



SESSION

“Balance: Work VS Play”

LOCATION

Room One

HOSTED BY

[TF] Kathryn Burke (Theta Fleet)

TIME

11pm GMT

(all times presented in CST [UTC-6])

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:01:40 PM

Hi, everyone! This is the Balancing Work vs Play panel. We're going to talk about the importance of having a well-rounded character and keeping things in balance. 😊

I've been simming for ten years now on more sims than I care to mention. lol I've been in five different fleets and on independent sims. I've seen some that focus on missions and little else, and others where characters are so involved in relationships that there's very little mission. I prefer a balance between the two, and so, this panel. 😊

[BF] TheeFlamehead, 5:05:39 PM

== ^ == ^ == ^ == EVENT: Balance: Work vs Play == ^ == ^ == ^ ==

[TF] Qazzy, 5:06:20 PM

Hey everyone, this is Qazzy. I'll be helping co host this panel. I've been simming since mid 1997 all throughout the simming community, in various fleets and even several independents. As Burke mentioned, we're here to discuss different ways everyone can hopefully find ways to sim and have fun

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:06:33 PM

First, for those who expected a balance between real life and simming, we have a couple of comments. 😊

We all have real lives. We have to take time to work, be with family and friends, and play. Some people can tag every day. Some can only tag once a week. Some of us use simming to escape real life, as a fun break from "reality." Some take it more seriously. There are sims out there for all of us. It doesn't take long to tag.

If you can spend thirty minutes or an hour, check your sims or your email. But remember we do this for fun. If you can't keep up, find a sim where you fit in and that goes at a speed you are comfortable with.

Beautiful Night, 5:07:21 PM

who needs real life anyway 😊

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:07:29 PM

lol

[TF] Qazzy, 5:07:47 PM

unfortunately, all of those adulting things, like bills

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:08:05 PM

Find a balance that works for you. And recognize that others are also trying to find their own balance. We all do this for fun, and we all need to help keep it fun for everyone.

(BF) Skoll, 5:08:10 PM

Real life never bothered me anyway

Fluffy Killer, 5:08:12 PM

Ugh, he said the B word. Ban him!

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:08:21 PM

has to pay bills after this conference

Yeah. We all have to find or make time. I learned long ago that you make time for the things that matter most. Usually. Unless you have too many of them.. 😊

And we really can't blame others when RL interferes from time to time.

Please feel free to comment or ask questions as we go along. 😊

Now to the IC stuff...

For characters, there also has to be a balance between work and play.

[TF] Qazzy, 5:10:51 PM

I will try to confuse you all with inconclusive answers

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:11:31 PM

1/3 to 1/2 of your day is spent at work, and the same is true for your characters. For an example, on a Star Trek sim, Starfleet officers work in shifts, usually on what has become the standard of three eight-hour shifts. But, not all of your character's time should be on the mission. Your departments have things you can do.

Security is always involved in training (Weapons training, hand-to-hand training, and training in repelling boarders.) and ship wide patrols and guard duty. In addition, as a member of security, you can Train the other departments to be prepared. Have interdepartmental training and intradepartmental training.

Science is one of the easiest places to keep busy. You have the different areas to work in. labs, the arboretum, hydroponics, astrometrics. Each has tasks that need to be done on a regular basis. Each science character should have a specialty or two to work on. Do research, work on experiments, talk to other scientists about a new find, shift through the sensor data log for those spatial anomalies. If you have multiple disciplines, make sure they are related. Geology and nuclear physics are not very compatible, but astrophysics and quantum physics can be. There are dozens of disciplines. Use a search engine and find something you find interesting. Then save a few sites to look up terms if you need them. You don't need to be a rocket scientist, but you do need to know enough to fake it.

Fluffy Killer, 5:13:01 PM

or have department only get togethers in the holodeck or mess hall

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:13:02 PM

Websites with basic science info or science for kids give you quick, easy to use information.

As do those that list different branches of science.

As you can tell, science is my favorite department. lol

[TF] Qazzy, 5:13:39 PM

Wikipedia is sometimes useful for science stuff, as well as some medical

Fluffy Killer, 5:13:44 PM

or competitions between departments is usually fun

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:14:07 PM

Yes.

