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Can you Really “Balance” Work and Life?

Are you giving too much at work and too little in your personal life? The question haunts us, creating stress in and of itself. Is balance really attainable in our busy, overworked society? If so, how do we achieve it? We asked a panel of experts to share their perspectives. Read on to learn more.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Rusty-Gaillard.jpg>).

Rusty Gaillard

Rusty Gaillard, A speaker and transformational coach. Rusty helps others achieve more freedom and balance in life. A Stanford MBA and successful leader at Apple for over 13 years, Rusty believes that each of us is far more powerful than any circumstance we are in, and we can claim the freedom to

live our best life. Visit here for more information: [Rusty Gaillard](#)

(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rustygaillard/>).

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Change your mindset

Asking whether you can balance work and life is the wrong question. Just by asking that, you're assuming there's not enough time for both, that you have to make tradeoffs, that you have to sacrifice somewhere. If you're thinking to yourself, "that's all true!" then that is part of your problem. With that perspective, you'll never be satisfied. As long as you're giving up something you want, you won't feel "balanced."

You don't have to live in a fantasy world to shift your perspective. No one has more than 24 hours in a day, but some people can navigate their schedule without struggle and tradeoffs. I bet you even know some of them. What do they know that the rest of us don't?

To step around the struggle, you have to change your mindset to one of abundance. This can be challenging at first, but it's absolutely possible. What if you approached your day with the belief that you had enough time to get everything done that mattered? That you were one of those who navigated your day effortlessly and with ease. Give it a try. Whenever you feel stressed or rushed, remember that you have enough time to get everything done.

It also helps to evaluate what really needs to get done. Most people I know have a to-do list. Even if you got everything on your to-do list complete, would you be any closer to a balanced and meaningful life? Would you be any closer to your career ambitions? No! Put your time and focus on what really matters, on what will move the needle. And if something has been on your to-do list for more than 2 weeks, take it off. It's just adding to the endless list of work that hangs over your head. If you want to be really bold, throw away your whole to-do list!

Work expands to fill the time allotted to it. By shifting your perspective to one of abundance, and focusing on the items that really matter, you will find a new sense of ease and flow in your time. It doesn't require trade-off and sacrifice, and others will look at you and wonder how you did it.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/LaWann-Moses.png>)

LaWann Moses

LaWann Moses is a Business Executive and Content Creator at [LaWann A. Moses](https://lawannmoses.com/) (<https://lawannmoses.com/>). She is an advocate, visionary, and leader who has a passion for empowering individuals to rise up, reclaim their power, and live a life of boldness, purpose, and authenticity.

Set your priorities

In case you haven't heard, balance is dead. Work-life balance doesn't exist. People spend their lives trying to chase this thing called balance, which is impossible to obtain. Trying to achieve balance is like running on a hamster wheel with no end in sight. No matter how much you try to balance, there will always be something in your life that requires more of your attention at any given time.

Instead of trying to achieve balance, you should strive for life harmony. Harmony is when you get everything in life to flow together and work in sync with each other. One day your family may need more of your attention, other days your job/business may need more of your attention.

The key to life harmony is prioritization. Learning to prioritize goes a long way when it comes to rethinking balance. If you set your priorities each day, you can work at checking things off of your to-do list and

getting things done. Priorities change from day-to-day so I recommend getting up early in the morning, evaluating your day, and deciding what needs your attention the most during that day and time.

Understand that things happen and life happens. You may not get to everything on your list each day and some days your list may become obsolete because something else occurs which becomes top priority. Either way, take the pressure off yourself, replace balance with prioritization, and work towards life harmony each day.



<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Aaron-Walker.jpg>

Aaron Walker

Aaron Walker – Freelance Writer at [The Walkers Abroad](http://www.thewalkersabroad.com)

<http://www.thewalkersabroad.com/freelancing>

Look for common goals

“Balance” assumes that work and life are opposites. We work, and then we live. It implies that we dislike working, and we enjoy living – whatever that means, exactly. Probably it means leisure activities or something like that.

For most of human history, work was life, for better or worse. What's that mean for us? It means that it might be helpful to stop thinking of work and life as opposites, and more as two parallel sources of fulfillment. We can get achievements, rewards, and success from work – just like we do in our hobbies, families, and other parts of life.

Stop looking for balance: start looking for common goals shared between both areas.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Sandra-Woznicki.png>).

Sandra Woznicki

Sandra Woznicki is a Stress and Anxiety Coach and Mindfulness Meditation Teacher (<https://stressandanxietycoach.com/>) who helps women to stop being so hard on themselves, to handle difficult emotions with greater ease, and to motivate themselves with encouragement and self-compassion to become the happiest version of themselves.

