

# How to Balance Work and Family Life

## What Is Your Definition of Success?

If you want to create balance in your life, it is important to know how you define success. The following list is a place to start. Cross off those that don't seem important to you and add your own. Next, identify which of the items on your list are the most *essential* to your success definition and which items present the greatest *challenge* to you.

1. Being able to move on when a situation is no longer productive or positive
2. Being satisfied with your work situation
3. Enjoying the present, not putting off the good things until some time in the future
4. Expressing your creativity
5. Fulfilling your potential
6. Holding yourself with esteem separately from your work
7. Being authentic
8. Identifying your values and basing your choices on them
9. Managing your money well
10. Not feeling envious of others
11. Paying attention to your spiritual life
12. Spending time in fun ways away from your workplace
13. Spending time with people you cherish and enjoy
14. Taking good care of yourself
15. Understanding when to fight for something and when to give in

What would you add? Which items present the greatest challenge to you?

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## The 80/20 Rule

The 80/20 Rule, also known as the Pareto Principle, says that 20% of what we do produces 80% of the results. Some examples of this principle are:

- 20% of the people sell 80% of the widgets.
- 20% of the salespeople earn 80% of the commission.
- 20% of the parts in your car cause 80% of the breakdowns.
- 20% of the members of an organization do 80% of the work.

The 80/20 principle can help anyone create balance in their life. Here's how:

1. Identify the times when you are *most* happy and productive (i.e., the 20% that produces the 80%) and *increase* them as much as possible.
2. Identify the times when you are *least* happy and productive (i.e., the 80% that produces the 20%), and *reduce* them as much as possible.

### **Your Seven Habits of Success**

You have probably heard of Stephen Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. As you create balance in your life, think about your own list of success habits. What seven things would lead to more happiness in your life if you did them every day? Here are some ideas to get you started:

1. Do something you love doing for at least part of the day.
2. Get some physical exercise.
3. Get some mental exercise.
4. Stimulate yourself artistically.
5. Stimulate yourself spiritually.
6. Do something for someone else.
7. Do something just for fun.
8. Acknowledge yourself for something you said or did.

What ideas would you add?

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### **Dealing with Workaholism**

What if a person needs more than just self-help in dealing with a lack of balance in work and family life? An organization called Workaholics Anonymous can help.

Workaholics Anonymous is a 12-step recovery program similar to Alcoholics Anonymous. It is a “fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others recover from workaholism. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop working compulsively.”

### **How Do You Know if You Are a Workaholic?**

Ask yourself these questions if you think you might be a workaholic:

1. Are you more comfortable talking about work than anything else?
2. Do you become impatient with people who do things besides work?
3. Do you believe that more money will solve the other problems in your life?
4. Do you get irritated when people ask you to stop working and do something else?
5. Do you get more energized about your work than about anything else, including your personal relationships?
6. Do you look for ways to turn your hobbies into money-making endeavors?

7. Do you often worry about the future, even when work is going well?
8. Do you take on extra work because you are concerned that it won't otherwise get done?
9. Do you take work home with you? Do you work on days off? Do you work while you are on vacation?
10. Do you think about your work while driving, falling asleep, or when others are talking?
11. Do you think that if you don't work hard you will lose your job or be considered a failure?
12. Do you work more than 40 hours in a typical week?
13. Do you work or read while you are eating?
14. Have your long hours hurt your family or other relationships?

For more information about Workaholics Anonymous, write or call: Workaholics Anonymous

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(510) 273-9253

You can also learn more about this by visiting the web site of Alcoholics Anonymous,  
[www.Alcoholics-Anonymous.org](http://www.Alcoholics-Anonymous.org).