Operations has most of the ship to play with. Lots of little things can go wrong, need to be replaced, or simply manned. Transporters and communications are a lot of fun.

Helm has engines and is usually cross trained between engineering and operations.

Medical and Counseling have those pesky crew physicals that never seem to get done, as well as other medical related stuff

Engineering has power and engines. Other departments need to train.

Beautiful Night, 5:15:50 PM

Holodecks go wrong too. a good way to mix the to together, try and fix a malfunctioning holosuite, get stuck in a random scenario

[BF][118] Kylindra, 5:15:55 PM

Not to mention, in the real navy, you have constant drills, checkups of how clean you are, mandatory training, secondary duties.. you can always find something to do even after your bridge shift is done

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:16:43 PM

I love holodeck missions. Anything can happen.

And yes, in the real military, you're always busy.

[TF] Qazzy, 5:16:58 PM

You also have continuous training sessions for system upgrades and qualifications for anything related to your department as well

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:17:14 PM

There are also other oddball positions that may be appealing as well, something that doesn't fit in with the normal on most sims. Most COs are willing to listen and discuss adding these positions, such as a civilian specialist or civilian related job that supports the day to day operations on the ship or station.

Marty, 5:17:19 PM

There's always something to do 😊

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:17:28 PM

On one TOS sim, I had a character that ran the laundry.

Marty, 5:18:07 PM

what? were replicators not responsible making uniforms?

[BF][118] Kylindra, 5:18:16 PM

Not in TOS.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:18:24 PM

Don't just rely on the mission to keep you busy and active.

Fluffy Killer, 5:18:32 PM

On SB 109 in Theta Fleet, I ran Disney Inc. Most of the time, I had to come up with my own story arc that would tie into the sim's story arc

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:18:36 PM

I know, not in TOS, but I fudged it.

She was a martinet about keeping uniforms clean.

Work with other players on duty to expand your options. Or find ways to recreate with characters from other departments to find more things your characters can do.

On one Starbase, I had a roller disco exercise gym with a juice bar.

DS5 has several places on the promenade with establishments that see a lot of IC traffic.

SB109 has an amazing arboretum.

They're in TF, so I'm familiar with them. Every sim has something unique.

[BF][118] Kylindra, 5:21:05 PM

TF is Tanglo Fleet, right?

Fluffy Killer, 5:21:08 PM

who are you on 109?

[TF] Qazzy, 5:21:10 PM

Theta

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:21:37 PM

There's never a reason to tell your CO you have nothing to do.

I was on 109 when it was Protector. :0

[BF][118] Kylindra, 5:21:50 PM

ah, thank you for clarifying!. I've toyed with asking a character on a sim to be formally the ship's collateral legal duty officer. Which doesn't mean much since I don't think Trek ever needs it, but..

Beautiful Night, 5:21:54 PM

There's also a list floating around of 50 things to write about if you're stuck for posting, that has lots of good ideas for non mission posts

[TF] Qazzy, 5:22:09 PM

Also, don't forget that you have the option to create NPCs in other departments.

Fluffy Killer, 5:22:17 PM

ah, ok

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:22:32 PM

I've seen some creative lounges in Obsidian Fleet, too.

Play time can involve being in a relationship, but it can also involve a family, a hobby, a walk, jogging the corridors, working out in the gym, spending time on the holodeck, etc. Your character bio has hobbies and interests, use them. And use your strengths and weaknesses. Meet other characters and start something. You can also use NPCs to keep yourself involved in other departments as well.

I personally prefer playing one PC and two or three NPCs so I have more places to cause trouble...I mean, get involved. 😊

[TF] Qazzy, 5:23:42 PM

No, you mean trouble

Beautiful Night, 5:23:45 PM

How much of this is not so much a problem of nothing to do, but an issue with not creating a full character that has hobbies and interests, and ambitions?

to be devils advocate for a moment

Fluffy Killer, 5:24:44 PM

@Beautiful Night That's true I hate an undeveloped bio

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:25:19 PM

I think it's less of how the bio is created and more of knowing how to USE what's in your bio, Beautiful Night.

