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Enhancing Wellness through
Resilience and Work-Life Balance

Presentation by:
MHN Training & Development

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Participant Handbook

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss different aspects of work-life balance
- Identify values and activities core to your life
- Describe the characteristics of resilience and balance
- Present different strategies to enhance resilience and create work-life balance

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What is Work-Life Balance?

- Work-Life Balance is NOT:
 - An “equal balance”
 - Stable over time
 - “One-size fits all”
- Work-Life Balance IS daily:
 - Achievement
 - Enjoyment
 - In major areas of our lives
 - Family
 - Work
 - Community/Friends
 - Self

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What Do You Value?

- Worth, merit or importance
 - From: Webster's New Century Dictionary
- Activities:
 - *Identifying Your Life Values*
 - *Life Circles*

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Strategies for Creating Work-Life Balance

- Prioritize based on values
- Enhance your organizational skills
- Reduce/Eliminate unnecessary activities
- Protect time for yourself
- Be aware of signs of burnout
- Accept help to balance your life

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Prioritize

- Make a list
- Consider time constraints
- Consider requests from other people
- Consider the consequences
- Re-prioritize as necessary

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Protect Time for Yourself

- Schedule regular “appointments”
- Inform family members of protected time
- Choose activities that help you recharge
 - Meditate
 - Exercise
 - Get some sleep
 - Get a massage
 - Relax

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What is Resilience?

- Coping well with changes brought about by life events
- Maintaining your best possible health
- Bouncing back easily from setbacks
- Overcoming adversities
- Changing to a new way when an old way is no longer possible
- Doing all this without dysfunction

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Building Resilience

- Resilience Attitudes
 - Control
 - Challenge
 - Commitment
- Resilience Skills
 - Transformational Coping
 - Social Support
 - Continuous Learning and Improvement

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How Do Resilience & Balance Enhance Wellness?

- Prioritizes values central to your life
- Making choices about what you can and cannot control
- Finding growth opportunities through challenges
- Emphasizes the importance of self-care; helping others requires personal wellness

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Action Plan for Enhancing Balance & Resilience

- **Identify What Information You Need**
 - Personal
 - Professional
- **Identify Your Resources**
 - Internal
 - External
- **Clarify Options**
 - Personal
 - Professional
- **Identify Opportunities**
 - What do you want to get out of the challenges?
 - Evaluating risks and benefits

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Regaining Balance after Challenges

- Review priorities and strategies
 - Re-prioritize when needed
 - Keep a journal/log
 - Take advantage of your options
 - Reexamine how you manage your time
 - Rethink household standards
- Strengthen work-life boundaries
 - Remember to say “no”
 - Leave work at work
 - Set aside one night each week for recreation
 - Protect your day off

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Regaining Balance (cont'd)

- Enhance your support networks
 - Dispel guilt
 - Get enough sleep, exercise & good nutrition
 - Nurture yourself
 - Communicate clearly
 - Bolster your support system
 - Seek assistance from your EAP

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Work-Life Balance is...

- an *on-going process*,
...not a *permanent state*

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Resources

- Internal
 - Human Resources
 - Direct Supervisor/Manager
 - Who Else?
- External
 - MHN Online www.MHN.com
 - MHN EAP Clinical Services
 - Who Else?

Handout A. What Do I Value Most?

Rank the following items in order of importance: 1= most important and 20 = least important.

-
- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| __ Job | __ Social Status |
| __ Exercise | __ Appearance |
| __ Children | __ Food |
| __ Spouse/Partner | __ Clothing |
| __ Friends | __ House / Apartment |
| __ Church | __ Health Benefits |
| __ Physical Health | __ Nice Weather |
| __ Emotional / Mental Health | __ Co-Workers |
| __ Climate/Geography | __ Meditation |
| __ Money | __ Myself |
| __ Social Activities | __ Other _____ |

