

*Adult Balanced Life  
Enhancement  
Inventory*



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browsing is just the beginning



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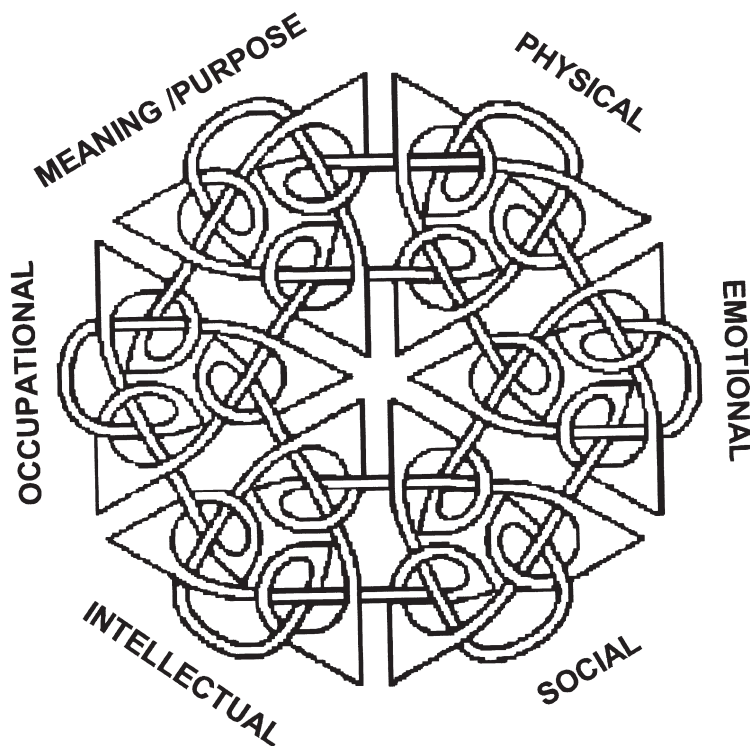
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*"I feel like my life is out of control — I'm trapped in a spider-web of endless work, stress and I've lost my sense of balance." Career Center Client.*

The ADULT BALANCED LIFE ENHANCEMENT was developed to provide a framework for achieving meaning and balance in adult life. It can help with setting goals and developing a plan to regain control over your life.

Dr. William Hettler of the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point developed the wellness model that inspired this inventory.

The ancient Celtic design below represents a model of balanced life enhancement. It emphasizes the importance of these six dimensions as an interdependent system, where change in one area creates change in the other dimensions. *To attain life balance, equal time does not have to be devoted to each area.* The energy devoted depends on the individual, but over-investment or under-investment to an area can cause stress and a feeling of loss of control. It's a dynamic, everchanging process of choices.



The questions that follow represent adult life enhanced by these six elements that provide full meaning and dimension to human development.

## **ABLE (ADULT BALANCED LIFE ENHANCEMENT)**

PART I of the Adult Balanced Life Enhancement Inventory asks you to think about the dynamics of your life in six areas and lets you see where your life energy is currently focused.

PART II of the Adult Balanced Life Enhancement Inventory asks you about your level of satisfaction in the six areas and encourages you to develop action plans to shift your focus toward other areas that could help you regain balance.

## PART I

As you look at your current lifestyle, circle the number that corresponds with how true the statement is of your regular, everyday behavior.

PHYSICAL enhancement involves actively embracing activities that support a healthy lifestyle resulting from exercise, good dietary habits and the development of responsible behavior.

1. I participate in a regular exercise routine (walk, run, swim, aerobics) at least three times per week.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
2. My body weight is within, plus or minus, 20 pounds of the weight standard for my height/age.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
3. I do not smoke or use tobacco products.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
4. I limit my daily alcohol intake to 2 or fewer drinks (beer, wine or liquor).				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
5. I eat fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains and limit my animal fat intake.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

6. I am free of addictions/dependencies to prescription, over-the-counter or street drugs such as depressants or stimulants.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
7. I feel rested after a nights sleep.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I feel I am in good health.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
9. I stay focused on goals for my physical well being (e.g. maintaining or achieving my ideal weight) and following a healthy diet and exercise program.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
10. I consult with health care providers (doctors, dentists, etc.) and follow their recommended schedule for checkups and medical tests.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

Total your circled numbers for PHYSICAL \_\_\_\_\_

EMOTIONAL enhancement accepts that feelings — anger, anxiety, sadness, hope — can be turbulent and challenging. An emotionally well person accepts personal limitations, effectively deals with stress and understands how to seek support and build satisfying relationships with others.

