



THE WELLBEING BULLETIN

“Oh no! What have I put myself into?”

How to integrate an online course into your routine without sacrificing your social or family life...

You just made it home after an 8 hours shift and need to take care of your three kids. You worked overtime to finish an urgent task and are now late for your second job... trust me, we have seen them all!

Whatever your situation is, in this article, we want to show you how **adding an online course on top of your routine is doable** – but – with the right structure in place. We know it, balancing work, study and everyday life can feel like a juggling act, and the line between attending an online course and building a recipe for burnout is thinner than people think.

Recent data shows exactly this issue: **part-time adult learners** - pretty much everyone following a CERTEFL course - **are part of the most vulnerable group** when it comes to completion rates in online courses.

A study from Park and Choi (2025) revealed that the dropout rate for students who are part of this category is between 40% to 80%, depending on the education context.

The main barrier separating students from their desired certifications is time. Yes, as you might have intuited from the punchline of this article, time is your biggest enemy.

But don't worry, this is why we want to focus on giving you tips on how to manage your time to effectively integrate online learning into your routine.

Time is limited - so instead of creating “new” time, we have to work with what we have. The best way to handle our time is to create a **sustainable ecosystem** where your mental health and family relationships aren't the price you pay for your education.

Tactical Time Management

To make learning sustainable, you must move away from "cramming" and toward "micro-learning."

The "Cook Once, Eat Twice" Philosophy:

Have you thought of how much time it takes you to prepare a meal every single day? If you want to save some time from this, try to batch-cook meals reclaim 2–3 hours a week during your course period.

The Pomodoro Technique: You don't have a full hour today? That's not a problem at all, try to work in 25-minute sprints followed by 5-minute breaks. This is often more effective for most working students going through very busy days.

Setting Healthy Boundaries

Sustainability requires a clear line between "student mode," "parent mode," and "employee mode."



Create a Dedicated "Focus Zone": Even if it's just a specific chair or a desk in the corner, your brain needs a physical cue that it's time to learn - use the same space over and over to see the results of your study hour!

Digital Hygiene: Use "Do Not Disturb" modes on your devices. It may sound obvious I know, but for many, the stress of online learning comes from the constant ping of work emails or social media notifications while trying to read a module.

Integrating the Family

Instead of the course being a "thief" of family time, try to make it a shared goal.

Parallel Study Hall: If your children have homework, do your online course alongside them turning your study into a shared family activity.

Delegation: Can a partner take over bath time? Can an older child help with the dishes? Try to temporarily delegate certain tasks which you are used to do in your daily life to better integrate your studying journey.

So where does all this leave us?

As we found out, time is enemy No. 1 for part-time adult learners. Thus, **managing your time in a smart way is your best weapon.** Unfortunately, there is no golden rule for this - the best way is to try some of the ideas we shared and see if they work out for you!