



Work – Life Balance



One's perception that the demands of their work and personal life are compatible.

Healthy work - life balance is linked to:

- Improved physical, emotional, and mental well being
- Higher retention
- Improved readiness and resilience
- Lower likelihood of suicide / suicidal ideation
- Increased productivity & motivation
- Feelings that one's personal and Family life are important
- Strong Family bonds
- Enhanced job satisfaction and performance

Poor work - life balance is associated with:

- Increased stress and anxiety
- Poor performance or burnout
- Weakened immune system
- Lack of concentration
- Headaches / mental confusion / irritability
- Depression
- Increased turnover intention (desire to leave the military)
- Increases in other harmful behaviors (domestic violence)



Challenges to Maintaining Work – Life Balance



- Finding time for sleep, a healthy diet, and exercise
- Finding time for recreation, stress relief, or Family
- Competing commitments (work, school, childcare)
- Frequent Moves & Deployments:
 - Stay connected with family and friends: this can help ease the stress (make regular phone/video calls and send care packages/letters to help maintain a sense of connection).
 - Take advantage of resources: financial assistance, relocation services, and counseling.
 - Stay active: to manage stress and maintain your mental health (find a workout partner or join a local gym).
 - Build a support network: reach out to other military members/families (provides a sense of community and helps with tasks such as childcare or household chores).



Strategies to Improve Work - Life Balance



- Build strong relationships with co-workers, battle buddies, and supportive family members
- Identify personal and professional priorities
 - Personal: Family commitments, health and wellness, hobbies or interests, personal relationships
 - Professional: training, immediate job responsibilities, rank or position advancement
- Set realistic goals, deadlines, and expectations
- Develop effective time-management strategies:
 - Identify / set goals and priorities = small manageable tasks
 - Plan and schedule activities with adequate time allotted
 - Monitor progress – eliminate activities that waste time
 - Delegate responsibilities for less important tasks
- Openly and effectively communicate at work and home
- Practice self-care and stress management
 - Self-care: set aside time for hobbies, exercise, relaxation and practice mindfulness and meditation
 - Stress management: develop problem-solving and time management skills, set realistic goals (one task at a time), and seek support from friends, family, and colleagues
- Seek support from military resources: counseling, educational programs, support groups, MFLC



Improve Work - Life Balance At Work



- Set manageable goals each day. Meeting priorities leads to a sense of accomplishment and control. Be realistic, make a “to do” list, take care of important tasks first, eliminate unessential ones, and ask for help when necessary.
- Be efficient with your time at work. Don't procrastinate. When you face a big project divide it into smaller tasks and complete the first one before moving on. Give yourself small rewards for completion. If you feel overwhelmed tell your boss.
- Take five. Take a break at work it will help clear your head, improve your ability to deal with stress, and allow you to make good decisions when you jump back into the grind.
- Tune in. Listen to your favorite music to foster concentration, reduce stress and anxiety, lower blood pressure, and stimulate creativity.
- Communicate effectively. Be honest with colleagues and bosses when you're in a bind; chances are, you're not alone. Don't just complain - suggest practical alternatives. Look at a situations from another's viewpoint, rethink your strategy or stand your ground, calmly and rationally, and make allowances for other opinions, and compromise.
- Give yourself a break. No one's perfect! Allow yourself to be human and just do the best you can



Improve Work - Life Balance At Home



- Unplug. Technology may make it easy to do our jobs flexibly, but it can also burn us out if we use it 24/7. Make yourself available but recognize the need for personal time.
- Divide and conquer. Ensure responsibilities at home are evenly distributed and clearly defined to avoid confusion and problems.
- Don't over commit. If you're overscheduled with activities, learn to say, "no."
- Get support. Chatting with friends and family can be important to your success at home and can improve your health.
- Take advantage of All Available Resources. Resources are available for everything from finding daycare to getting referrals to mental health.
- Stay active. Regular exercise reduces stress, depression and anxiety, and enables us to better cope with adversity. It'll also boost your immune system and keep you out of the clinic.
- Treat your body right. Eat right, exercise and get adequate rest. Don't rely on drugs, alcohol or cigarettes to cope with stress!
- Get help if you need it. Don't let stress stand in the way of your health and happiness. If you are persistently overwhelmed seek help from a mental health professional. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness—taking care of yourself is a sign of strength.