

A GUIDE TO BALANCING WORK, LIFE, AND MENTAL HEALTH



Abstract

In the fast-paced modern world, achieving a balance between work commitments, personal life, and mental well-being has become increasingly challenging. This abstract presents a comprehensive guide aimed at assisting individuals in effectively managing these aspects of their lives. The guide explores strategies for maintaining equilibrium amidst the demands of career, familial responsibilities, social engagements, and mental health considerations.

Drawing upon research findings, practical advice, and personal anecdotes, this guide offers actionable insights for individuals seeking to cultivate a harmonious integration of work, life, and mental well-being. By implementing the strategies outlined in this guide, individuals can strive towards achieving a sustainable balance that promotes overall fulfillment and resilience in the face of life's challenges.

The secret To A Healthy Work-Life Balance

Often, work takes precedence over everything else in our lives. Our desire to succeed professionally can push us to set aside our own well-being. Creating a harmonious work-life balance or work-life integration is critical, though, to improve not only our physical, emotional and mental well-being, but also to succeed in our career.

What is work-life balance?



In short, work-life balance is the state of equilibrium where a person equally prioritizes the demands of one's career and the demands of one's personal life. Many people seek work-life balance, but it's not always easy to achieve. Some of the common reasons that lead to a poor work-life balance include:

- Increased responsibilities at work
- Working longer hours
- Increased responsibilities at home

- Having children

It's important to work toward reaching and maintaining a healthy equilibrium between your personal and professional life. A good work-life balance, said Chris Chancey, career expert and CEO of Amplio Recruiting, has numerous positive effects, including stress reduction, a lower risk of burnout and a greater sense of well-being. This benefits both employees and employers. "Employers who are committed to providing environments that support work-life balance for their employees can save on costs, experience fewer cases of absenteeism, and enjoy a more loyal and productive workforce," said Chancey. Employers that offer options such as telecommuting or flexible work schedules can help employees have a better work-life balance.

How can you improve work-life balance?

Improving your work-life balance means making an effort to find the best way to spend your time so you thrive at the office and at home.

When creating a schedule that works for you, think about the best way to achieve balance at work and in your personal life. Chancey said that work-life balance is less about dividing the hours in your day evenly between work and personal life and more about having the flexibility to get things done in your professional life while still having time and energy to enjoy your personal life. There may be some days where you work longer hours so you have time later in the week to enjoy other activities.

Here are eight tips for creating a better work-life balance.

★ **Accept that there is no 'perfect' work-life balance**

When you hear "work-life balance," you probably imagine having an extremely productive day at work, and leaving early to spend the other half of the day with friends and family. While this may seem ideal, it is not always possible.

Don't strive for the perfect schedule; strive for a realistic one. Some days, you might focus more on work, while other days you might have more time and energy to pursue your hobbies or spend time with your loved ones. Balance is achieved over time, not each day.

"It is important to remain fluid and constantly assess where you are [versus] your goals and priorities," said Heather Monahan, bestselling author and founder of the career mentoring group Boss In Heels. "At times, your children may need you, and other times, you may need to travel for work, but allowing yourself to remain open to redirecting and assessing your needs on any day is key in finding balance."

★ **Find a job that you love**

Although work is an expected societal norm, your career shouldn't be miserable. If you hate what you do, you aren't going to be happy, plain and simple. You don't need to love every aspect of your job, but it needs to be exciting enough that you don't dread getting out of bed every morning.

Monahan recommended finding a job that you are so passionate about you would do it for free. “If your job is draining you and you are finding it difficult to do the things you love outside of work, something is wrong,” said Monahan. “You may be working in a toxic environment, for a toxic person, or doing a job that you truly don’t love. If this is the case, it is time to find a new job.”

Doing what you love for a living can make a huge difference when it comes to work-life balance. Read our guide on choosing the best job for you to find a fulfilling career that motivates you and allows you to be a well-rounded individual.