Action is a choice

A feeling of a lack of work/life “balance” is a major source of stress in so many lives. But with so many things to juggle – work, family, sleep, social life, self-care, personal growth – the idea of finding “balance” with a

measly 24 hours in a day can seem impossible. In reality, what we're trying to achieve by finding balance is to stop us from spending too much of our time on any one or two areas of our lives, to the detriment of the rest.

Trying to achieve balance makes us think that each area needs equal attention, or that each day should have the same mix. In reality, it's a moving target. There's no way to give equal time and attention to each thing in our lives that is important to us. Unfortunately, no matter what mix of our time we choose, there will always be a sacrifice. I love my son and want to be with him all the time. I love my work and look forward to doing it. When I am with one, I am not with the other and, at the moment, it feels out of balance. I feel like I'm missing out.

A crucial element of the magical balancing act we don't discuss is managing what we think and how we feel about these sacrifices. Ultimately, that is what is causing us stress – not the lack of perceived “balance” but rather understanding the story we are telling ourselves about it. The story I'm telling myself is that I have no choice but to work late instead of spending time with my kids. The story I'm telling myself is that I can't spend time exercising because I should be spending it with my family.

These stories become “truths” in our minds – as though we have no other option. That lack of choice creates immense stress.

Changing how we think about dividing our time changes how we experience it. “I choose to stay late at work because this job is important to me.” “Today it is important to me to spend time with my children instead of going to the gym.”

When we realize each action is a choice, on the one hand, it feels significantly less stressful. On the other hand, it opens our minds to the realization that we can make another choice right now if we want to.

The key is not to let your thoughts make you feel trapped. Change the story.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Liz-Brown.jpg>).

Liz Brown

Liz Brown is a certified sleep science coach and founder of SleepingLucid (<https://sleepinglucid.com/>), a company (<https://perelson.com/company/>) that aims to raise sleep problem awareness by creating informative sleep product reviews and other helpful sleep-related content.

Maintain healthy habits

To most entrepreneurs, a work/life balance is no more than a mere myth, but I can tell you that through the right tweaks and changes, anyone can achieve a work/life balance. However, one must make sure to maintain and live by healthy habits that target holistic health such as sleep and exercise. These small additions to your routine condition the body and balance out hormones that affect one's physical, emotional, and mental health, which, in turn, empowers you to push through any task with ease and time to spare.



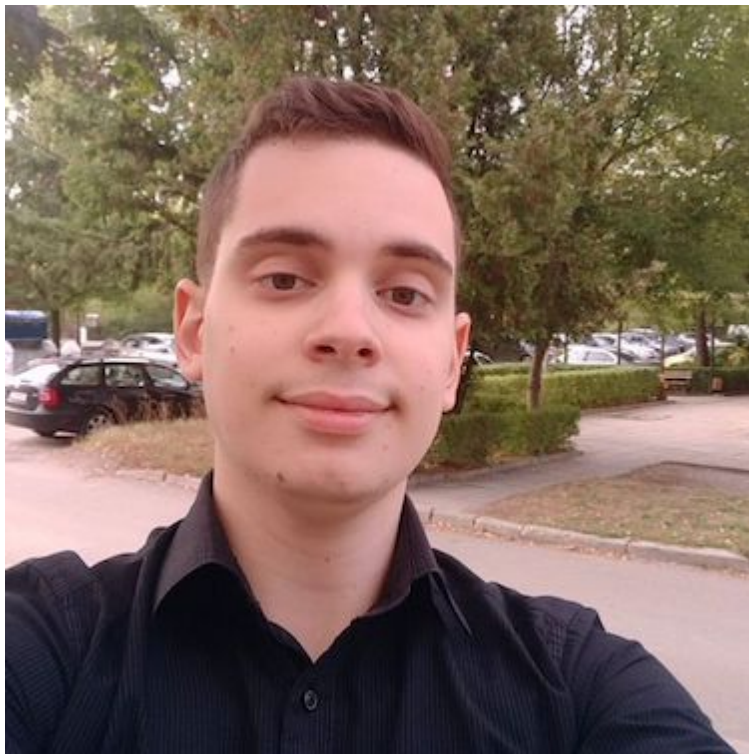
(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Luka-Arezina.jpeg>)

Luka Arezina

Luka Arezina, editor-in-chief at [DataProt](https://dataprot.net/) (<https://dataprot.net/>). Armed with a degree in Philosophy and an obsession with [technology](https://perelson.com/industries/technology-it/) (<https://perelson.com/industries/technology-it/>), Luka has combined his prowess at making complicated topics accessible with his passion for data safety.

