Chapter 27

Data File 27-1 Maintaining a Balanced Life

**Directions:** Complete the following activity to gain insight into how to live a balanced life.

“Oh, if only there were more hours in a day!” Have you ever heard anyone say that? You might have thought it yourself. The truth is that many people long for additional time to get things done—on the job, at home, in school, and throughout life in general. Too many roles to manage may seem like more than one person can handle. If one role demands too much, another one may be neglected.

When life feels out of balance, people suffer in several ways. Stress increases, and relationships are challenged. The most enjoyable parts of life may be neglected. No one wants this to happen. Preven­tion means thinking creatively and using resources. It may mean changing the way you think, perhaps letting go of things that are really not that important. You might need flexibility and organization. You might need to take better care of yourself. All of these are part of managing life effectively. Keep in mind what author and speaker Michael Altshuler said, “The bad news is time flies; the good news is you’re the pilot.”

Several scenarios are presented below. Suppose you are a counselor. What advice would you give to help the people in each scenario?

**Activity Questions**

1. Zane and Chantal are working parents with two young children. Zane does outdoor work and maintenance around the house, and Chantal takes care of the children and household responsibilities. That means laundry, ironing, cleaning, cooking, shopping, and more. Chantal is exhausted. She sees her responsibilities as taking far more time than Zane’s, and she is silently resenting that.

<<Place Answer Here>>

2. Diana is a mother who has a part-time job. She and her husband have three children. Diana is involved in school activities and is a community volunteer. Every week she spends some time working at an animal shelter and in a soup kitchen. She recently headed a committee that put on a school carnival as a fund-raiser. Diana transports her children to various activities every week. When she was asked recently to organize a church bake sale, she agreed even though she just didn’t feel like she had the time. When she was asked to work longer hours on her job for a few months, she said yes. Then she went home and cried.

<<Place Answer Here>>

3. Akeem has a job that takes him on the road a lot, often for a week at a time. His wife, Chloe, and their two young children miss him when he’s gone. When Akeem is home, he has paperwork to do and sometimes spends part of the weekend in the company office catching up. Chloe worries that the children have so little time with Akeem. He says that what he does puts a roof over their heads and food on the table.

<<Place Answer Here>>

4. Isako is a single mother who works full-time. She has two children in elementary school. Isako makes sure the children get off to school in the morning before she goes to work. After school, the children stay with a neighbor until Isako gets home around 5:30 in the evening. Sometimes she works late to meet a project deadline. Isako feels the strain of trying to take care of child-related responsibilities, such as illnesses, doctor appointments, teacher meetings, and after-school events. Isako feels stressed, but her employer doesn’t seem to notice.

<<Place Answer Here>>

5. When Cassidy dropped in to visit her mother Margaret, she found her sitting in the kitchen with head in hands. Concerned, Cassidy asked what was wrong. She had noticed her mother looking more weary and sad in recent weeks. Reluctantly, Margaret said how difficult it was becoming to care for her own mother. Grandmother Walters had Alzheimer’s disease, which slowly robs a person of memory and ability to function. Margaret took Mrs. Walters into her own home because the older lady could no longer care for herself. Care had become a 24-hour responsibility that didn’t allow Margaret to leave Mrs. Walters in the house alone. Providing physical care had become very strenuous for Margaret. Constant vigilance was needed to prevent Mrs. Walter’s from wandering away. Cassidy’s mother didn’t know what to do and felt that she couldn’t go on this way.

<<Place Answer Here>>

6. Ask your instructor where to save your documents. This could be on the school’s network or a flash drive of your own. Name your Word document *FirstnameLastname*\_Activity27-1.docx (i.e., JohnSmith\_Activity27-1.docx).