

## FIND YOUR EQUILIBRIUM

### DOES 'WORK-LIFE BALANCE' EVEN EXIST?

Even for those who have been in practice for 30+ years, it seems a never-ending struggle to achieve the seemingly elusive 'work-life balance', but if we think of it as more of a work-life *equilibrium* it immediately becomes more attainable.

There is no such thing as a "work-life balance" because the scale is always going to be tipped in one direction or the other. Picture a canoe tipping a little back and forth as it glides forward. The canoe's balance is challenged on a constant basis, but as the canoers adjust their positions and paddling, equilibrium is maintained. Acknowledge to yourself when you are upset. Then, have some strategies to help you regain your equilibrium, in your own way. Some may be:

- Make sure that there is more to your life than only work so that you have outlets – family, friends, hobbies, activities, interests outside of veterinary medicine. Have a group of friends who aren't part of the vet community who want to talk about things other than your work.
- Push yourself to say yes to experiences like yoga, a concert, night out with friends or a weekend trip.
- Prioritize a hobby or exercises that help you to de-stress. Every person has different activities that help them unwind.
- Activities with repetition or patterns can reduce stress. Running, biking, meditation or breathing exercises quiet the mind and release negative energy.

### FAMILY DEMANDS

Families are part of the landscape for any workplace. Prioritizing family life and giving permission for the need to change/cancel work-related commitments to attend to the needs of family is a real need.

Most SaskVets are parents. Children are usually adaptable, understanding and supportive of work schedules, but if you have young children, some SaskVets suggest making your kids your priority because 'you won't ever get this time back with them'. You may want to consider working part time or shortened days. This may require a conversation with the practice owner, especially if they do not have children themselves.

Partners and aging parents are part of the family too, and will have need of your time as well.

### SELF CARE

Diet, sleep, exercise, hobbies and interests – remember to honour and care for yourself. All those things matter to our sense of wellbeing. Wellness is an evolving process- your wellness needs can and will change throughout life. Continue paying attention to your internal cues and honour them.