What really matters

I think “work-life balance” is overrated in that sense that it puts a lot of pressure on an individual. Instead of trying to divide time at work, and time spent on personal things equally, I suggest thinking about what (who) really matters to each of us personally, and what impact those important things/people have on each other. For instance, if our boss insists on staying longer at work, but that means we will miss dinner with our family, compromise and open discussion with your boss might bring a solution that works for everyone. Ultimately, I think discussion and finding a middle ground that ensures we’re happy with every aspect of our life is more important than seemingly equal time spent on each segment of our life.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Daniel-Koychev.jpg>).

Daniel Koychev

Daniel Koychev is a staff writer at [Clarity Wave](https://www.claritywave.com/) (<https://www.claritywave.com/>). He enjoys writing about the latest in the HR and work world. In his free time, he likes reading, working out, stargazing, and learning languages.

No more, No less

A POINTLESS WAR

The mainstream view on work-life balance is wrong because it approaches the topic in the wrong way. There seem to be two main views on it – one is that work is something to be endured so one can be a useful member of society and support oneself, and the other is that work is a goal in itself and the most important part of one's life.

These two views are flawed, because they both consider work as something unique and not just another part of your life. There is an alternative:

LIVING A HOLISTIC LIFE

My viewpoint is that work is just another part of your life, and not different in any real way from, say, relaxing and bingeing on a TV show, or reading a book – working isn't "worse" or "better" than these other things. So there is

no “work-life balance” – there is just life, and one should devote just as much energy toward their work as they should toward anything else – no more, no less.

Once one realizes this, they will work and live, not work to live or live to work.



[.https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Andrew-Taylor.jpg](https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Andrew-Taylor.jpg)

Andrew Taylor

Andrew Taylor – Director at [Net Lawman](https://www.netlawman.co.uk/) (<https://www.netlawman.co.uk/>).

One word. And I apologize for it: No.

There is no balance between work and life that allows both to prosper in my experience – when one is thriving, the other suffers. Each individual needs to find their own happy medium where they feel comfortable.

One way to do this is to ensure what you do for work enhances your life. It is so important to do what you love, to enjoy your work. You don't have to be an entrepreneur or a business owner – but you do need to make sure that you feel fulfilled in your role.

That way, you're not trying to play 'catch-up' in your off times, but rather, you are just taking time off work to enjoy moments with other aspects of your life, such as your family or your hobbies.

Another way is to attempt to merge them both together. Include family in your work if you are a business owner. Ensure your hobbies are recognized in your role and try to bargain a position where they can be utilized (example – you like social media so you can be the blogger for your business with a post a week or something, you like events so you organize the Christmas party or the monthly meet up).



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Sedruola-Maruska.jpg>).

Sedruola Maruska

Sedruola Maruska is an author, speaker and personal development coach on a mission to help women re-discover their deepest desires, and confidently set relevant and intentional goals to change the trajectory of their lives. Web: sedruolamaruska.com (<http://sedruolamaruska.com/>).

It takes focus, time and effort

To truly balance work and life you've got to be clear on what you want out of both. Instead of going along and thinking life is just happening to you, you've got to decide what matters. When you're able to do that, you'll be able to remove the excess baggage and focus on those things that are truly important.

The balancing act of work and life will feel easier because every action will be intentional and meaningful. The clutter will be gone. So the easy answer is yes, you can balance work and life, but it takes focused time and effort—effort that's always well spent.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Chris-Boutte%CC%81.jpg>).

Chris Boutté

Chris Boutté is the Content Manager at [Bell+Ivy](https://www.bellivy.com/) (<https://www.bellivy.com/>) as well as a mental health YouTuber and author. You may know him as The Rewired Soul.

Discipline

As someone who works two jobs, runs an 80,000-subscriber YouTube channel and writes, I've had to find work-life balance. On paper, I should be burned out and miserable, but I'm the happiest I've ever been. I spend

plenty of time with my son, girlfriend, and friends even though I work well over 60 hours per week. I am also averaging 13 books per month – my annual goal is 150 books!

I've found the best way to rethink work-life balance is to realize how much time we all waste mindlessly scrolling through social media feeds or binge-watching Netflix. When we make our non-working hours more meaningful and discipline ourselves to take that time, we find that we're much more refreshed.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Jasmine-Daya.png>).

Jasmine Daya

Jasmine Daya is the Managing Principal of Toronto-based [Jasmine Daya & Co.](https://www.jdlawyers.ca/) (<https://www.jdlawyers.ca/>) a personal injury law firm specializing in claims involving minors, including bullying and cyberbullying. A proud mother of three, Jasmine is also a published cookbook author, novelist, podcaster and speaker.