★ **Prioritize your health**



Your overall physical, emotional and mental health should be your main concern. If you struggle with anxiety or depression and think therapy would benefit you, fit those sessions into your schedule, even if you have to leave work early or ditch your evening spin class. If you are battling a chronic illness, don’t be afraid to call in sick on rough days. Overworking yourself prevents you from getting better, possibly causing you to take more days off in the future. “Prioritizing your health first and foremost will make you a better employee and person,” said Monahan. “You will miss less work, and when you are there, you will be happier and more productive.”

Prioritizing your health doesn’t have to consist of radical or extreme activities. It can be as simple as daily meditation or exercise.

★ **Don’t be afraid to unplug**

Cutting ties with the outside world from time to time allows us to recover from weekly stress and gives us space for other thoughts and ideas to emerge. Unplugging can mean something simple like practicing transit meditation on your daily commute instead of checking work emails. Monahan said when she used to travel with her boss for work, she’d look over to find him reading a novel while she would be doing something work-related.

“I didn’t understand at the time that he was giving himself a break and decompressing while I was leading myself to a potential burnout,” said Monahan.

Now, Monahan practices the same tactics. She reiterated that taking a break to unwind is critical to success and will help you feel more energized and productive when you’re on the clock.

★ **Take a vacation**

Sometimes, truly unplugging means taking vacation time and shutting off work completely for a while. Whether your vacation consists of a one-day staycation or a two-week trip to Bali, it’s important to take time off to physically and mentally recharge.

According to a State of American Vacation study conducted by the U.S. Travel Association, 55 percent of employees reported having unused vacation days left over at the end of the year. Employees are often worried that taking time off will disrupt the workflow, and they will be met with a backlog of work when they return. This fear should not restrict you from taking a much-needed break.

“The truth is, there is no nobility in not taking well-deserved time away from work; the benefits of taking a day off far outweigh the downsides,” said Chancey. “With proper planning, you can take time away without worrying about burdening your colleagues or contending with a huge workload when you return.”

★ **Make time for yourself and your loved ones**

While your job is important, it shouldn’t be your entire life. You were an individual before taking this position, and you should prioritize the activities or hobbies that make you happy. Chancey said that achieving work-life balance requires deliberate action.

“If you do not firmly plan for personal time, you will never have time to do other things outside of work,” said Chancey. “No matter how hectic your schedule might be, you ultimately have control of your time and life.”

When planning time with your loved ones, create a calendar for romantic and family dates. It may seem weird to plan one-on-one time with someone you live with, but it will ensure that you spend quality time with them without work-life conflict. Just because work keeps you busy doesn’t mean you should neglect personal relationships.

“Realize that no one at your company is going to love you or appreciate you the way your loved ones do,” said Monahan. “Also [remember] that everyone is replaceable at work, and no matter how important you think your job is, the company will not miss a beat tomorrow if you are gone.”

★ **Set boundaries and work hours**

Set boundaries for yourself and your colleagues to avoid burnout. When you leave the office, avoid thinking about upcoming projects or answering company emails. Consider having a separate computer or phone for work so you can shut it off when you clock out. If that isn’t possible, use separate browsers, emails or filters for your work and personal platforms.

Additionally, Chancey recommended setting specific work hours. “Whether you work away from home or at home, it is important to determine when you will work and when you will stop working; otherwise, you might find yourself answering work-related emails late at night, during vacations or on weekends off,” said Chancey.

