



FAMILY *Matters*

Developing meaning and balance in your life

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Most people have very busy schedules. Managing job and children's activities can become quite unmanageable at times. It is easy to get our lives out of balance and lose perspective on what can really promote meaning, wellness and happiness. Therapeutic lifestyle changes can create balance, positivity, wellness, and meaning which promotes good physical and mental health.

The first step to successful wellness is time management. Don't feel like you have to do everything now. Make a list of priorities and focus your energy there. Make a schedule to get the important things done. Do non-priority things if you have the time but balance these out with family and friends connections. Essentially, take charge of your life and direct it how you want it to go. The more control you feel in your life, the lower your stress will be.

Develop an optimistic attitude. Optimists look

for the positive learning experience in most of what they do. They embrace a growth mindset where they seek new experiences that can lead towards self-improvement. This mindset promotes physical and mental health. Optimists recover better from surgeries and major illness than pessimists

Develop these major therapeutic lifestyle changes

- Choose to exercise regularly by making a plan and put it on the schedule. Consider family exercise activities.
- Get the amount of sleep you need. It promotes better weight control, reduces stress and improves mood.
- Be social. Connect with friends and family on a regular basis.
- Good nutrition promotes good physical and cognitive functioning.
- Challenge yourself cognitively. Take a class, read, learn a second language and do mentally challenging games (luminosity.com or positscience.com).
- Use meditative or mindfulness practices such as prayer, relaxation techniques (diaphragmatic breathing or massage) and/or yoga.
- Enjoy hobbies that bring you pleasure.
- Take a nature break, not a coffee break. Nature can be very energizing when you "stop to smell the roses."
- Develop a personal mission such as helping others and/or promoting social justice in your community.
- Appreciate simple things in life like good health, good fortune and loved ones.
- Take an electronic, mobile phone and screens break. You really can live without them for a while.

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