

LIFESTYLE & MOTIVATION

Maximize Your Physical Well-being by Balancing All Aspects of Your Life

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Feel as though you have full control of your life, with all elements in perfect balance? Do you feel like you have achieved a maximum level of physical well-being?

I am fairly certain that most of us would have to answer these questions with a clear “No.” Sure, there might be times where it seems that we have full control and are performing at our best; however, many of us struggle with balancing the responsibilities of life and maximizing our physical well-being, and often experience more lows than highs. We encounter obstacles that seem impossible to overcome, and we fail to do the things we know we should. We may look for quick fixes, even though we know that, in the long run, these won’t be effective.

Many of my clients and students express repeatedly that there just doesn’t seem to be enough time for everything that needs to be done. It appears that everyone is continuously more stressed, busy, unhappy and physically unwell. While you could spend a lot of time analyzing why this might be so, it is more productive to focus on basic, simple ways to live life to the fullest, increase your physical well-being and balance your life in healthy and happy ways.

Setting the Stage

You are a multidimensional being, including mind, body and spirit. Achieving optimal health and a desired

state of wellness requires a continuous readjustment of all elements to achieve balance. This journey of finding balance in all aspects of life seems to be the never-ending endeavor of the human race, inspiring us to search for a better way.

The Power of Knowledge

The good news is that we actually know a lot about the functioning of the different dimensions of wellness, including physical, mental/emotional and spiritual well-being, which can help us understand what we ought to do to achieve maximum physical well-being.

The Barrier

Transferring theory into practice (i.e., knowledge into action) is what presents the challenge for most people. This barrier usually creates the limitations to achieving an optimal level of physical well-being.

The Answer

There are a few key, yet simple, action steps we can take to balance the different aspects of our lives. Just remember that it will be an ongoing effort to reevaluate, readjust and rebalance, as needed. These elements will directly and indirectly affect physical well-being, yet all are important to achieving maximum wellness.

To experience positive change, you have to be willing to take a chance and challenge yourself. Are you ready? Now is the time to embark on a new journey to live a complete life that maximizes your physical capabilities and wellness.

1. Choose

Living life to the fullest is a choice, and you have an enormous amount of control over your life, including your time and health. Choose to take a chance to change for optimum wellness. It is not your circumstances that dictate the outcome; it is how you choose to respond. Write this sentence on a piece of paper or position it on your desktop or phone and say it out loud every morning: "I choose to live life to the fullest!"

2. Prioritize

Before you can achieve any level of balance in your life, you need to set your priorities. Create a list of your top five priorities and place this list where it will be visible to you. This will help you shift your energy in the right direction. You will probably notice that much of your time is spent on the things that have a lower priority in your life, which can actually drain you physically and cause unnecessary stress.

3. Organize

Not surprisingly, those who are organized have a lot more time to do the things they want to do. Organization decreases stress and provides an automatic sense of control. Organizing your time will be the key element to help you experience an increased level of physical well-being. This also means that you need to think ahead

and plan how you will spend your time, including healthy habits related to resting, moving and eating. Use the calendar function on your electronic device or find a helpful app to start organizing your responsibilities and elements related to health and fitness. Make to do lists and check off the things you have completed; this provides an amazing feeling of accomplishment and positivity.

4. Train

It will take practice, but you need to outline a training plan for your physical activity, eating and drinking patterns, sleeping habits and stress-management techniques. This will require some serious self-discipline, but you will start noticing that it will add phenomenal strength, energy, positivity and balance to your life.

Specifically, ensure to do the following and consider these as a general guideline (assuming that you do not suffer from any medical conditions, in which case you should always consult a physician):

- **Move as much as possible throughout the day.** Stand more and sit less. Take the stairs. Walk after lunch, even if it is for five minutes. Choose any activity over being sedentary.
- **Exercise every day.** Include at least three to five days of cardiorespiratory activity for 20 to 60 minutes. Do a full-body stretching routine each day (preferably after exercise that increases your body temperature for better results). Strengthen your muscles by engaging in muscular strength and endurance training two to three times per week, addressing all major muscle groups.
- **Drink enough water each day.** Depending on your situation and activity level, be sure to stay well-hydrated throughout the day. Check your urine to determine if you are drinking enough water (it should be light yellow or clear and odorless). Avoid drinking sugary, caffeinated or diet drinks.
- **Eat well and balanced.** Eat regular meals and snacks. Eat as clean and organic as possible. Avoid processed foods and prepare your own meals instead of eating out as much as possible. Include a lot of vegetables, fruits, nuts, legumes and whole grains. Avoid refined sugar and saturated fats as best as possible. This will require you to plan ahead as it relates to shopping, time and logistical preparations; therefore, include it in your organization.

5. Pause

Achieving balance and experiencing maximum physical well-being will require you to consider the power of **rest**, breaks, vacation and meditation in your life. Sleep should occur every night at a regular time for at least seven to eight hours. Take a lunch break and mini-breaks throughout the day. Start your day with a meditation (could be spiritual or non-spiritual depending on your belief system). Take regular vacations (preferably every three months for at least a week if that is possible). At the end of the day, reflect on what went well and what needs to change and improve tomorrow in relation to all things on the list above.

At the end of the day, restate your new objective: "I choose to live life to the fullest!" Finding a desired level of equilibrium in your life will be an ongoing journey, but if you can manage to implement these action strategies, you will achieve a greater level of balance that will contribute significantly to your physical well-being and inspire you to continue to do better. You will be energized and have a much more positive outlook on life

because you know that you took a chance to choose to challenge yourself and change for the better.



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Dominique is a director of university wellness, an international speaker, certified personal trainer (ACE), wellness practitioner (NWI), lecturer, author, filmmaker, hobby photographer and musician. She was awarded **'Top 11 Personal Trainers to Watch in the U.S.'** (2011) by Life Fitness and ACE. In 2016, the U.S. President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition recognized Dominique with the **'Community Leadership Award'** for health promotion.

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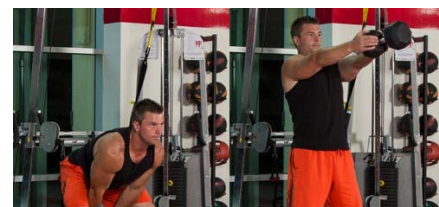
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