

Occupational Balance Reflection

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The Wellness Wheel and Barth Time Construction sheets gave me a visual representation of my priorities (Wylie, 2022; Barth, 1988). Despite the challenging transition from summer vacation to graduate school, I understand that regardless of my environment, I struggle to maintain a healthy balance of activities in my daily life. Through this exercise and reflection, I am inspired to find a proper equilibrium between my occupations and dimensions of wellness on a regular day-to-day basis.

Reviewing my Wheel of Life, I noticed my routine is typically centered around academics, athletics, and work (Wylie, 2022). Although I am no longer working, having had three summer-only jobs, I expect the combination of graduate school and softball to be just as busy as my summers were, balancing work, individual softball practice, and graduate school preparation. This is because being on the softball team requires an individual to devote approximately 24 hours per week to practice, lifting, and agility training. We all know that graduate school itself is hard to balance, illustrating how much of my life is dedicated to being productive and fulfilling multiple roles. At the same time, it suggests that I may not prioritize myself and my own needs as much as I would like.

Examining my Time Construction, I observed a clear structure in how my days are organized (Barth, 1988). Much of my time is devoted to classes, studying, and softball, demonstrating intense routines and discipline. Evenings are spent socializing and on screen time, with some hours of softball in the afternoon. While this shows that I am maintaining productivity and staying engaged in my primary roles, it also reveals limited variety in the types of occupations I engage in daily. Since leisure and family time appear less frequently, even though I would love to make more time for them, this suggests that I may not be prioritizing the social aspect of the Six Dimensions of Wellness (National Wellness Institute, 2020). Nevertheless, it

may make it harder for me to feel fully restored or connected outside of school and sports. I don't know when I'll have time to unwind properly because I spent my last weekend at my beach house during the summer, and now my weekends are occupied with softball games—a routine that will only get more intense in the spring when we play 56 games.

One of my primary goals this semester is to maintain strong family connections by speaking with my parents at least every other day for a minimum of 20 minutes. During the first week of school, I was highly stressed and put a simple conversation with my parents on the back burner. By intentionally scheduling these conversations, I can ensure that I stay emotionally connected and supported, even during the busiest weeks of classes and softball. Tracking these interactions in my planner will help me consistently and intentionally foster these crucial relationships.

In addition to family goals, I want to prioritize social wellness by engaging with friends through leisure activities at least twice a week. This could include going out for ice cream, going for a hike, or watching a movie or show together. By intentionally setting aside time for these social interactions, I can strengthen my friendships, relieve stress, and balance my academic, athletic, and personal life 

In conclusion, I plan to prioritize these SMART goals, as they will benefit me and enhance my overall well-being. As a student-athlete with many challenges, I tend to create anxiety for myself when it is not always necessary. Through incorporating more conversation with my parents and more activities with my friends, these activities will offer ways to break from the stress I put upon myself.

References

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