Chase without 50/50 calculations

The trouble with pursuing work-life equilibrium is that life doesn't neatly conform to a set of scales. You're not spending five hours at work to enable you to spend five hours on the golf course. Reality doesn't work like that.

Rather than striving to achieve that elusive balance, I am flipping the script by encouraging people to chase whatever combination of interests and pastimes fulfills them without all 50/50 calculations. In other words, to pursue their work-life passion!

It was only a few years ago that I was able to make room in my own life for one of my passions: cooking! Now, as a published cookbook author highlighting the joys of Indian cooking, my accomplishment has given rise to other pursuits outside of the law, including novel writing, real estate investing and podcasting.

I didn't think it was practical to pursue interests outside of law and family, but now I know that having these outside focuses actually makes me a better lawyer. The time I spend with my family and friends socializing, recipe testing, monitoring the real estate market, exercising and writing is what motivates me to work hard and ultimately inspires an inner sense of balance.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Jess-Dang.jpg>)

Jess Dang

Jess Dang is the founder of Cook Smarts (<https://www.cooksmarts.com/>) online meal planning service, voted #1 on Lifehacker. She started Cook Smarts in 2012 to help families live healthier lives, feel empowered and inspired in the kitchen, and lighten the mental load of meal planning. Prior to starting Cook Smarts, Jess was a contestant on a Food Network cooking show and taught in-home (<https://perelson.com/>) cooking lessons around the Bay Area.

Focus on work-life synergy

I think we need to stop talking about work-life balance and start talking about work-life synergy. There's so much pressure on women in particular to find balance, and it ends up feeling like we're on a seesaw, with one side always winning while the other loses — we're never perfectly in balance. How can we feel good about our efforts, either at work or at home, in that context?

By focusing on work-life synergy instead, though, we look for what feeds us. Meaningful, energizing work gives us more energy for our families, and spending time with family in a meaningful way keeps us motivated when we're back at work. Work and home life don't have to be at odds with one another.

Also, when we try to balance, it feels like we're compartmentalizing those two worlds. We can be moms at work, and we can apply the systems we use at work to our homes — our identities are multi-dimensional and we should show all sides in all the places we contribute.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Farah-Harris-.jpg>)

Farah Harris, MA, LCPC

Farah Harris is a licensed therapist and workplace, wellness advocate. She is the owner of WorkingWell Daily, LLC, a company dedicated to addressing work-life alignment. Her mission is to help individuals and organizations decrease symptoms of stress and burnout and elevate their emotional intelligence quotient while improving morale and esteem to create healthier work environments. Web: farahharrislcpc.com (<https://farahharrislcpc.com/>).

Things that matter

There's this misconception that you need to have a balance between work and life as if these two things are separate. In your life, you will work, the key is to create alignment between the two. Your values will help create your boundaries to help you create a life by design.

So, when considering a job or career, think about the things that matter to you: family, social life, leisure, impact, success, etc. These value systems will guide you in your decisions regarding your time and motivation. There will never be a moment when everything is balanced and be equal because your priorities will change and weigh differently depending on what season you are in. The key is to make sure that you graft your work and your work schedule into your day-to-day living so that it aligns with how you want your life to be at that moment.

As things shift in our lives, we readjust. This can mean choosing to work closer to home because you have young children or finding a position that requires a lot of global travel to satisfy your love of culture and diversity. Whatever it is, take the time to evaluate what your values are to better strategize how you want your working years to look in your life.



(<https://perelson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Sonya-Schwartz.png>)

Sonya Schwartz

Sonya Schwartz is a Managing Editor at [HerNorm](https://hernorm.com/) (<https://hernorm.com/>). She has been featured in Bustle, BuzzFeed, SheKnows, Lifehack, and Cosmopolitan.

No such thing as 'perfect balance'

Yes, you can balance work and life but [only] to some extent as sometimes it is nearly impossible to balance both. Sometimes your work demands more than 8 hours of your day. On the other hand, some family circumstances, whether good or bad, break the healthy bond between your personal life and work. Sometimes a little thought of not enjoying the weekend just because you have to check your email kills the inside of you slowly and your frustrated behavior is what affects the balance between your work and family.

First, and the best key to balance work and life, is to accept that you can continue to maintain balance, but there is no such thing as 'perfect balance' between life and work. In this way, you'll be less stressed when you are unable to get things done, whether at the workplace or in your family.

Your health should be your top priority. The less stressed you are the happier you'll be. It will increase productivity at your workplace, too. You should avoid multitasking, and don't let the criticism at your workplace affect you personally. In this way, your personal life wouldn't get disturbed, and balance between work and life will work well.

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(TEL:8015321000)
801.532.1000
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Give us a call

Headquarters:

2180 S. 1300 E. #350, Salt Lake City, UT 84106

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