

# How to Maintain a Work-Life Balance for Employees and Executives with a Special Emphasis on Entrepreneurs



Robert DeJon Hinson 12841

Bhu12841@students.beulah.edu

Ls 698 Leadership Capstone

Beulah Heights University

Dr. Harvey, Professor



## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research is to identify those things that take us out of balance as it pertains to work and life outside of the office. The research places an emphasis on how it especially effects entrepreneurs. There is ample research about employees and executives, but the gap in the research is how it effects entrepreneurs who have no set schedule or salary cap. Entrepreneurs can be self- directed and self -motivated and are known for being married to their mission. Finding balance can be especially hard for these individuals as they are often very driven. This research will deal with the mental and physical aspects of being in balance and how the profit motivated entrepreneur can become self- actualized through goal setting and paradigm –shifting. The research will use scholarly articles as well as timeless wisdom from business pioneers such as Stephen Covey, Zig Ziglar, Napoleon Hill, John Johnson and local entrepreneurs.

## **Literature Review**

Article 1

*Work/Life Balance* Johanna N Leonard , A IC P JULY 2019 PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

The sub title for this article is leaning in while finding balance. It describes a manager at a firm who identifies a fellow co-worker who would be good for management. However, she does not have interest in the position because of the demands it will place on her time and limit the time she has available for her two small children

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In this article, the author discusses the role played by gender while maintaining work-life balance and offers suggestions for the same. Topics discussed include expectations from workers to devote unlimited hours to the job making, women with advanced degrees unable to take advantage of professional opportunities due to family responsibilities and there existing only few moments when disconnected from the work with increasing use of technology, and rethinking public involvement & engagement.

Article 2

*Work-Related Internet Use as a Threat To Work-Life Balance –A Comparison Between The Emerging On-Line Professions and Traditional Office Work* ALEKSANDRA JACUKOWICZ and DOROTA MERECZ-KOT Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine, Łódź, Poland  
Department of Health and Work Psychology

This article discusses the emerging tele- work phenomena that is happening world-wide. It maintains the position that internet use can help maintain a better work- life balance. In the present study, the authors focused on the comparison of work characteristics related to the possibility of striking the right work–non-work balance, as well as satisfaction with the actual work–life balance (WLB), negative work-to-home conflict and the quality of life related to social relationships, between a new group of on-line workers (social media or e-marketing specialists, search engine optimization or search engine marketing specialists, e-public relations experts etc.) and traditional office workers. The authors conducted a questionnaire study covering 189 on-line workers (whose work required permanent presence on-line) and 200 office workers (using the Internet mainly to communicate with other departments and to search for information). The results showed that the on-line workers reported a significantly lower satisfaction with WLB and a higher negative work-home interaction. The authors found no differences as regards the social quality of life between the studied groups. These findings confirm that technology advancement

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opens a new chapter in organizational psychology and occupational health, especially in the context of the emerging on-line occupations.

Article 3

*Innovative machine learning approach and evaluation campaign for predicting the subjective feeling of work-life balance among employees* Aleksandra Pawlicka<sup>1\*</sup>, Marek Pawlicki<sup>2</sup>, et al Wielki University in Bydgoszcz, Bydgoszcz, Poland, 4 UTP University of Science and Technology, Bydgoszcz, Poland

At present, many researchers see hope that artificial intelligence, machine learning in particular, will improve several aspects of the everyday life for individuals, cities and whole nations alike. For example, it has been speculated that the so-called machine learning could soon relieve employees of part of the duties, which may improve processes or help to find the most effective ways of performing tasks. Consequently, in the long run, it would help to enhance employees' work-life balance. Thus, workers' overall quality of life would improve, too. However, what would happen if machine learning as such were employed to try and find the ways of achieving work-life balance? This is why the authors of the paper decided to utilize a machine learning tool to search for the factors that influence the subjective feeling of one's work-life balance. The possible results could help to predict and prevent the occurrence of work-life imbalance in the future.

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Article 4

*NO SILVER BULLET ... .. but many options exist to help you achieve a better balance.*  
TOWNSHEND, ANN MARIE Public Management (00333611). Jul2019, Vol. 101 Issue 6, p16-19. 4p.