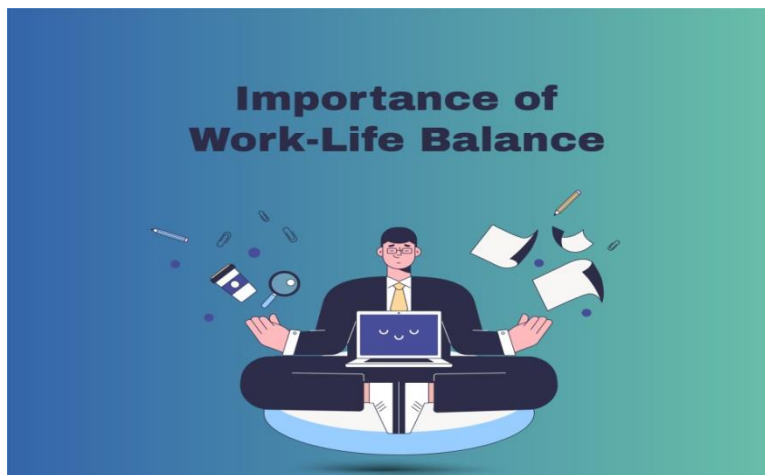
Chancey advised notifying team members and your manager about boundaries beyond which you cannot be accessible because you are engaged in personal activities. This will help to ensure that they understand and respect your workplace limits and that they don’t create unrealistic expectations.

★ **Set goals and priorities (and stick to them)**

Set achievable goals by implementing time-management strategies, analyzing your to-do list and cutting out tasks that have little value.

Pay attention to when your most productive work time is, and block that time off for your most important work-related activities. Avoid checking your emails and phone every few minutes, as those are major time-wasting tasks that derail your attention and productivity. Structuring your day can increase productivity at work, which can result in more free time to relax outside of work.

Why is work-life balance important?



The goal of a healthy work-life balance is to succeed at work and at the same time lead a fulfilling personal life. If an imbalance exists and too much of your time and energy is devoted to work, it will lead to negative consequences in almost every area of your life.

Here are some reasons why it is important to achieve a good work-life balance.

★ **It impacts your mental health**

Stress in the workplace is unavoidable, but if you are dedicating too much time to work and don’t have enough time to unwind, stress can become unmanageable, negatively affecting your mental health. And, if you are overwhelmed at work, you probably don’t have enough time to deal with your responsibilities at home, which only exacerbates the problem.

A Mental Health America and FlexJobs study found that 76 percent of people said workplace stress negatively impacts their mental health, leading to challenges like depression and anxiety. But they found that having flexible work options, an indicator of good work-life balance, results in employees reporting better mental health. In fact, those who don't have flexibility were twice as likely to say that they have poor mental health.

★ **It impacts your physical health**

Apart from impacting mental health, the stress caused by a work-life imbalance can also lead to a variety of physical health issues. A CDC report on stress at work notes that demanding jobs can result in a host of problems, such as cardiovascular disease as well as musculoskeletal and psychological disorders. The report also notes that there is some evidence that work-related stress might be a factor in ulcers, cancer and impaired immune function.

A healthy work-life balance not only reduces stress, which can help prevent disease, but it also allows you to prioritize your health by making time to exercise and eat a healthy diet.

★ **It impacts your job performance**

A poor work-life balance has serious consequences for your health, but spending too much time and energy on work can actually negatively affect your work performance. Mind Share Partners' 2021 Mental Health at Work report noted that, due to stress and other work-related mental health issues, employees are only performing at around 72 percent of their full capacity. On top of that, they are missing around eight days of work a year because of mental health issues.

But, a 2021 study in the Kansas Journal of Medicine found that employer efforts to reduce stress and increase employee psychological well-being lead to higher performance. Since working overtime won't make you more productive, it's important to focus on how you work, not how many hours you spend. Working with your employer to find flexible arrangements that allow for a better work-life balance will help make you a more productive and more valuable employee.

★ **It impacts your relationships**

It may seem obvious, but a work-life imbalance will cause problems outside of the workplace. A recent UKG survey noted that 71 percent of people said that work stress affects their home life and 62 percent said it negatively impacts their relationships. If you are stressed by work and spending too much time on it, you won't have the adequate time or emotional capacity to dedicate to your loved ones.

Finding a positive work-life balance will allow you to spend time with the people you care about. And not being overwhelmed by work means you'll be able to fully be present in the moment and enjoy that time with friends and family. The goal is to be more than just a good employee; it is to be a well-rounded individual with an enriching life in and out of the workplace.

A healthy work-life balance takes work

None of us is superhuman, and giving 200 percent at work will result in slip-ups in other areas of our lives. Of course, succeeding at work is important, but we've got only one life to live. We shouldn't sacrifice our personal lives or our health to get ahead professionally.