1. In my life there are significant people with whom I share social and emotional concerns.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
2. I am able to accept constructive criticism.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
3. I am able to share my deepest feelings with a valued friend.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
4. When faced with personal conflict, I seek ways to address the issue to achieve a resolution.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
5. I am comfortable spending some quiet time contemplating and reflecting.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

6. I am able to disagree and express my anger without crying, shouting or becoming depressed and withdrawn.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
7. When experiencing stress, I am able to cope by exercising, using humor or talking it out with a friend.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I feel more relaxed and in control of my life than stressed and anxious.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
9. When I have a setback/failure to meet a goal, I take a deep breath, refocus and move ahead with confidence.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
10. I am able to see humor and joy in my daily life.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

Total your circled numbers for EMOTIONAL \_\_\_\_\_

INTELLECTUAL enhancement implies an eagerness to continually seek knowledge and incorporate it creatively and intuitively to new situations. It affirms the responsibility to develop critical thinking skills.

1. I enjoy learning about new ideas through reading books and magazines, online information as well as the media (TV, radio).				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
2. I engage in self-directed learning activities (i.e. gardening, language study, home improvement projects, computer skills).				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
3. I participate in and enjoy at least one hobby not related to my occupation.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
4. I enjoy considering other view points and perspectives and debating ideas and possibilities before making a decision.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
5. I attend films, educational programs or cultural/community events which challenge my thinking and analytical skills.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

6. I attend courses in vocational, technical, adult education, college or graduate school to enhance life-long learning.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
7. I appreciate quiet time to think and respect others' right to do so.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I view problems and challenges as opportunities for learning and personal growth.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
9. I enjoy the mental stimulation of learning.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
10. I have good concentration when learning.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

Total your circled numbers for INTELLECTUAL \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATIONAL enhancement is the ability to receive satisfaction from your work experiences. This satisfaction requires that you know yourself and that you possess a willingness to accept a variety of occupations that will provide purpose and meaning to your life.

1. I look forward to the challenges of my job and the work environment with enthusiasm every day.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
2. My current position offers me an excellent opportunity to utilize my skills, interests and values.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
3. I am satisfied with the amount of control I have over decision-making power to do my job.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
4. I have a clear vision of the job/career I plan to pursue in three to five years and a plan to obtain the education and skills to reach my goal.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
5. People or clients I work with respect my opinion and ideas, support me in accomplishing my goals, and provide honest and fair feedback about my performance.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

6. My current position allows me to continue to learn new skills and concepts and expect promotional opportunities and income growth.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
7. While my position can be stressful at times, my overall satisfaction with the work environment, salary and benefits has me feeling more satisfied than stressed.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
8. I welcome learning new skills and technology to remain current and in control of my career.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
9. When confused or disheartened by my employment, I seek career counseling guidance to help me develop career direction.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
10. I have a good balance between work hours and family or personal time.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	

Total your circled numbers for OCCUPATIONAL \_\_\_\_\_

SOCIAL enhancement stems from your active contributions to the social welfare of your community and your involvement with others in shared activities.

1. I am active in special interest groups (hiking, cooking, bird watching) or community activities (political, community development, volunteer) that I enjoy and find meaningful.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
2. I have close friends outside my work setting that I see or call.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
3. I attend or host parties/dinners, informal get-togethers with friends.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
4. I try to meet new people and expand my friendships.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
5. I develop friendships in which I share ideas, feelings, and mutual interests with people other than networking contacts and business associates.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

6. I invite and am invited by friends to films, concerts or recreational programs.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
7. I take vacations and visit different places.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
8. I am aware of my own prejudices and how they affect my behavior.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
9. I am able to give and receive compliments.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
10. I am able to help co-workers or friends work cooperatively.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	

Total your circled numbers for SOCIAL \_\_\_\_\_

MEANING/PURPOSE enhancement requires that you seek the meaning and purpose in human existence. It is an examination of your values and beliefs.

1. I spend time reading and reflecting on issues related to life's meaning and purpose.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
2. I engage in a program of meditation or activities focused on personal growth.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
3. I take time to assess my viewpoints and beliefs as a way to challenge myself and view the world from differing perspectives.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
4. I believe my life has a sense of meaning, purpose and integrity.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	
5. Asked to rank my values, (i.e. money, status, autonomy), I can do so.					
5	4	3	2	1	
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never	

6. I am involved in ways I can personally improve the lives of others.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
7. I have a belief system which provides me with an inner peace and hope in good times and bad.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
8. I am involved in a religious tradition or set of ethical/philosophical guidelines that provide me with a framework for conducting my life.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
9. I am satisfied with my life and am optimistic about my future.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never
10. When I face a difficult decision, I am confident my ethical/philosophical beliefs will help me make a choice.				
5	4	3	2	1
All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Rarely	Never

Total your circled numbers for MEANING/PURPOSE \_\_\_\_\_

## 1. B. SCORING THE ADULT BALANCED LIFE ENHANCEMENT

Place the total score for each category in the matching box below.

PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	INTELLECTUAL	OCCUPATIONAL	SOCIAL	MEANING/ PURPOSE

### Part II.

Are you satisfied with the pattern of your scores?

Rate your current level of satisfaction in the following areas. Circle the appropriate number. 5 — high level of satisfaction, 1 — low level of satisfaction.

	Nutrition, Rest, Regular Exercise	Expressing and Dealing With Difficult Feelings	Acquiring New Knowledge	Sense of Accomplish- ment in Career	Interact with People and Community Organizations outside work	Knowledge of Personal Values, Meaning and Beliefs
HIGH	5	5	5	5	5	5
	4	4	4	4	4	4
AVERAGE	3	3	3	3	3	3
	2	2	2	2	2	2
LOW	1	1	1	1	1	1
	PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	INTELLECTUAL	OCCUPATIONAL	SOCIAL	MEANING/ PURPOSE

As you looked at where you direct your energy in Part I and your levels of satisfaction in Part II, did you notice an area or areas toward which you would like to shift life energies?

The next step is an ACTION PLAN and involves conscious choice. We have presented some recommended activities in each area of the inventory and encourage you to envision and implement others.

PHYSICAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in fitness activities (walk, run, weights, swim, cycle or aerobics).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Achieve and maintain a healthy body through optimal nutrition.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Engage in addiction-free behavior (no smoking, limit alcohol consumption, narcotic free).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do\_\_\_\_\_
- 

EMOTIONAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ Explore techniques to reduce stress (i.e. attend stress reduction workshop, practice meditation).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Identify areas of emotional weakness (i.e. anger control, addictive behavior) and enroll in support group, counseling or self guided instruction.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Take time to listen to a friend and share my thoughts and feelings with them.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do\_\_\_\_\_
- 

INTELLECTUAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend a concert, museum, play.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Read a book.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Learn a new computer program.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Attend an education program.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do\_\_\_\_\_
-

## OCCUPATIONAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend a career development course.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Talk to a career counselor about your career plans.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Informational interview or 'shadow' someone in a profession that interests you.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteer your services for career exploration.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do \_\_\_\_\_
- 

## SOCIAL

- \_\_\_\_\_ Get involved in an organization.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Make a new friend.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Invite someone to attend a program, concert or sports event with you.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Throw a party.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do \_\_\_\_\_
- 

## MEANING/PURPOSE

- \_\_\_\_\_ Meditate.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Read a book that addresses human values and purpose.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Attend a personal growth session, spiritual retreat, or religious service.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Other activities to do \_\_\_\_\_
-

The following resources may enhance your search for ADULT LIFE BALANCE.

## **BOOKS/ARTICLES**

Ardell, Donald. *The Book of Wellness: A Secular Approach to Spirituality, Meaning and Purpose*. Prometheus Books, 1996.

Bloch, Deborah Perlmutter and Lee J. Richmond. *Connections Between Spirit and Work in Career Development: New Approaches and Practical Perspectives*. Davies-Black Publishers, 1997.

Buckingham, Marcus, Donald O. Clifton. *Now, Discover Your Strengths*. New York: Free Press 2001.

Cameron, Julia. *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*. Jeremy P. Tarcher/Perigee, 1992.

Ciulla, Joanne, *The Working Life: The Promise and Betrayal of Modern Work*. Three Rivers Press, 2000.

Frankl, Viktor Emil. *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*. Viktor E. Frankl; foreword by Swanee Hunt. New York, Insight Books, 1997.

Gelb, Michael. *Discover Your Genius*. Harper Collins, 2002.

Jacobsen, Mary H. PhD. *Hand Me Down Dreams*. Harmony Books, 1999.

Jaffe, Martin. *Enchantment of Life Enhancement: Adult Life/Work Design With the ABLE, Career Planning and Adult Development Journal*. Volume 15, Number 3, Fall, 1999.

O'Donohue, John. *Anam Cara: A Book of Celtic Wisdom*. New York: Cliff Street Books, 1997.

Philipson, Ilene. PhD. *Married to the Job*. Free Press, 2002.

Quenk, Naomi L. *Beside Ourselves: Our Hidden Personality in Everyday Life*. Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc., 1993.

Robinson, Bryan E. PhD. *Chained to the Desk*, New York University Press, 1998.

Rufus, Anneli. *Party of One – The Loner's Manifesto*. Marlowe and Company, 2003.

Sawi, Beth. *Coming Up for Air*. Hyperion, 2000.

Schein, Edgar. *Discovering Your Real Values*. University Associates, Inc., 1993.

Tieger, Paul D. & Barbara Barron-Tieger. *Do What You Are: Discover the Perfect Career for You Through the Secrets of Personality Type*. Little, Brown and Company, 2001.

Seligman, Martin. *Authentic Happiness*. Free Press, 2002.  
<http://www.authentichappiness.org/> "Signature Strengths Survey"