



## Finding balance in your life

Distinguishing between our hectic work schedules and our personal lives is vital to help us feel happier, healthier and more productive in all aspects of our lives.

The summer can pile on the pressure for some. Those of us with children can find ourselves juggling childcare during the long holiday period. Some of us find the pressure of preparing to go on annual leave, putting plans in place at home and finishing off tasks in the workplace, then returning to work to pick up on what's happened whilst we've been away all very stressful.

An imbalance can affect our health, resulting in high blood pressure, sleep deprivation, damage to relationships with family and friends or depression. All of these are detrimental health risks and so we thought we'd share a few tips to help you strike a balance.

- ▶ It's good to talk – chat to colleagues, friends and family, or, if it helps, speak to someone outside of your network to share your thoughts and feelings.
- ▶ Set boundaries – turn off your work mobile whilst at home and stick to working hours for your email communications.
- ▶ Take a break – find some ways to switch off at lunchtime. Maybe you can attend a yoga class, play darts or table football, go for a quick swim, take a walk round the block, chat to colleagues about stuff outside work, and eat your lunch away from your desk.
- ▶ Digital detox – with many people taking holidays at this time of year, why not make 2018 the year you give your phone and other devices a holiday too, or at least a little break? Leave it somewhere where you can check for anything urgent a couple of times a day, and that's all!
- ▶ Sleep – make sure you do all you can to get a good night's sleep.

# Healthy choices this summer

It's a temptation for all of us during the summer to over-indulge.

We all love a celebration or an opportunity to kick-back in the garden or beer garden. There is no harm in the occasional naughty treat but ice creams, fizzy drinks, picnic and BBQ food plus a tittle in the sun can become a bit of a habit if we're not careful.

When it comes to the family, did you know that it's quite common for children to gain weight and lose their fitness during the school holidays? By keeping to a few simple rules, you can help yourself and those around you to avoid piling on the pounds.

- ▶ Plan ahead – take some time to have fun planning your weekly meals. Ensure they are packed full of seasonal fruit and vegetables plus lean meats or non-meat alternatives for protein to help curb hunger.
- ▶ Make food attractive – colourful foods are more appealing, especially to children. Browse some cookery books for inspiration. Try something new!
- ▶ Avoid the fizz - a can of fizzy drink can contain 8 teaspoons of sugar. Ideally swap for water or diet/sugar-free versions to stay hydrated.
- ▶ Keep active – to avoid weight gain, make the most of the outdoors by trying a new activity. If you have the room at home, get yourself a swingball, hula hoop, skipping rope or badminton set (they are all fairly low-cost) or offer to take someone's dog for a walk. Even housework, washing the car and gardening will help you to burn calories!

## Quote of the month

Imagine life as a game in which you are juggling five balls in the air. You name them — work, family, health, friends and spirit and you're keeping all of these in the air. You will soon understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. But the other four balls — family, health, friends, and spirit — are made of glass. If you drop one of these, they will be irrevocably scuffed, marked, nicked, damaged, or even shattered. They will never be the same. You must understand that and strive for balance in your life.

- Brian Dyson, former Vice Chairman and COO of Coca-Cola

## Food of the Month

**Blackcurrants-** A great tasting and very versatile dark fruit which you may have growing in the garden but don't really use. They contain 4x more vitamin C than an orange and have the best antioxidant polyphenols, particularly anthocyanins, which, in research, have been shown to help in maintaining cardiovascular health, are anti-ageing, good for brain health, urinary tract health and vision.

### Top tip

add to morning cereals, or add to low fat Greek yoghurt for a healthy, tasty dessert.

