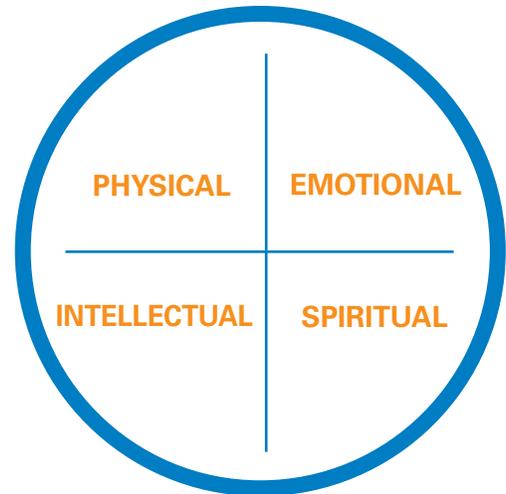


# Life Balance — Investing in You!

Invest your energy in caring for your body, mind, heart and spirit. Here are some ideas.

## Body

- Focus on improving your health rather than on losing weight.
- Make small changes rather than trying to overhaul your entire life.
- Have regular check-ups. Take care of your health needs and don't ignore new or unusual symptoms.
- Eat fresh, healthful and interesting foods.
- Engage in enjoyable physical activities regularly.
- Limit your screen time. Instead of spending passive hours in front of the television or computer, do something active that will restore your energy.
- Get plenty of rest and adequate sleep so you'll feel clear and refreshed.
- Give and receive physical affection.
- Treat yourself to a massage, manicure, pedicure or facial. Take a hot bath or long shower to relax and unwind.
- Clear the physical clutter around you.
- Create a pleasant personal space for yourself. Include comfortable pillows, photographs, candles, music or whatever makes you feel happy and calm.
- Plant a garden and grow fresh vegetables, herbs or flowers.
- Spend time in nature walking, hiking, camping or just sitting.



## Heart

- Spend quality time with your family and friends having fun and sharing.
- Build intimacy and emotional connections with your partner and friends.
- Make new friends or renew old friendships.
- Volunteer and give back to your community by helping others.
- Set appropriate boundaries in your relationships.
- Assert yourself to let others know how you feel, what you think and what you need. Accept that beyond that, you cannot control what other people feel, think or do.
- Manage stress effectively. It's not possible or even desirable to eliminate stress but it's possible to learn to release and cope with stress.
- Practice forgiveness. Harboring anger and hurt is harmful and eats up precious emotional energy.
- Be vulnerable. Let people you trust see your imperfections and fears. This can deepen intimacy and free you from the need to be perfect.
- Seek counseling or therapy for emotional support and to build coping skills if needed.

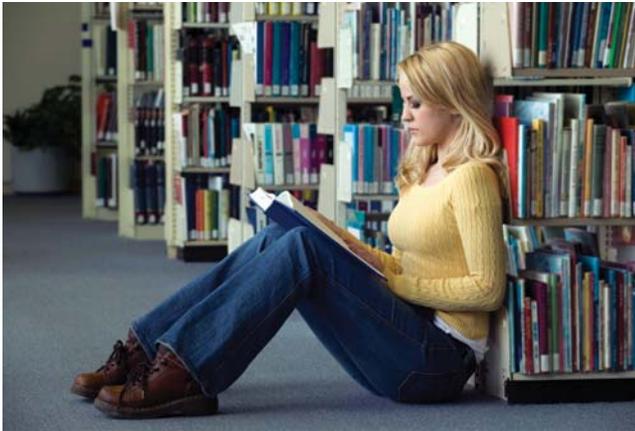


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STRONG MEDICINE FOR AMERICA

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AAFP National Research Network

## Mind

- Examine your values and priorities, then set your short-and long-term goals.
- Recognize that your thoughts lead to your feelings, your actions and results. Challenge yourself to think positively and powerfully.
- Learn something new – a skill, trade, hobby, language or anything you find interesting.
- Read books and magazines. Stretch yourself!



- Visit museums or other novel places.
- Do brain teasers and play challenging games by yourself and with others.
- Be creative, especially if you don't ordinarily have an opportunity to express yourself creatively. Experiment with art, music, crafts and hobbies.
- Take classes online or at your local community center or college.
- Become an expert on something. Learn everything you can about an area and share that knowledge with others by writing, speaking or teaching.
- Participate in stimulating discussion groups.
- Explore new occupational and career opportunities.
- Travel or explore areas close to home.

## Spirit

- Practice mindfulness. Be fully present in whatever you're doing – eating, talking, working or playing to experience the full pleasure, satisfaction and meaning.
- Renew and restore yourself through prayer and meditation.
- Schedule time for your inner work. Know yourself, your values, your dreams and your purpose.
- Define your guiding principles so you'll have a clear path to follow.
- See your problems as opportunities for learning and growth.
- Reclaim your joy! Experiencing joy is possible even as you face challenges.
- Look for the good in others; it's there somewhere waiting to be discovered.
- Write in a personal journal to explore your deepest thoughts and feelings.
- Visit your place of worship (or find one).
- Read meaningful, inspirational works.
- Have an attitude of gratitude. Being thankful for even the smallest of things will remind you of all you have.
- Practice kindness without any expectation of anything in return.