

### ❖ Managing Work & Family

Unfortunately, many couples get married without spending much time discussing their expectations about what their work and family life will be like. It's important that you and your spouse have a joint understanding of each other's thoughts and expectations in these areas.

*Answer these questions individually, and then compare your answers with those of your spouse.*



Do you and your spouse both plan on working after you get married?

If you both work, will one spouse's job take priority over the other's?

Are you and your spouse in agreement about the type of work you both will do?

Do you expect your spouse to be open to relocating if your job requires it?

If both you and your spouse do not need to work for financial reasons, will both work anyway?

If your spouse became unemployed, for how long would you be comfortable being the sole provider?

How will your work affect your decisions of whether and when to have children?

Should either of you consider staying home to care for the children? Who should that be?

If both you and your spouse need or want to work, what are your childcare options?

How many hours do you expect to work in a typical week?

What type of hours do you expect your spouse to work in a typical week?

Is career development or family life your top priority?

Whether one or both of you work, it's important for you to create a healthy balance between work and home.

Although it's impossible to completely separate your work life from your home life, there are some potential benefits to having a little separation between the two.

*Complete the following sentences so you'll have a better understanding of how your work life spills over into your home life. Read through your responses with your spouse. Which responses do you feel good about? Which responses show how your work life might be negatively affecting your home life?*

If I work overtime, when I get home...

After a hard day at work, when I get home...

If I feel hassled at work, when I get home...

If my boss compliments me, when I get home...

If things have gone well at work, when I get home...

If my work environment has been noisy, when I get home...

If I've been bored at work, when I get home...

If I feel underpaid, when I get home...

If I've had to take orders all day, when I get home...

If I'm proud of my day's work, when I get home...





<b>Balance vs. Stress</b> - Now consider the level of balance or stress in your life. Circle your responses to the statements below as strongly disagree (SD), disagree (D), neither (N), agree (A), or strongly agree (SA).					
At the end of the day, I feel frustrated because I did not accomplish all that I planned to do.	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
I find myself trying to be everything to everybody.	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
I have difficulty setting aside time for activities with my spouse.	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
I feel good about how much my spouse contributes to the care and maintenance of our home.	SD (5)	D (4)	N (3)	A (2)	SA (1)
I often cannot participate in family activities because of my work.	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
I often cannot get work done because of commitments to my family.	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
Tally the points that are associated with each of the responses you circled.					
<i>If your score is 6 to 12 — you're probably doing well in managing your work/family balance.</i>					
<i>If your score is 13 to 20 — you may want to look at a few areas of work/family life and think of ways to reduce the stress a bit.</i>					
<i>If your score is 21 to 30 — it's important that you and your spouse discuss strategies for reducing your stress and restoring some balance to your life.</i>					

**❖ Tips for Managing Work & Family**

Changes don't have to be big to make a difference. Try some of these pointers to help you manage the daily routines of work and family.



**Wake-up time**

- Get to bed earlier and get up earlier.
- Get ready before waking others.
- Have children make their own lunches.
- Coordinate and share morning tasks with your spouse.
- Take time for breakfast.
- Set clocks ahead 10 minutes.
- Reward yourself for arriving at work on time.

**After work/dinnertime**

- Transition with a change of clothes.
- Take time to listen and debrief about each other's day.
- Prepare meals together.
- Sit down for dinner together at the table.
- Allow each other some time alone.
- Share cleanup of the dishes and house.
- Make the next day's lunches.

**Cleanup/bedtime**

- Stick with an agreed TV cutoff time.
- Do a few maintenance chores daily (bills, dusting).
- Arrange items that you need access to in the morning in a familiar place.
- Plan and lay out what to wear tomorrow.

