

# 35 keeping your life in balance

## for you to know

When people keep their lives in balance, their anxiety level tends to be lower. Staying in balance means that the way you choose to spend your time and energy is a healthy mix of leisure and responsibilities.

Rachel, Jennifer, and Stephanie were the same age, lived in the same neighborhood, went to the same school, and were in the same grade. But Rachel and Jennifer were usually anxious, while Stephanie was relaxed.

Rachel spent most of her time rushing from one activity to the next. Along with school, she was in the band, took flute lessons, was on the track and lacrosse teams, had a part-time job walking dogs, and volunteered at a senior citizens' home. She also did her homework and household chores and helped with her mom's home business. She was almost always anxious about getting everything done. Rachel's life was out of balance and brought on anxiety because she tried to do too much for the amount of time she had.

Jennifer was in only one activity, Junior Achievement Club. She spent all of the rest of her time after school and on the weekends studying and doing homework. She felt like she had to study all the time to get the best possible grades so she could go to a good college. She was usually very anxious about whether she was studying hard enough. Jennifer's life was out of balance and brought on anxiety because she spent all of her time working and no time on leisure activities.

Stephanie spent her time with three main activities: she took violin lessons, played soccer, and did her homework. She also spent time with her family and friends, going bowling, to the movies, and camping. Stephanie enjoyed everything she did and rarely felt anxious or overwhelmed. Stephanie's life was in balance because she did a moderate number of activities and balanced work with play.

activity 35 \* keeping your life in balance

directions

On the scales below, record approximately how much time you spend on your responsibilities and your leisure activities over the next two days.

RESPONSIBILITIES		LEISURE ACTIVITIES	
Activity	Amount of Time	Activity	Amount of Time

Day

RESPONSIBILITIES		LEISURE ACTIVITIES	
Activity	Amount of Time	Activity	Amount of Time

Day

## more to do

Look back at the pictures of your scales. Describe anything you notice about the balance of your life.

---

---

---

Tell how your daily balance compares to

Rachel's \_\_\_\_\_

Jennifer's \_\_\_\_\_

Stephanie's \_\_\_\_\_

Tell why your scales are balanced or unbalanced.

---

---

---

Describe how you think the balance of your scales affects your anxiety level.

---

---

---

Tell what you could realistically change in the way you spend your time and energy to make your scales more balanced.

---

---

---