Achieving a healthy work-life balance is key to being a well-rounded individual who thrives at home and in the office. But that takes work, and the right equilibrium looks different for everyone. It could mean taking a break, arranging a flexible schedule with your employer or finding an entirely new job that fits your needs. Reflect upon what you need to have better work-life balance, then take action to make it happen.

Taking Care of Your Mental Health

Good mental health is when you feel you can manage day to day stresses, work productively, use your abilities and contribute to society.

What is good mental health?



Good mental health is more than just the absence of mental illness. It means you are in a state of wellbeing where you feel good and function well in the world.

According to the World Health Organisation, good mental health is when you can:

- cope with the normal stresses of life
- learn and work productively
- use your talents and abilities
- contribute to the community

If you have good mental health, you might feel happy, confident, hopeful and generally satisfied with life.

You are likely to feel connected to other people and to be making a contribution to society. You might also have a sense of meaning or purpose and a feeling of being at peace.

Good mental health in challenging times

Everyone has challenges in life. People who have good mental health are more likely to be able to cope with the ups and downs of daily life.

You are more likely to have good mental health if:

- you are confident when you come across new situations or stresses
- you feel optimistic
- you do not always blame yourself
- you can set and achieve your goals
- you can stick to routines that are good for you, such as eating and sleeping well
- you can enjoy life even though you've had difficult experiences

Building resilience

An important part of having good mental health is building resilience. This is when you can cope with unexpected changes and challenges in your life, by using your inner strength and the networks around you.

Resilient people can manage stress better. This means they are less likely to develop mental health problems such as depression and anxiety. You can learn coping skills to build resilience. For more information about building resilience, visit [headspace](#) or [Kids Helpline](#).

Daily actions for good mental health

Research conducted by MindSpot has shown that people who regularly do the below actions tend to have better mental health than people who don't do them.

MindSpot refers to these as 'the Big Five', and their research has shown that the more often you do these actions, the better your mental health may be.

★ Meaningful activities

These are any actions that you enjoy or that give you a sense of accomplishment. A meaningful activity could be listening to music you like, or watching a favourite TV show.

★ Healthy thinking

Examples of healthy thinking include keeping perspective and talking to yourself with kindness.

★ Goals and plans

Having goals is important to keep you energised and motivated. Goals give you something to look forward to and can help to prevent dwelling on past problems.

★ Healthy routine

Keeping up a healthy routine doesn't need to be complicated. It can be as simple as going to bed and waking up at the same time every day, or a routine linked to our roles and relationships.

Social connections

Staying connected to friends and family helps you to feel validated and reminds you that you belong.

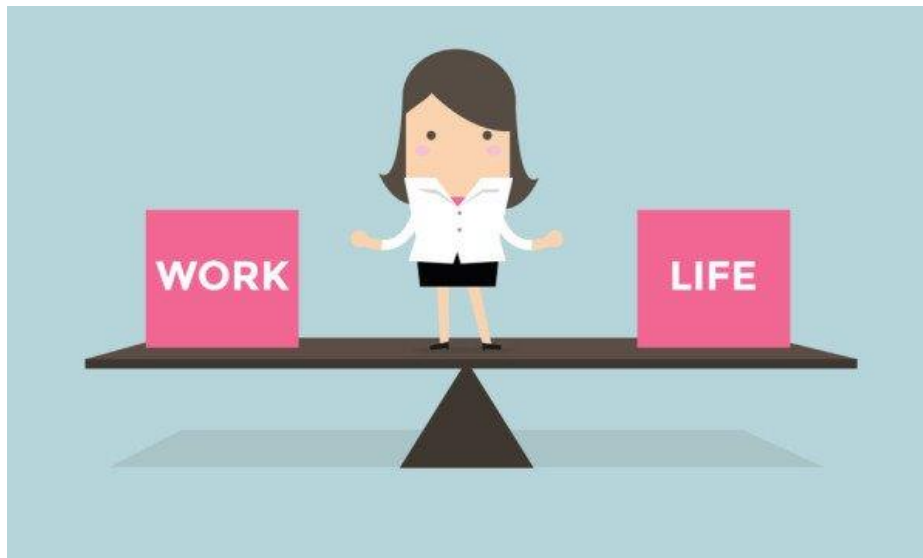
How To Maintain A Social Connections To Maintain Work Life Balance

