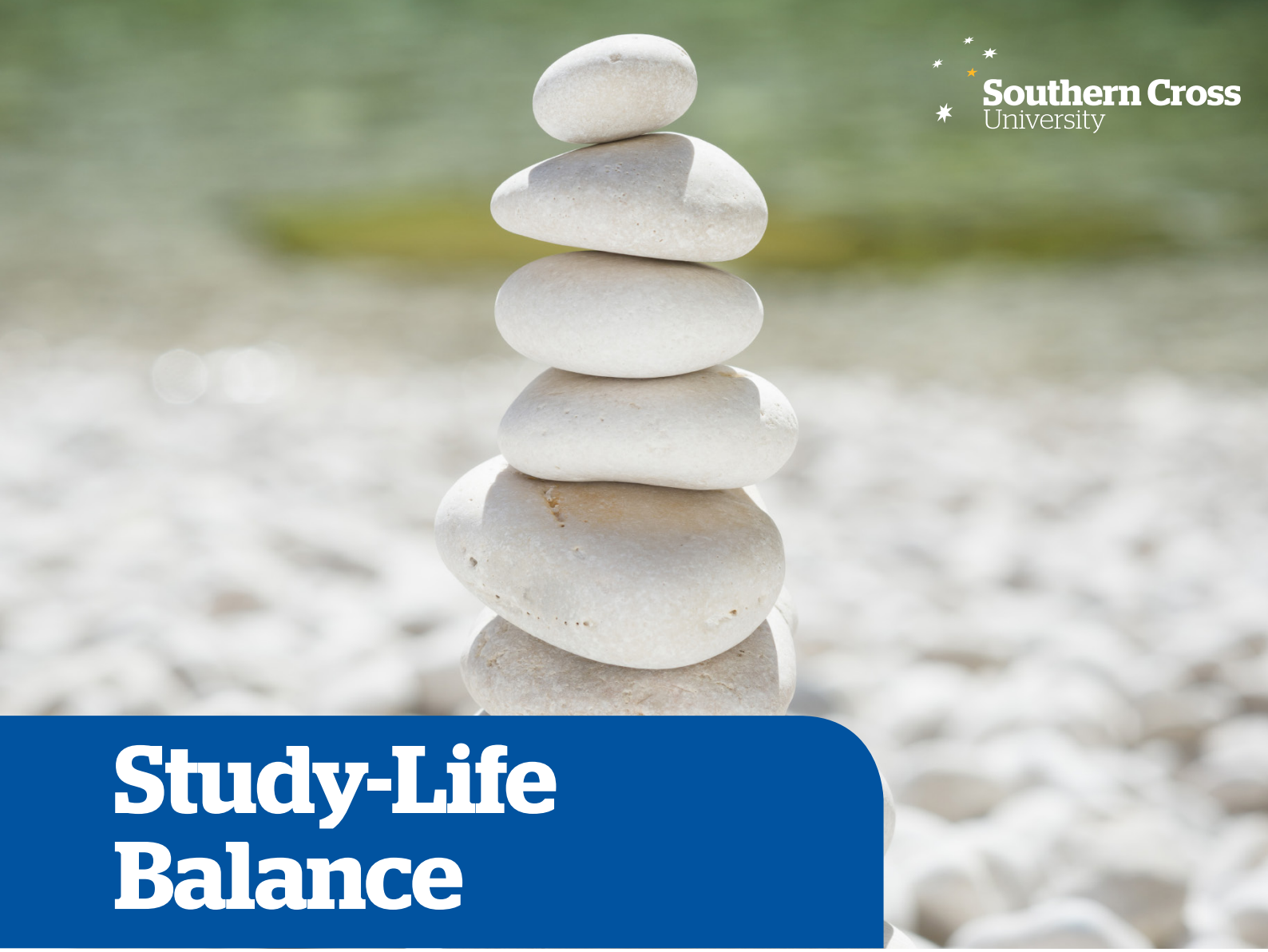


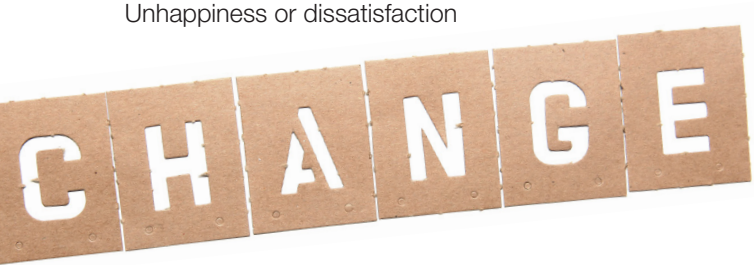
Southern Cross University

Study-Life Balance

Going to university requires students to juggle many different roles while also trying to be successful at study. Some of these different roles may include: work colleague, mother, father, partner, husband, wife, friend, team member or community leader. Study-life balance is about looking at the energy you put into the different roles in your life and keeping a balance in all areas that are important to you. This is important as sometimes life can become unbalanced when things become really busy and when all of one's energy is directed into a specific role or project. What often results is that one or some parts of a person's life becomes neglected or overlooked, resulting in life becoming unbalanced.