This article discusses family dynamics of being out of balance. It uses case studies and an authors narrative to give real world examples of why a healthy balance is optimal for managers and entrepreneurs. The article discussing importance of maintaining work-life balance while choosing a career in local government management and offers suggestions for achieving the same. Topics discussed include health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes arising due to chronic or prolonged stress associated with job, attending art shows and children's sporting events and avoiding technology connecting with work such as cell phones while at home.

Article 5

## **Introduction**

What exactly is work/life balance? The answer is likely to be different for each person and may vary with one's stage in life and career. But we can identify a few common themes. Work/life balance involves splitting time among work/ career, family, and self. It involves attending to mental and physical well-being and recognizing the physical and mental health risks that come when things are out of balance.

Given the importance of work/life balance to success in career and family and to mental and physical health, what can we do to achieve that balance? There's no silver bullet, but this article will share some strategies we can use to create balance in our lives and to nurture workplace cultures that promote balance as well.

## **Thesis Statement:**

Maintaining a work – life balance is crucial for the optimal health and financial success of employees and executives, but it is especially true for entrepreneurs.

## **Materials and methods**

Research questions

Research question 1. Does committing to a work life balance become an impediment to financial success?

Research question 2. Is self -actualization a material manifestation or mental perception?

Research question 3. How does ones definition of success affect ones work-life balance?

What is the correlation between balance and success? Then, if any correlations were to be found, the following question was: Would shifting, increasing or decreasing any of the parameters result in achieving/ losing the balance? How? Why?

## **Research Methods**

The research methods employed in this research study will be qualitative. The researcher will use case studies to demonstrate real life examples to support the thesis statement. Also, the research will use narrative approaches from first hand eye- witness accounts. Also incorporated in the research methods will be grounded theory and phenomenology.

Case Studies

Narrative approaches

Phenomenology

Grounded theory

## Discussion/Body

### **Get the Family involved**

Maintaining a work – life balance as an entrepreneur can be daunting. It helps to get the whole family involved. Early in my entrepreneurial endeavors I worked in a lot of immigrant communities. I was amazed at how they worked together. I owned and operated a carpet cleaning franchise that had accounts with several apartment complexes on Buford Highway. A northern suburb of Atlanta, GA. As a result, I was able to get an up close and personal view of their various lifestyles. I was impressed at how they worked together to accomplish their goals. For instance a two bedroom apartment could have as many as ten residents. There would be double and triple beds or mattresses throughout the bedrooms and the living room. Everyone worked and added their income into the household expenses. They shared rent, utilities and transportation expenses to and from work. This allowed them to send any surplus money to their home country.

I witnessed this phenomena again with foreign entrepreneurs. When patronizing their establishments, they would have their whole family working there. Many times the younger children were the interpreters and the older adults oversaw the operations. When your work is your life and your life is your work, then it is easy to maintain a work -life balance.

However, the American life-style can complicate this reality. When families are on the same page it is easy, but what about when you have spouses that don't work together or children who

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are not interested in the family business. As noted above, there's no "one-size-fits-all" approach to work-life balance, and a person's balance may change over time.

### Case Study1: Anna Marie Townsend

As a young mother, having a job close to home was a key strategy for me. Geographic proximity allowed me to stop in at daycare, volunteer at school during my lunch hour, and stop at home to see my husband and sons before going to an evening meeting. Now my children are older, and I work for a municipality that is about 40 miles from home. It's less important for me to be close, but it is important for me to leave early to get to my son's golf matches.

Colleagues and friends have shared their experiences with achieving balance. One colleague has a demanding job that requires frequent travel. In her case, her husband left the workforce to stay home with their children. Another cut back to part time when her children were young to accommodate her husband's work travel demands. Just as the family has changed over the decades, the ways in which families work to balance competing demands has changed as well.

### Case Study2: Kyle Gay

Kyle Gay is a 33-year-old law associate working to grow her municipal law practice. She is a mother to two young children, ages two-and-a-half and six months. She says that for her, balance is when she's happy in her work life and her home life.