Many companies talk about offering a “good” work-life balance as a means to attract or retain employees. Though their exact meaning may vary based on the occupation, it often means they do one or more of the following:

- offer flexible schedules
- options to work from home
- several days off and holidays
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Finding a balance as an employee can have important impacts on your health and overall satisfaction. It can also impact your overall job performance.

What is work-life balance?



The Cambridge Dictionary defines work-life balance simply as the number of hours spent doing your job vs the number of hours you spend doing things you enjoy.

Researchers note that many people think of work-life balance as balancing family time and work., researchers noted a lack of research that examines other aspects of “life” beyond the family.

They noted that current research has largely focused on working parents whose “life” consists of taking care of their dependent children. They argue that “life” in the diverse workspace, encompasses much more than simply taking care of children or managing family time.

Another review of studies from 2021 explored gaps in research about work-life balance. They noted several areas where more research is needed, including how:

- employee education affects work-life balance
- impact of income on work-life balance
- domestic helps impact
- individual (employee) strategies play an important role in work life balance
- implemented strategies at companies worked after some time

Understanding these areas could help increase the number of people across all demographics and occupations to achieve better work life balance. **How to help employees balance life and work**

Employers have good reason to pay attention to work-life balance. According to Mental Health America (MHA), improving the balance can help employees feel less stress, which can lead to less turn over, improved productivity, and fewer sick days.

Some policies that workplaces are doing to help with work life balance in recent years include:

- offering extensive or flexible paid time off (PTO)
- options to work from home
- changes to parental or other leave policies to be more flexible
- respecting working hours
- reminding employees about their benefits
- having management set good examples such as not sending out emails after hours and sticking to normal working hours

How is Time Management important for your Mental Health?

Working on your time management skills, taking time to recharge, becoming aware of how events affect you, and relying on a support network may help you manage job-related stress. Asking for help is also important.

Here's how effective time management contributes to mental well-being:

Reduced Stress

Proper time management helps individuals allocate sufficient time for tasks, thereby reducing the pressure of impending deadlines. When tasks are spread out and tackled systematically, there's less likelihood of feeling overwhelmed by a mountain of work. This reduction in stress levels can prevent the onset of anxiety and burnout.

Improved Productivity

Time management techniques such as prioritization and goal-setting enable individuals to focus on high-value tasks, leading to increased productivity. Accomplishing tasks in a timely manner enhances feelings of competence and satisfaction, positively impacting mental well-being.

Enhanced Work-Life Balance

Effective time management allows individuals to allocate time not only for work but also for personal pursuits, relaxation, and social activities. Maintaining a healthy balance between work and leisure is essential for preventing work-related stress and maintaining overall life satisfaction.

Greater Sense of Control

When individuals have a clear plan and schedule for their tasks, they feel more in control of their time and activities. This sense of control can alleviate feelings of uncertainty and helplessness, promoting a positive mindset and resilience in the face of challenges.

Increased Self-Care Opportunities

Proper time management enables individuals to carve out time for self-care activities such as exercise, hobbies, and relaxation techniques. Prioritizing self-care is essential for maintaining mental health and preventing burnout, as it allows individuals to recharge and rejuvenate.

Prevention of Procrastination

Effective time management strategies help individuals overcome procrastination tendencies by breaking tasks into smaller, manageable steps and setting deadlines. Procrastination often leads to increased stress and anxiety, which can negatively impact mental health.