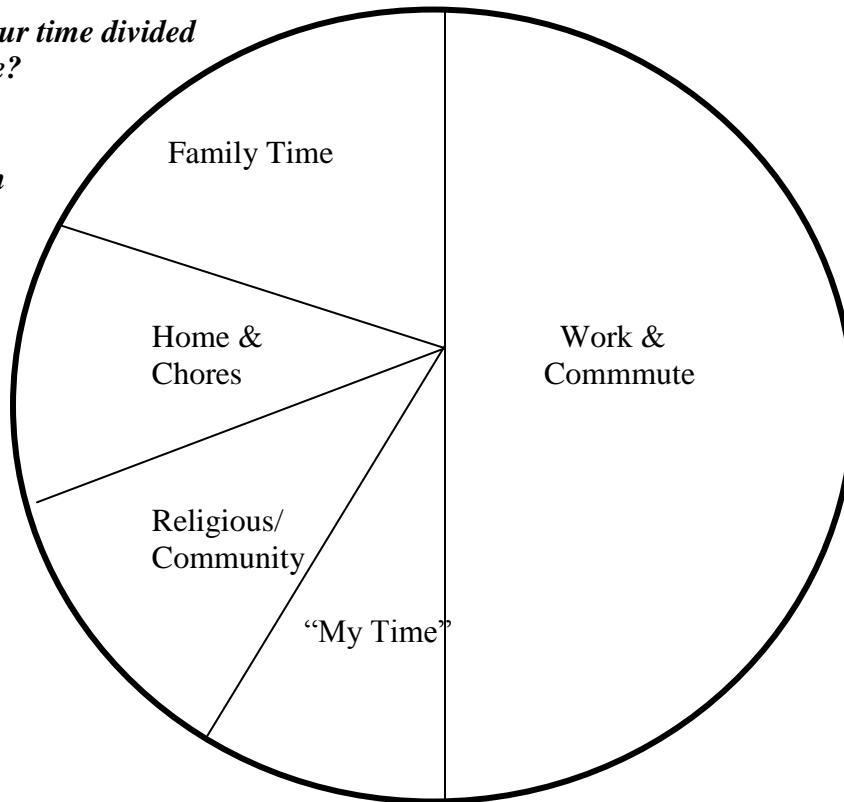
List your top 5 from above:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Handout B. Life Circles

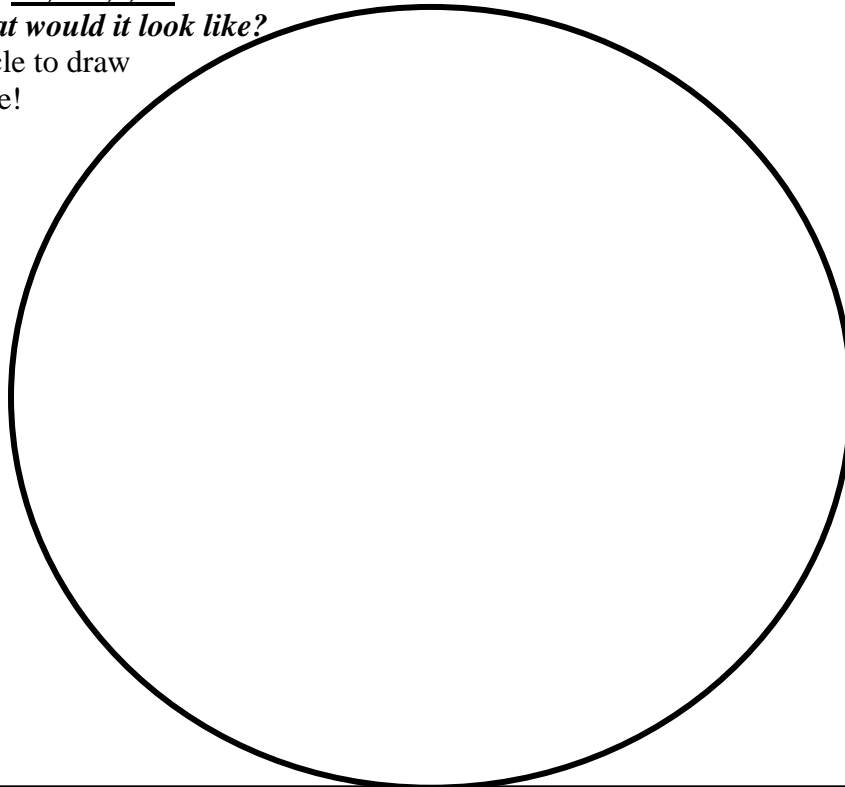
*How is your time divided
in real life?*

*Here is an
Example:*



*If you could divide up
your time in any way you
wanted, what would it look like?*

Use this circle to draw
your own pie!



Handout C. Rocks

One day an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, “Okay, time for a quiz.” Then he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouth Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. He then produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, “Is this jar full?”

Everyone in the class said, “Yes.” The expert said, “Really?” He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. Then he dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the space between the big rocks. He asked the group once more, “Is the jar full?” By this time the class was on to him. “Probably not,” one of them answered. “Good!” he replied.

He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, “Is this jar full?” “No!” the class shouted.

Once again he said, “Good.” Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, “What is the point of this illustration?” One eager beaver raised his hand and said, “The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!”

“No,” the speaker replied, “That’s not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don’t put the big rocks in first, you’ll never get them in at all.”

What are the ‘big rocks’ in your life? Your children...your loved ones...Your education...Your dreams...A worthy cause...Teaching or mentoring others...Doing things that you love...Time for yourself...Your health...Your significant other. Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you’ll never get them in at all.