## **Good help is hard to find**

As a startup, it can be financially impossible to hire permanent staff, but as the business grows, help will be needed. Many entrepreneurs feel that they can do it all. You may be able to do everything, but is that the optimal way to conduct business? I say the answer is no. My rational is that the graveyard is full of essential people.

## **Training and Delegating**

When delegating task, it is essential to have a training program. Develop STOP. STOP is an acronym for standard operating procedures. STOP helps ensure that the mission of the business will be carried through as the proprietor wishes. STOP gives you a framework as to how you want your business to run. It lets others know that there is a structure in place and that things are to be done a certain way.

### Case Study 3: Peggy Hinson

My Mom was a genius at creating a work- life balance. When my brothers and I were young, my Mom created a private school. What better way to maintain a work- life balance than to create a school for you children to attend. As we got older and grew out of the school in junior high we were still a part of the business. We would clean the building on holidays and often accompanied our mom to the big discount warehouses on weekends to buy lunch and school supplies for the coming week. As our social lives began to become more involved, she switched to a food service to deliver the necessary items to keep the school going. We never forgot those experiences and

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after her passing my younger brother and I continued the legacy she created for an additional twenty-one years. It was our way of honoring her memory. In fact our children got to experience a similar life- work balance that we experienced as they were students there also.

### **The budding entrepreneur**

Entrepreneurs are work-a-holics. Their motivation is their work. Often we can bite off more than we can chew. Learning to delegate is a skill that must be developed in order to maintain balance. I was once told that I worked so much that I would not be able to enjoy the fruits of my labor. One must take time to sharpen the saw. This is one of Stephen Coveys seven habits of highly effective people. It is essential to take time to rejuvenate.

One of my favorite ways to rejuvenate is spending time with my daughter. I enjoy our Daddy-daughter time immensely. It helps me reconnect with family and remind me why I'm working so hard and also understanding that it is not about material manifestations but quality of life that can't be measured by things, but by the ability to have options.

### **Goal Setting**

To know where you are going it is important to have a target. What does your final destination look like? Steven Covey calls this beginning with the end in mind. It is important to know where you want to go. When we set our gps, we have to input a destination for the gps to give you directions. If we don't give it a destination, then we can't get started. If we do get started without a destination, then we ride around aimlessly wasting time and resources. This causes an

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imbalance in our lives. Some people battle with this for a lifetime. They aimlessly wander around with no direction, idea or purpose.

In Zig Ziglar's book Goals, he uses the analogy of being blind folded- spun around, then given a bow and arrow and told to shoot. He goes on to say that that is what it is like when you don't set goals. How can one achieve balance when there is no constraint? If there aren't any boundaries, then how do we know what is out of bounds?

### **Multiple Income Streams**

Establishing multiple income streams can sound like creating more work. However, it can also streamline efforts. It is important to have funnel vision and not tunnel vision. Too often entrepreneurs can get so immersed in an idea that they don't see the forest for the trees. For example Steve Jobs got so involved in the design of his computers that he didn't focus on the larger picture that he was losing market share to the IBM pc. It wasn't until he developed the imac, and ipod that he was able to turn apple around. He opened his mind and thought out of the box and looked at other revenue streams and uses for the personal computer. This led to the iphone, ipad and apple watch. All versions of the personal computer designed for specific purposes.

Having multiple streams of income means that one is not solely dependant on a single source. An overdependence on one source may cause an entrepreneur to overspend on time and financial resources to keep a business a float that isn't financially viable. This can cause a lot of mental stress and anguish because an entrepreneur's lifestyle is created and affected by any downturn or uptick in business revenue.

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With multiple income streams, it is like creating a mutual fund for your business. With mutual funds, one is invested in several different companies in a similar sector. For example, if I owned a tech sector mutual fund, then it may contain companies like IBM, Apple, Intel, etc. If Apple stock is not performing well, then maybe IBM stock is performing well. This allows me to realize gains and growth even though one company may not be performing well. Income streams can work similarly. If one owned a Janitorial service and rental property and the real estate market went through a correction, then the janitorial business may hit a boom as people need to maintain what they have by cleaning and restoring versus selling in a depressed real estate market.

