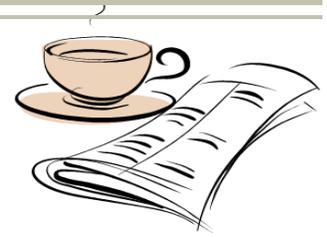


# WVNG Coffey Break

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## Building Resilience through Rest and Relaxation



Welcome to the June 2011 edition of the WVNG Coffey Break, a monthly Wellness publication for all WV National Guard members and their families. The objective is to promote wellness, readiness and resilience by providing information and resources on topics relevant to daily living.

Continuing with our Resilience series, the focus this month is on Balancing Work and Relaxation. Life is busy and it seems to get busier each year. Work, family, drill, and other commitments eat the day away and leave you no time to just sit back and relax. However, rest and relaxation are

important. In this edition, we will define what constitutes balance, identify side effects of not getting enough rest, provide tips for achieving better work-life balance, and since it is June, discuss summer vacations. So, please take a few minutes to read the following article before hitting "Delete" on your computer.

**"A vacation is having nothing to do and all day to do it in." - Robert Orben**

The mission of the National Guard Psychological Health Program is to advocate, promote and guide National Guard members and their families by supporting psychological fitness for operational readiness. For contact information regarding the Director of Psychological Health in your state or territory or other resources, go to: [www.jointservicessupport.org/](http://www.jointservicessupport.org/)

### **What is Work-Life Balance?**

It's really an individual thing and it comes down to a variety of factors. How much time do you need to rest to become optimally productive for the week that follows? One day? Two days?

There are other factors-how much time does your family need from you? Can you meld your personal relaxation time in your family time, or do you need to separate them? Do you even have a choice?

Decide what you need to recharge your batteries and be honest. The temptation is to underestimate it. But if you underestimate it, you're not doing anyone—boss, family, yourself—any favors. You'll be giving them less of you in the process.

## Coffey Break

### How Balanced Are You Right Now?



**Break (brāk)** definition *verb*:  
To interrupt or stop *break a*

Does your life feel out of balance? If so, are you also one of the many people who have promised to strike a better balance between work and home life? Most people know when they are out of balance. The typical signs are:

- Constant Tiredness
- Feeling Out of Control
- Not Doing Anything Very Well
- Being Reactive
- Not Being Able to Make Decisions
- Being Difficult to Live With or Work With

If you're someone who has difficulty reading the signs, the following questions may help. If you answer yes to any one of them, it may be time to get better at striking a good balance between your working life and your personal life:

- Are you spending long hours at work – and unhappy about it?
- Do you feel under stress?
- Do you feel overwhelmed by how much there is to do?
- Do you feel you have no control over what happens?
- Are people demanding too much of you – at work and/or at home?
- Do you often feel, no matter what you're doing at the time, that you should be doing something else?
- Do you feel guilty taking time out for yourself?

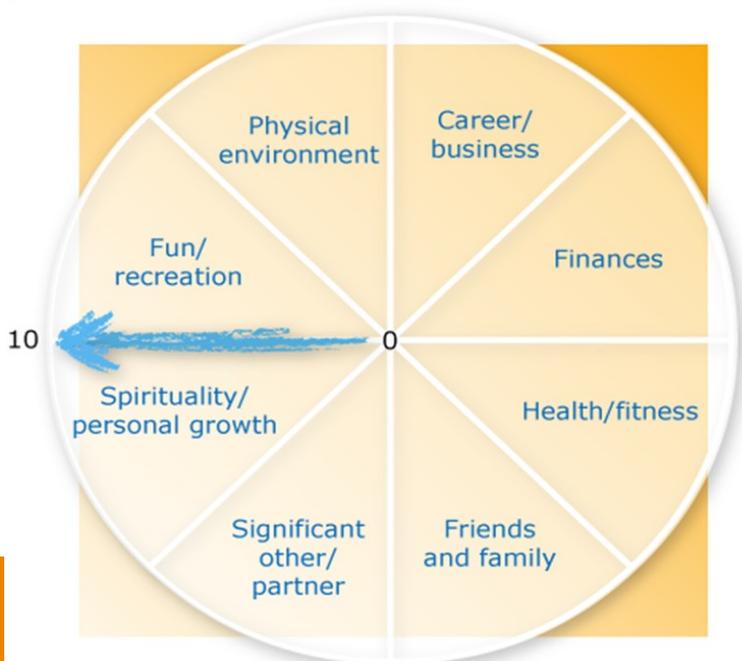
### How to Tell the Source of Imbalance

To the right is a wheel-of-life model designed to show the inter-relationship of various life roles. Score your satisfaction in each area from 0-10 and see if the areas are even.

Deciding how much focus you are putting into each area can give you clues as to which areas need the most attention.

“The hardest work is resting.”

~Author Unknown



## 6 Tips for Better Work-Life Balance



If you're feeling overworked and finding it more challenging than ever to juggle the demands of your job and the rest of your life, you're not alone.

But even if you don't have much control over the hours you have to work, you can ask yourself: "In what other ways am I bringing greater enjoyment to my life?" Focus your time and attention on things you CAN control.

