are able to keep a healthier perspective, as well as have more to give to your family and loved ones.

This material provides a general overview of the topic. Health information is not a substitute for diagnosis or treatment by a therapist, physician or other health care professional. Contact a health care professional with any questions or concerns about specific health care needs.