My mom would call this “not putting all your eggs in one basket”. A famous business guru put it another way “diversify or die”

### **Seek first to understand**

Communicate at home and at work. Kyle Gay, the law associate, notes the importance of communication to achieving and maintaining balance. She communicates with her associates and partners about her schedule limitations. She and her husband sit down every Sunday and preview the week ahead so that each knows what the other has planned. This way, if they need to ask a family member for help with the children, they can provide adequate notice.

This is a hard principle for me to fully grasp. I say hard because of past experiences. Many times I have felt like Ralph Ellison’s *Invisible Man*. (1952 Random House) I’ve been in the room but didn’t have a presence. In some situations, I’ve felt as though my opinion didn’t matter or no one cared to hear it. This created an independence in me that drives me to this day. Frank Sinatra had

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a famous song called *My way*. (1969 Reprise) Every human has a need to be heard. The recent protest happened because black people felt that they were not being heard.

The Reverend Dr Martin Luther King Jr. famously said that “riots are the voice of the unheard”

This is a powerful habit to develop and can go a long way to resolving conflict. The road blocks to this habit are individuals refusal to compromise. Why should I give up something to give you something? This type of attitude is called the scarcity mentality. Meaning that there are finite resources and that I have to get my share or someone else may use them up. We saw this with the covid-19 pandemic. Some people stockpiled paper products and sanitizers for fear they would run out. This only created a shortage and limited the resources available to others. In the meantime those that stock-piled soon realized that they had more than they needed and began giving away extras because they had nowhere to store them or grew weary of having tissue paper stacked up in their living rooms.

### Case Study 4 Lisa Moore

To achieve balance we have to think win-win and not compromise. My wife at the time had a teacher’s conference in Orlando. Our daughter at the time was three years old. We decided to make a family vacation out of the conference. Our daughter had her first Disney vacation and my wife fulfilled her obligations to her job. Of course every situation is not as simple as that example, however we can find ways to create scenarios in which both parties can be satisfied. It starts with gaining an understanding of the wants and desires of both parties involved.

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Case Study 5 Kinekia Simpkin

I have a co-worker who likes to dominate a conversation. She can go on and on all day. Often repeating herself and sometimes putting on dramatics to bring attention to her point. If anyone disagrees with her, she calls them an idiot and argues and argues her point to force you to agree with her. If you don't agree with her, not only are you chastised but you may become the victim of her verbal rage. She has been known to solicit support from other co-workers to build a coalition of folks against you.

Don't try to get a word in edgewise. If anything you say doesn't line up with her viewpoint then you are in the battle for your life. Verbally speaking of course. Her goal is to dominate and get her point across. This is dangerous because it does not consider any other points of view. It can throw you off balance as you get stuck in only one way of accomplishing a goal. Proverbs 15:22 says Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed. It is important to hear alternative points of view because they can make your job or your attempts to achieve a goal much easier.

Additionally, when dealing with co-workers or employees they are more receptive to those who consider their thoughts and feeling versus authoritarian bosses. Although the above example is extreme, we have to be careful of time robbers. Some people will never be satisfied for one reason or another. There may be some mental health challenges involved in the above example. The vast majority of people will be able to offer their opinion and concerns in a succinct fashion. They will appreciate that you considered their needs when making decisions.

This helps maintain balance because an employee who feels valued will perform at higher levels and will in-turn value you and your time as an employer. When I ran a private elementary

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school, I could always count on my registrar. We developed a relationship where we cared about each other as co-workers and as human beings. If she or I ever needed cover, then we had each other's back. When I needed to leave to pick up my daughter there was never an issue. This gave me the mental space to enjoy being a parent while earning a living. It showed in my attitude when spending time with her and allowed me to enjoy our time and not worry about what was going on at the office.

