



This issue builds resilience in...

Mental Health

Maintaining Balance

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## Wishing there were more hours in the day?

How often do you catch yourself saying, “I wish I could split myself in half to get the essentials done and still have some time for me”? Families often feel like there is very little time in the week for them to de-stress and do something enjoyable. What’s worse is that, when they do, they often feel guilty for it. This ‘having to be productive mode’ can lead to overwhelm, anxiety and low moods. It’s not good for anyone, especially the children and is one of the contributors to the increasing levels of stress.

### Change your default setting...

Creating a **default diary** can miraculously find the hours in the day you’ve been hunting for. It has added bonuses of: building respect, developing very healthy habits for your children to learn from and maximises time efficiency.

e.g. Mary has 3 small children (one with special needs) and was feeling constantly overwhelmed. She described herself as either a “Screaming Shrew”, “A nagging fish wife” or when that failed, “A slap-fest mother”. She was horrified with who she’d become since having children.

Using the following ideas, Mary sat down and worked out her default diary for the next 6 months. She blocked out holidays with the family, scheduled a 2 hour weekly riding lesson for herself (she loved riding when she was younger), committed to 2 sessions of gym a week and then built work and other commitments around these. She put herself first, family second and then the other necessities of living came after that! (The reverse of what most people do.) It worked!!!

### Here’s how to start your own default diary...

Choose **one activity** that you would love to do each week, even if it’s only for 30 minutes. It needs to be something that makes you feel brighter, more

vibrant and content? Schedule it into your diary and ensure you have the resources you need to **be certain it will happen**. Do you need baby sitting etc.? Make this a top priority appointment not to be missed. Block out some **quality time for important relationships** and plan for these too. Include some self-care time for **health and wellbeing**. Once you’ve developed a habit of scheduling time-out for fun, you may find your default setting becomes, “Calm, content and resilient”. It’s not about having more time, it’s spending it effectively that makes the difference.

- ✓ Not scheduling time for you can cause overwhelm and out of proportion emotional reactions.
- ✓ Start a default diary that starts with you first.
- ✓ Keep to it like your life depends upon it, because your sanity does!

**“Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you.”**

Carl Sandburg