Build Self Care Practices To maintain Mental Health

Self-care, as the name suggests, is all about caring for yourself to ensure that both your physical and emotional needs are met. All the stress relief activities in the world won't help if you aren't taking care of yourself. Meditation won't do you any good if you aren't getting adequate sleep. In fact, when you try to meditate, you might doze off because you aren't taking care of your body's need for sleep.



Similarly, hitting the gym once in a while won't relieve much stress if you're not regularly fueling your body with healthy, nutrient-dense food. You need to take care of your basic needs first if you want your stress relief activities to be effective.

This article discusses some of the different types of self-care and why they are so important. It also covers some of the things that you can do to develop a self-care plan of your own.

What Is Self-Care?

Self-care has been defined as "a multidimensional, multifaceted process of purposeful engagement in strategies that promote healthy functioning and enhance well-being."¹ Essentially, self-care means a conscious act people take in order to promote their own physical, mental, and emotional health.

There are many forms that good self-care can take. It could be ensuring you get enough sleep every night or stepping outside for a few minutes for some fresh air. It can also mean taking the time to do the things that you enjoy doing.

Self-care is vital for building resilience toward those stressors in life that you can't eliminate. When you've taken steps to care for your mind and body, you'll be better equipped to live your best life.

Incorporating these self-care activities into daily routines, such as exercise, mindfulness meditation, hobbies, and regular house cleaning and maintenance, to promote overall well-being while working remotely.

★ Exercise

Engaging in regular physical activity is crucial for both physical and mental health. Whether it's a brisk walk, yoga session, or home workout, exercise helps reduce stress, boost mood, and improve overall well-being.

★ Mindfulness Meditation

Practicing mindfulness meditation can help cultivate a sense of calm and clarity amidst the chaos of daily life. Taking a few minutes each day to focus on your breath and observe your thoughts can reduce stress and enhance mental resilience.

★ Hobbies

Pursuing hobbies and interests outside of work is essential for maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Whether it's painting, cooking, gardening, or playing a musical instrument, dedicating time to activities you enjoy can provide a much-needed mental break and foster creativity.

★ Regular House Cleaning and Maintenance

Incorporating regular house cleaning and maintenance tasks into your routine can have significant benefits for your well-being. A clean and organized living space can reduce stress, increase productivity, and promote a sense of calm and control. Schedule time each week to tackle cleaning chores such as dusting, vacuuming, and decluttering to create a more peaceful environment to work and relax in.

Benefits Of Regular House Cleaning And Maintenance

★ Improved Health And Well Being



There is no denying the fact that a clean home is a hygienic home. Dust, dirt, allergens, pollen, and mould can trigger allergies, respiratory problems and even asthma.

With regular dusting and cleaning of contaminated surfaces, you can reduce the level of allergens and germs in your home, which can improve the overall health and well-being of your family. You must follow best hacks to reduce dust mites, pet dander, and grime to keep your house clean and hygienic.

Tip: Use eco-friendly or organic cleaning products that do not contain harmful chemicals or release toxic fumes. Try vinegar, baking soda, lemon, etc., over store-bought cleaners to maintain a healthy indoor environment.

★ Improves Indoor Air Quality

The air you breathe is not healthy if you live in an unclean house. The presence of dust mites, pet dander, mould, pollen and other allergens can contribute to poor indoor air quality. This can lead to various health hazards, including:

- Coughing & Wheezing in Children
- Watery Eyes and congestion
- Decreased Lung Function
- Poor Sleep Quality
- Breathing Problems or trigger your asthma

Luckily, regular cleaning of air vents, ducts, dusting of hard surfaces, and vacuuming of carpets and upholstered furniture. Make sure you use a HEPA-filtered vacuum machine to achieve desired outcomes while cleaning.

★ Enhances Mental Well-Being

Believe it or not! A cluttered and dust-laden home can affect your mental health. It can increase anxiety levels and affect your overall productivity. You may feel irritated or annoyed throughout the day because of the dirt and filth around you.

On the other hand, regular cleaning gives you peace of mind and a relaxed atmosphere. It is always good to de-clutter your home and bring positive vibes to your life. It becomes even more important to keep a house clean with kids and pets because they create a lot of mess, which can lead to stress.