Zig Ziglar talks about this phenomena. He says it is easy to confuse activity with accomplishment. He uses the example of caterpillars lined up in a circle around a plant. They march and march around the plant being very active, but they aren't accomplishing anything but going in a circle. All while the food and nourishment they need is only two inches away. We have to constantly gauge our efforts and make sure they are bringing us closer to our goals. Otherwise we are wasting time which affects our work- life balance.

### **Budget, Budget, Budget**

For entrepreneurs, it is always about the money, even when it is not about the money. We are driven by the profit motive. After all, no margin...no mission. (Covey) Financial success or the pursuit thereof drives a lot of entrepreneurs. I can remember working on a holiday and someone made the comment if you don't take the time to enjoy the money you're making you're going to leave it for someone else to enjoy. I was only 21. But it took someone more experienced to tell me to stop and smell the roses. Too often, entrepreneurs get focused on the next accomplishment, the next financial rung or the next contract that we don't take time to enjoy the accomplishments we've already made.

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A paradigm shift has to be made to mentally satisfy our emotional need for financial success.

What does that mean? Napoleon Hill said it best in his book *“Think and Grow Rich”*. I find the title itself intriguing. The first word think leads me to believe that “Rich” is more a state of mind, than a state of finances. In fact Napoleon Hill says that the first principle of becoming rich is to live within whatever means you are able to create for yourself. That principle changed my life. I view finances and money in a totally new way. Whether I have a minimum wage job or I am CEO of a fortune 100 company, I can be rich.

This helps entrepreneurs to maintain balance by putting the focus on budgeting existing finances versus pursuing additional finances. Additionally, we have to identify what is rich? Napoleon Hill says that living within your means and creating a surplus is considered rich. Many may not agree. They may think that rich is a seven figure income, multiple mansions in different states, private jets and Rolls Royce’s. Certainly those are the trappings of success, but do they define success. Are we only successful if we acquire these things? To maintain balance we have to ask ourselves if these things are important to us, our loved ones, or are they trophies to display for others to see.

I owned a small two bedroom, one bath ranch home in East Point, GA. It was a rental property. It became my primary residence after my divorce from my daughter’s mom. We had a large four bedroom traditional in Fayetteville. In order to make my daughters visits fun, I decorated one of the bedrooms with the Disney character Nemo. She was only three, but she helped me decorate. Years later when we would pass by the house she would say Daddy, I miss the East Point House. I thought that this was strange because I had since moved into a larger house in South Fulton. I said really, Why? She said she missed the Nemo room. It didn’t matter about the neighborhood

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or the size of the house. What was important to her was seeing Nemo. Nemo made her happy, not more bedrooms.

In finding balance you have to ask the question. Who is this important too? Is it for me, my loved ones, or for others. Establishing that clarity of thought helps direct or course of action and gives us purpose and meaning and the mental space to pursue those things that are truly important.

### **Self- reflection, assessment, and evaluation**

Stephen Covey calls this sharpening the saw. In his book *the seven habits of highly effective people* he gives the example of a person cutting wood and growing weary because the saw has become dull, but he is still muddling along trying to cut the wood instead of taking the time to sharpen the saw and make his work easier. Entrepreneurs are guilty of this. We just plug along without taking the time to refresh ourselves. To lead a balanced life, we have to take time for ourselves. This can be difficult if we don't have adequate help.

#### Case Study 5: Carpet Maintenance Corp.

With my carpet cleaning business, I had several accounts with apartment complexes. They are notorious for last minute emergencies. It was hard for me to plan anything outside of work because as my only employee, I was always on-call. A missed call was a missed opportunity and a possibility of being placed on their do not call list. I was so focused on generating revenue that I worked weekends, holidays, evenings, and late nights. I wanted to take every job that came my way. My goal was to grow my business and generate as much cash as possible. I was not

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thinking about my health. I was in my twenties at the time and felt invincible. Well, I worked and worked and worked. I made lots of money, but I was not in balance. I didn't take the time to properly do my paperwork. Although I was making the money, my credit was affected because I didn't take the time pay creditors and suppliers on time. I was working so much that I did not take the time to interview, train, or seek good help. It came to a head one morning after a twenty-four hour shift when I nearly passed out. I had just finished cleaning a dozen units at an apartment complex and needed to get some gas for my van. As I was walking into the gas station my knees buckled. I held on to shelf until I re-gained my senses. I immediately went to the drink cooler and grabbed a Gatorade. I could only drink it a sip at a time. I knew that I had pushed the envelope too far. My heart was racing and I knew that I was dehydrated. I was two minutes away from driving to Grady Emergency because I thought I was having a heart attack. After getting some fluids in me and sitting in my van for a half an hour, I began to feel better.