Lack of balance may result in:

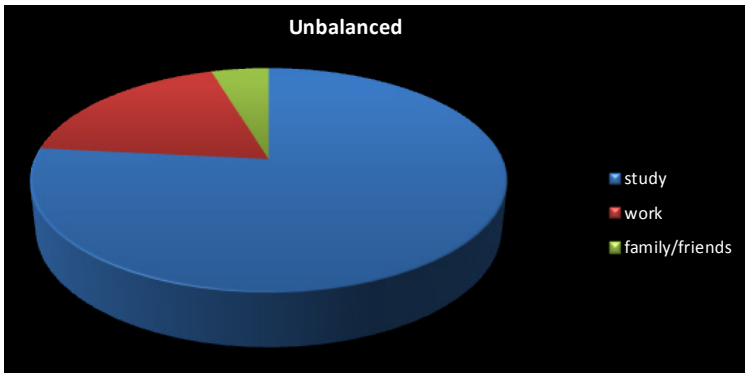
Stress
Burnout
Fatigue
Anxiety
Depression
Tension in relationships or the end of a relationship
Isolation
Physical illness and medical problems
Lack of healthy eating & exercise
Sleep problems
Unhappiness or dissatisfaction

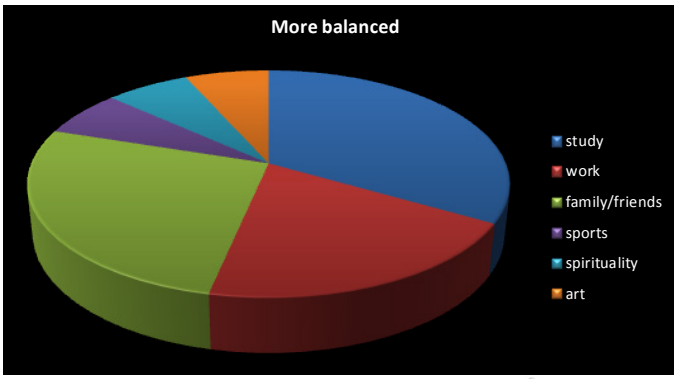


Make time and energy for all the dimensions of your life that are important to you:

Study
Work
Family
Friends
Sport/Exercise
Hobbies – music, art, theatre, gardening
Spirituality – church, nature, meditation
Sexuality – Intimate relationships.

This is very personal depending on what you value in your life and what is important to you. Also, what is important to you may change over time and with different circumstances. Having a moderate balance of activities can help to prevent burnout and can help to sustain energy over time!





How to create balance

Activity 1– Actual life balance: draw your own pie chart and section off the dimensions of your life where you actually spend time and energy. Draw a chart of exactly how you spend your time now. Some items may be missing if your life is currently unbalanced, just take note to yourself about what these are. For example, you may put 65% of time into study/career, 15% work, 5% friends, 5% family.

Activity 2 – Ideal life balance: Now draw a pie chart and section off all the dimensions you want to have in your life to make it feel whole and balanced. Assign the amount of time and energy you want to put into each section. For example you may wish to ideally have 45% study, 15% work, 10% friendships, 10% family, 5% exercise, 5% meditation, 10% developing art skills. Add all the dimensions that would make an ideal life for you.

Some ways to achieve balance

- Find time each day to relax, be active and spend time with friends.
- Schedule your time and time manage.
- Take care of yourself: eat well, exercise, sleep, relax, self-care, massage, visit naturopath, visit GP and pamper yourself when you can.
- Allow for mistake and failures. We can learn from these experiences. Challenge perfectionist thinking.
- Quite time; step off the treadmill of life, turn off phones and technology and just be still.
- Appreciate nature, go for a walk in the bush, visit a park or beach.
- Look for the small things in life and appreciate them.
- Set personal boundaries. Say ‘no’ and do not over commit to events, invitations, and work. Reduce the feeling of commitment to others.
- Reassess time frames for goals. Ask yourself if the timeframe is realistic.

Everyone has different priorities about what is important to them in their life. Are you living your life in balance with all the dimensions that make life full and meaningful for you?

Southern Cross University Student Health Service, Counselling

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