Tip: If you are hiring professionals for deep cleaning, it is a good idea to vacate your property, like removing large furniture and appliances, before the arrival of professional end of lease cleaners Melbourne. This will help them clean the entire premises without any hindrance.

★ **Creates A Safer Indoor Environment**

Every house needs fixtures for heating, cooling, water sources and electricity. Regular maintenance of these appliances and gadgets including HVAC systems, plumbing and other household systems can minimise the risk of fire hazards, accidents and failure of equipment. Addressing necessary safety concerns ensures a healthy indoor environment for the entire family, especially if you have kids and pets. Maintenance increases the shelf life of appliances and creates a safer environment.

★ **Extended Lifespan Of Expensive Appliances & Furniture**

Regular cleaning and maintenance of ovens, microwaves, refrigerators, and other household furniture can help extend their lifespan. If they are laden with grease, grime and dirt, the appliances will malfunction sooner or later. It can also lead to electrical failure and hazards like fire. Thus, they must be cleaned with non-toxic cleaning solutions to increase their lifespan and enhance the hygiene levels for cooking and storing food.

In addition, make sure you take care of each piece of furniture, polish the wooden table, prevent wear and tear and keep them clean and shiny. It removes the germs present on the high-touch zones and eliminates the risk of spreading infections.

★ **Prevents Pests And Mould Infestation**

Regular cleaning of kitchen areas, bathroom surfaces and removing spills, food debris and crumbs can prevent pests like rodents and cockroaches. This promotes pest control and keeps your abode clean.

Sweeping, mopping and cleaning dirty surfaces can discourage pests from thriving in your abode.

On the other hand, inspecting humid areas, checking plumbing issues and controlling moisture can help reduce mould infestation.

Make sure you repair leaks, improve ventilation and regularly clean bathrooms to alleviate the risk of mould and mildew growth.

★ **Controls Your Repair Expenses**

Roofing, HVAC systems and plumbing maintenance can prevent bigger issues and help you save money in the long run. It prevents expenses on property repairs and replacements, which is great if living in a rented property in Victoria.

★ Increase The Property Value



There is no denying the fact that a tidy and well-maintained abode has the potential to sell for a higher price than a cluttered and dirty home. If you plan to sell your home soon, make sure you regularly spruce up every nook and cranny and also pay attention to the property maintenance to get the best price. It improves the curb appeal and attracts more buyers who can pay a better price.

★ Boosts Productivity

Sprucing up and organising all rooms, cabinets, cupboards and storage units on a regular basis help you stay organised and improve overall productivity.

You can easily focus on important chores without wasting your time searching for misplaced household belongings.

If you are preparing a property for the final inspection, do proper research and book the best end of lease cleaning Melbourne Service and get your full bond back without any stress. They follow a proper end of lease cleaning checklist and leave no stone unturned to give you sparkling results.

Wrapping Up

A tidy and well-maintained home reflects your personality, hard work and gives you a sense of accomplishment. These are some of the key benefits of regular cleaning and maintenance of a home. You can create a proper schedule, involve your family or simply hire professional house cleaners to maintain a healthy, hygienic and safe indoor environment. Maintaining a tidy and organised home is crucial for keeping disease-causing germs, bacteria and viruses at bay. Creating a schedule for regular housekeeping chores can help you tackle dust, dirt, allergens, spills, bad odours and stubborn stains with ease.

Bottom Line

The demands of your daily life can dictate what type of self-care you might need the most. A self-care plan for a busy college student who feels mentally stimulated all the time and has a bustling social life might need to emphasize physical self-care. A retired person, on the other hand, may need to incorporate more social self-care into their schedule to make sure that their social needs are being met.

Self-care isn't a one size fits all strategy. Your self-care plan will need to be customized to your needs and what is currently going on in your life. You don't want to wait until you've reached your breaking point. The goal is to take steps each day to make sure that you are getting what you need to deal with the stress and challenges you face in your daily life.

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