That taught me a good lesson about balance. You can't just plow through life like Superman. You have to take the time to take care of yourself. Replenish your body, replenish your mind, and replenish your spirit. It helps to understand the purpose and the goal of the actions you are taking. As well as assessing those actions to determine if they are bringing you closer to your goals or further away. This gives you an idea of what's working and what's not and a template for what to do more of and what to eliminate.

While stress is part of life, chronic or prolonged stress is linked to health problems and burnout. According to the American Psychological Association, the longer stress lasts, the more dangerous it is for your mind and body. 1. Chronic stress can directly affect health or lead to unhealthy behaviors such as overeating, smoking, and misuse of alcohol or drugs. The Mayo Clinic website includes a table of common effects of stress, noting that, if unchecked, stress can

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contribute to many health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. Shawn VanVessen, a licensed clinical social worker with a private practice, frequently sees clients who are struggling to maintain a work/life balance. 2. She says that many of her clients feel pressure because it's difficult to get everything done and to feel that they're successful in all facets of their lives.

Devoting time to oneself is an essential component of balance, and VanVessen notes the importance of self-care. She stresses the need for eating well, exercising, getting enough sleep, and carving out time to spend with people who are important to you. It's particularly important to carve out time to spend with your significant other and to make that relationship a priority.

### Prolonged Effects of Stress

ON YOUR BODY	ON YOUR MOOD	ON YOUR BEHAVIOR
Headache	Anxiety	Overeating or undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Angry outbursts
Chest pain	Lack of motivation or focus	Drug or alcohol misuse
Fatigue	Feeling overwhelmed	Tobacco use
Change in sex drive	Irritability or anger	Social withdrawal
Stomach upset	Sadness or depression	Exercising less often
Sleep	problems	

Source: <https://www.mayoclini.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/in-depth/stress-symptoms/art-2005098>

### Getting others Involved

Sometimes our goals require us to get other involved. There's an old African Proverb that was quoted in Marvels Black Panther (2018) If you want to go fast, then go alone. If you want to go far, then go with a group. It can be a challenge to work with others, but it can also be an immense help. Entrepreneurs are notorious for the Lone Ranger syndrome. I can do it myself. You can.

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But you can do more when you get others involved. Getting others involved can help distribute the responsibility.

### Conclusion

If I said that I've found the key to work/life balance and integrated it seamlessly into my career, that would be a lie. However, when I look back, I see how my family's definition of balance has shifted over time and how we have adapted.

Each career move has included a family discussion about what the change will mean in terms of night meetings and other commitments. In my most recent move, I told my employer at the interview stage that I had promised my family that we would not move until the kids finished high school. This has meant a 40-mile commute, and it was important for me to know that both my family and my employer were on board.

At times, I've felt headed toward burnout because I was trying to do it all. The strategies suggested earlier have been important in pulling things back into balance. One final strategy for finding harmony in work and personal life is knowing when it's time to move on. As many managers have learned, there are times when politics (at times directed toward the manager) become toxic and undermine a manager's efforts to maintain balance. At these times, moving on may be the best option.

Remember, you're more productive, healthier, and happier when you maintain a balance among all facets of your life. While sometimes this may feel like a lost cause, you can achieve it with prioritization, communication, attention to your personal needs, and openness to asking for help. (TOWNSHEND, ANN MARIE NO SILVER BULLET ... .. but many options exist to help you

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achieve a better balance. *Public Management* (00333611). Jul2019, Vol. 101 Issue 6, p16-19.

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## **Deficiencies and Related research**

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How the pursuit of the American dream shortens Americans life-span?

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