

11 Tips to Balance Remote Online College While Your Family is Also at Home

Your ability to strike a reasonable balance between family and college life demands is about to be tested like never before. In the last few weeks, attempts to increase social distancing and address the coronavirus pandemic has led to colleges all over the world shifting to remote online course work. Without much preparation, many people abruptly had to adjust to new ways of operating, leading and connecting.

Adult Learners who are parents have an additional burden now that colleges and school systems are sending students home to conduct virtual learning and daycare providers are suspending services. You now have two environments coming together—your college work and your home life—that were never meant to overlap this much. Before you get overwhelmed, here are some tips to help you communicate more effectively, manage the unavoidable stress of this situation and balance competing priorities.

1 Set a schedule for the week and get organized. If you don't make the time to plan for how you will address the myriad of tasks coming your way, you will inevitably find yourself failing to meet expectations at work or working around the clock because home life required more from you than you anticipated.

2 Use your support system. Discuss your expectations for school with your family and friends. Inform them about your schedule so that they know when you can't be disturbed and when they can expect your full attention. Negotiate household duties based on your schedule.

3 Get real with your faculty and classmates. It's time to have a open conversation with your faculty about your unique circumstances. Explain your commitment to completing college work, but also make sure you voice what obstacles you will have to manage in the background. **Know when you need help.**

4 Don't focus on getting straight As. Focus on the learning, not getting 100% on every exam or top ranking in your class.

5 Confirm changing priorities and deadline. Your goal for the next few weeks is to successfully fulfill the *essential* requirements of your College and Home life. While only meeting the minimum required at college has a negative connotation, in this case, that strategy may be your only shot at finding a sustainable balance to get through the next few weeks.

6 Reward yourself. You should plan a reward for sticking to your schedule or completing your work before a deadline.

7 Optimize your stamina. Managing your physical stamina is one of the most important things you need to do right now. Try to remind yourself that your entire family will benefit from being around the healthier, or at least better rested, version of you.

10 Have some fun. Make time to enjoy friends and family; watch a movie; or read non-academic books.

8 Learn to say 'no.' This is not the time to volunteer to run new initiatives or assume new family responsibilities if you don't have to. Just meeting your responsibilities at school and home will be enough of a challenge for now. Remember it is only temporary.

9 Remember that you are only human. Nothing will get done well if you are emotionally or physically drained. Plan exercise and creative activities into your week to help keep you energized.

11 Communicate, communicate, communicate. You need even more support from your partner while living in closer proximity with them but with greater physical isolation from your college support team. **Email, text, call!**

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