If you sweat the little stuff (the gravel, the sand) then you’ll fill your life with little things you worry about that don’t really matter, and you’ll never have the real quality time you need to spend on the big, important stuff (the big rocks.)

So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the ‘big rocks’ in my life?
Then, put those in your jar first.

Steve Norris Epicor Software Corporation

Handout D. Work-Life Balance Scenarios

SITUATION ONE: THE MORNING RUSH 7:00-8:00 A.M.

You normally leave for work at 8:30, but have to leave half an hour early today to attend a meeting. Your 5-year-old daughter has just decided that her Pretty Pony sweat suit—which you’ve laid out for her because she’s insisted on living in it for the past three weeks—is too babyish, and she refuses to get dressed.

Your 8-year-old-son, who buys his lunch everyday, has just noticed that the school menu lists bean burritos for today, and is graphically describing what will happen to him if he eats it.

Your spouse has more flexibility this morning than you do, and has gotten breakfast on the table. While you throw together a bag lunch for your son, your spouse is taking a few minutes to plant the two primrose plants in the pot on the front porch. By the time you leave for work, you have had an argument with every member of your family, and are wondering why so many days have to begin this way.

HOW COULD THIS MORNING HAVE GONE MORE SMOOTHLY?

SITUATION TWO: THE ARSENIC HOURS 6:00-8:30 P.M.

You pick up your children, ages 6 and 9, at their after-school day care center. As soon as they get into the car, they start bickering about who gets to describe the special assembly they had in school today. For the remainder of the evening they argue either with each other, or with you, especially if you ask them to help set the table, finish their homework, or get ready for bed.

After three incoming phone calls that interrupt dinner and story time, you finally get them into bed and sit down for a few minutes of time to yourself. Within 10 minutes, your 9-year-old is out of bed, crying about the way some of her classmates treated her during a game at recess today. You scold her for getting out of bed, and tell her that things will be better tomorrow.

HOW COULD THE EVENING HAVE BEEN HANDLED WITH LESS HASSLE AND UNHAPPINESS?

SITUATION 3: PLANNING MATERNITY LEAVE

You are six weeks pregnant with your second child, and haven't yet told anyone at work. You are planning to return to work after your two-month maternity leave, but have heard friends describe how much harder it is to work when you have two small children instead of one. The person who will probably replace you while you're out on leave is young, ambitious and available to work long, extra hours; this makes you reluctant to disappear completely from the workplace for two months. You need the income from your job, but feel very ambivalent and anxious about what the coming year will bring.

WHEN AND HOW DO YOU ANNOUNCE THIS PREGNANCY, AND HOW DO YOU PLAN FOR YOUR MATERNITY LEAVE?

(For men, think of this problem from the point of view of your wife / partner, and also as a coworker of the pregnant woman.)

SITUATION 4: TAKING CARE OF YOUR MOTHER

Your mother, 68 years old and widowed for three years, has just had hip surgery. She has recuperated well, but in a few days she will begin a six-week course of physical therapy, and will have to go for treatments three afternoons a week. Because you have been so available and supportive to her during her ordeal, and because your brother lives too far away to help out regularly, she expects that you will be taking her to her physical therapy appointments.

But you have a budget deadline coming up in three weeks at work and can't imagine asking your boss for permission to leave early three days a week.

How do you help your mother out, while fulfilling all your obligations at work?

Handout E. An Action Plan

Identify What Information You Need. Learn everything you can about what you need to enhance work-life balance.

Ask yourself questions such as:

- What information do I need to get in order to evaluate balance in my life?
- What's the worse thing that can happen?
- What do I stand to lose if I do not choose actions to create/enhance balance?
- How are life situations affecting me now?
- Who or what is in control of the effects of creating and maintaining balance now?
- Is there a way to minimize the negative effects creating balance?
- What result do I want to avoid?
- What result do I want to create?

Identify Your Resources. These include resources both internal and external to your family and organization.

When identifying and evaluating your resources, ask yourself:

- What do I value and what are my goals?
- What talents and abilities do I possess to help me create and maintain balance?
- How can the resources that I have identified work collaboratively or in conjunction with one another to assist me through life events and challenges?

Clarify Options. Think about and evaluate your options with some of the following questions in mind:

- What do you want to get out of your personal and work lives?
- What are the possibilities and opportunities for *growing*? for learning? for becoming wiser? stronger? healthier? more loving? more productive?

Identify Opportunities. Begin by asking yourself, in light of your efforts toward achieving balance when facing life events and challenges:

- What benefits or gains are hidden in this call to balance?
- What actions do I need to engage in to effectively create balance?
- Which choices best match my values and goals, and best utilize my talents and abilities?