



WORK



LIFE

Balance

*Stabilizing
Your
Schedule*

story by **Victoria Snyder** photo courtesy of **Singing River Health System**

Finding time to take care of yourself can be difficult, even in the best of times. During the worst of times, it can seem next to impossible. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, stress and anxiety are making themselves known in many people's lives more than ever. Even when self-care seems unachievable, attempting to take some time for yourself is better for you, your mental health, and even your physical health.

"Stress can affect the body in numerous ways. After all, it is our body's natural response to feeling a threat," says Cassie Slaton, a Clinical Therapist and Liaison with Singing River Health System. As Slaton explains, stress impacts people both physically and mentally, with symptoms including difficulty when trying to focus, lack of interest, headaches, and weight loss or gain. "These are just a few symptoms, and everyone reacts to stress differently, but it is important for us to listen to our bodies especially during high-stress times in our lives."

With so many people finding themselves at home more, and often working from home, because of COVID-19, it can be difficult to separate work and life. When it comes to a good work-life balance,

Slaton says that "It's very important to set boundaries with ourselves and even our partners." Slaton's advice? "Be loyal to yourself. Clearly identify and separate



Cassie Slaton

when your work hours are and when your home life or me-time begins."

If you're not sure what to do to relax, don't worry! "We all consider different things to be relaxing," adds Slaton. "For some it could look like getting that gym or yoga class in, taking a walk, taking a long shower or bubble bath, reading or literally

propping your feet up, and not doing a thing but being."

Speaking of relaxation, many enjoy spending time and doing activities with their families in their free time, especially with all of this extra time at home. "I do see and hear families having more dinners together, cooking together, having games and movie nights," Slaton says. However, not everybody may be with their families at this time, leading to increased feelings of isolation and depression. "It's important to know who your support system is and to stay in contact with them, even if only with phone calls, FaceTime, or Zoom."

The important thing to remember during this time of upheaval is that you need to make time to take care of yourself. Everybody processes things differently and enjoys different things, so do what is best for you during this tumultuous time.

Singing River Health System
www.singingriverhealthsystem.com

*For tips on managing stress and anxiety
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