

# Balancing Career and Family Responsibilities

by Evie DavyRomano, MS, LMFTA, Associate Marriage & Family Therapist



In today's busy world most of us have multiple roles that we need to fill. We are often torn between the demands of being a spouse, parent and family member while still having a full or part-time career.

In addition to this, we have other life responsibilities including being a good neighbor, active church member, volunteer, etc. So how do we keep our sanity while fulfilling all of these demanding roles?

First of all, we need to accept that we are not super human. We cannot accomplish all of these areas completely all the time. If we give our career all of the energy we have available, our family will get short- changed. If we give and do all that is possible for our families, we will not be able to give our full energy to a career. There is no need to feel guilty if we can't "do it all." Instead

we must accept that we have to choose our priorities and then balance them in a way that is best for us. That will be different for each individual.

Some people try to have a demanding career while still doing all the things that would be expected of a stay-at-home parent. This is a recipe for "burn-out" and when we are "burnt-out" we don't do any of the above well. If we aren't caring for ourselves, we will have nothing left to give to others.

It would be wonderful if we could decide to only do what fits neatly in our schedules, but for many of us that is not an option. When that is the case, we need to find the right balance of all our obligations with enough self-care to keep us healthy.

## So what is Self-Care?

*Self-Care* is the ability to recognize one's need and responsibility to take care of his or her own emotional, spiritual, mental and physical health.

*Self-Care* comes in different forms and is unique to everyone, but ultimately can restore, refresh and strengthen.

*Self-Care* is a discipline that must be practiced.

*Self-Care* indirectly cares for others because the time and energy expended will come from fullness not emptiness.

*Self-Care* is NOT selfish or self-serving; it is showing yourself the grace and compassion that God has shown you.

It is easy to get consumed with schedules, routines, and activities, which are good, but not at the cost of



For more information, call

708-895-7310 or  
219-226-1810



Originally published in "Turning a New Leaf," Fall 2014

anxiety, guilt, depression and broken relationships, which are all likely outcomes of loose boundaries and poor self-care.

There are a variety of ways we accomplish self-care, and we have suggested on the back of this flyer. What works for one person, might not work for another. The point is to find what helps you take care of your overall health and well-being.

If you are feeling overwhelmed with your responsibilities as a working mother, father or caregiver, and feeling anxious or stressed, then I encourage you to talk to someone about it. You are not alone! Take that first step in seeking the support you need to learn how to care for yourself.

### Ways to Accomplish Self-Care

- **Leave negative emotions at work and not take them home and vice versa.**
- **Learn to say “no” to non-essentials.**
- **Seek peace, solitude and rest each day.**
- **Take a break from demanding tasks.**
- **Find a way to re-energize, seek solace or unwind.**
- **Nurture your valued relationships and be intentional with your time.**
- **Make date nights with your spouse a priority.**
- **Call a friend.**
- **Have one-on-one time with a child.**
- **Set and keep limits on work hours.**
- **Set boundaries that can be flexible if needed.**