Here are six ways to bring a little more balance to your daily routine:

1. **Build Downtime in Your Schedule** - When you plan your week, make it a point to schedule time with your family and friends and activities that help you recharge. If a date night with your spouse or a softball game with friends is on your calendar, you'll have something to look forward to and an extra incentive to manage your time well and not cancel.
2. **Drop Activities that Sap Your Time or Energy** - Many people waste their time on activities or people that add no value - for example, spending too much time with a friend who is venting and gossiping. Take stock of activities that aren't enhancing your career or personal life and minimize the time you spend on them.
3. **Leave Work at Work** - With the technology to connect to anyone at anytime from virtually anywhere, there may be no boundary between work and home - unless you create it. Make a conscious effort to separate work time from personal time. When you're with your family, for instance, turn off your cell phone and put away your laptop.
4. **Rethink Your Errands** - Consider whether you can outsource any of your time-consuming household chores or errands. Hire a kid down the street to mow your lawn? Exchange services with friends? If you like to cook, you could prepare and freeze a couple of meals and give them to a friend in exchange for babysitting.
5. **Get Moving** - It's hard to make time for exercise when you have a packed schedule., but experts say that it may ultimately help you get more done by boosting your energy level and ability to concentrate.
6. **Remember that a Little Relaxation Goes a Long Way** - Don't get overwhelmed by assuming that you need to make big changes to bring more balance to your life. Set realistic goals like trying to leave work earlier one night per week. Slowly build more activities in your schedule that are important to you. Maybe you can start by spending an hour a week on a hobby or planning a weekend getaway with your spouse. Even in a hectic day, take 10-15 minutes to take a walk, listen to music, or call a friend.

"The greatest step toward a life of simplicity is to learn to let go."

- Steve Maraboli

In addition, know when to seek professional help. Everyone needs help from time to time. If your life feels too chaotic to manage and you're spinning your wheels worrying about it, talk with a professional. Achieving a healthy work-life balance isn't a one time deal. It's a continuous process as your family, interests, and work life change. Periodically examine your priorities and make changes, if necessary, to make sure you're keeping on track.

## *Breaking Away with Dr. Daniela Lupu*

### Summer Vacation

The long hot days, the seemingly unlimited free time and the family summer getaway are the basic ingredients of a fun filled summer vacation. But did you know that summer is also a time of increased accidents and injuries? ER physicians treat more physical injuries resulting from house chores, sports and motor vehicle accidents than at any other time of the year.

Parents, this is the best time to review with your family safety rules that will help insure that you and your family enjoy a fun filled summer.

Remind children to keep you informed of where they're going to play and tell them to check in with you regularly. Discuss with your children how to protect themselves against perpetrators or bullies and encourage them to tell you of anything that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Review with your teenager driving safety rules such as maintaining the speed limit, not using a cell phone while driving and being cautious of whom they drive with.

Check out [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org) where topics of interest to parents, children and teens are discussed. Review the site first so you have an idea of what your children may be exposed to and then walk through it with your child or teenager. It may lead to some interesting discussions.

Great tips on how to deal with the summer heat and reduce swimming accidents can be found on the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) website, [www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/summertips.cfm](http://www.aap.org/advocacy/releases/summertips.cfm).

Above all, be deliberate about setting aside a little down time for you and your family. Life has a way of pushing us into doing more and more. If we're not careful, we drift from one task to the next daydreaming of the moment when we'll be able to slow down. When you feel pressed to do more and more ponder on John Lubbock's words, "Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes

on the grass on a summer day listening to the murmur of water or watching the clouds float across the sky, is hardly a waste of time."



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## *The Final Sip*

This is a good time and space to say a few things about the goodness of summer and the importance of moving from out behind the desk and simply climbing a mountain, playing in the sand, or whatever it is that you do on a vacation. Summer is a good time to stop and just *Be*. It's a good time to spend time with family, do something out of the ordinary, watch the flowers grow, and maybe find some ways to grow yourself.

While we are out there walking around in the sun, whether it be traveling to an exotic place or taking a day trip to King's Island, remember that it is the "stuff" that happens "in here," within our minds and souls that help us grow.

Reading a book, working on a relationship, traveling to another place that reminds us that we are a small but integral part of a bigger universe are all opportunities for growth. I love listening to people talk about vacation plans and what was most memorable to them when they return. I especially love seeing a face light up when someone shares fun experiences they had with their children. So often, life is complicated, or at least we make it that way. And it's moments with family and friends that peel away those complications and leave us with pure joy.

For my own part, I am looking forward to spending time with my family next month in Germany. And although, we anticipate our time in Germany will be wonderful, we have found joy and relaxation in the *process* and planning. I have especially benefited from the stories of others who have already travelled there. In the exchange of information, there has been a shared excitement.

So, as you prepare the car for a long road trip or a simple weekend getaway, I encourage you to leave your laptops at home and your Blackberries in their holsters. The world *will* go on without you for a few moments. And while you're away, take advantage of what this world has to offer before it's too late. Take just a moment to take a deep breath and relax. In the long run, it may prove to be a very advantageous way of spending your time.

Feedback on these articles is welcomed. If you have a concern about yourself or a family member, feel free to contact Donna, Daniela, or myself. Contact information is listed below. Services are free and confidential. We look forward to hearing from you. So.....Step back , take a Coffey Break, and Drink to Your Health!

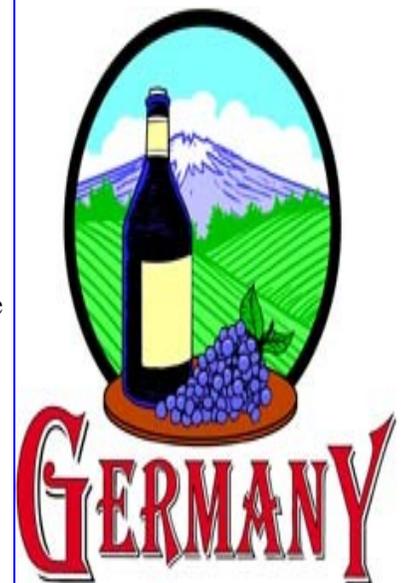
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**"Vacations used to be a luxury, but in today's world it has become a necessity."**

**- Author Unknown**



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