[TF] Qazzy, 5:26:13 PM

You don't have to have a fully completed bio for your character in order to have something to do. You can always develop the character as you play it out

Fluffy Killer, 5:26:24 PM

I think @Beautiful Night means when a bio doesn't list hobbies, etc

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:26:57 PM

Most people use the holodeck for recreation, but I was on a sim in OF where it was used to launch each mission, and done so very well. There were also parties at the end of missions that involved pirates and desert islands.

I love using weaknesses.

As I said in a pervious panel, I come from a Dungeons and Dragons background. I had a character with fire abilities who took damage from cold and couldn't swim AT ALL. I had more fun with the weaknesses than the strengths.

One campaign, I stayed behind to watch the horses because it involved swimming.

And so, there was trouble with the horses for me to deal with. :0

Use your hobbies and interests, too. Get someone else who has a similar hobby or teach another crew mate one of your hobbies.

Beautiful Night, 5:29:19 PM

@Fluffy Killer thats certainly part of it, and to go back to my old drum of character ambitions and goals, having them well thought out is massivley important. Its okay to say that your ambition is to have your own command, but then no-ne bothers to show themselves working for that goal - taking extra training, hitting the books, asking for experience. People just throw anything down on the bio to get on the sim, and then ignore what it means

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:31:02 PM

In that case, I would suggest that the CO USE that bio to put the character in a situation where they are forced to use that ability or weakness. But warn them first.

Fluffy Killer, 5:31:02 PM

It's fun to look at other players' bios. I did on my simm and realized that my CO character and the Chief Intel Officer on my simm were at the Academy the same years so we began to incorporate that into our posts

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:32:20 PM

I've looked at other character bios just to know how to do a better JP with that acharacter. And to find a fun setting that would appeal to both.

[TF] Qazzy, 5:32:45 PM

It's always a good idea to read through a character bio or even ask the player of another character and talk to them while you write with them, that way it makes it more realistic

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:33:13 PM

Back to balance: You do need to sleep. This is not generally part of what you write, but it can be from time to time. Have a nightmare, a strange dream, have something wake you up. Have insomnia.

Beautiful Night, 5:33:39 PM

also eat. go to the mess hall, or the replimat

Fluffy Killer, 5:33:54 PM

My CAG character on 109 had several nightmares that I written about while she was dealing with PTSD

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:33:55 PM

I remember doing a post with another player where I handed him a cup of coffee, black. It was in his bio, and my character would know this. He was impressed that I'd actually READ the bio. 😊

Beautiful Night, 5:33:55 PM

cook in your cabin. forget to turn of the smoke alarm, burn something

enjoy the fire suppression system

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:34:14 PM

lol

Go camping and have a storm come up.

You can get ideas anywhere. The key is, again, to find balance. At least half of your posts should be about the mission or what happens on duty. But you should spend at least twenty percent of your time on fun and relaxation. Or study. Have a friend on the ship to work with, or play with. Learn a new hobby. Ask another crew member to teach you one of their hobbies.

Fluffy Killer, 5:35:20 PM

or the waste recycling system stops working on the ship--always fun

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:35:39 PM

eww lol

Now I want to have a ship go sensor blind...

[TF] Qazzy, 5:36:33 PM

There's an endless list of ideas, but always be sure to pass them by your command team so you don't derail anything they might have going on as well

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:36:40 PM

If you find ways to incorporate more of your character's abilities and disabilities, it will help both the sim and your character have more depth. And you won't be sitting around with nothing to do.

Yes. EVERY time you go outside the box, or want to do something creative, pass it by your CO and XO. Get permission.

Part of the fun of finding balance when you write is using different ideas.

And not galling back on the standard solutions.

You can come up with stuff on the fly, or brainstorm with other players on your sim. So that if things get slow, you can have something to write about with other players to boost activity.

If you need ideas, there are lists you can get online. You can ask your CO or XO for suggestions. Maybe suggest using NPCs in other departments to help stay involved and busy?

If your character isn't involved in the core of the mission, there are things you can do around it. Use some of the ideas here, or come up with some of your own. Think outside the box. Remember, your character has strengths and weaknesses, hobbies and interests, for a reason. Use them. Find someone on the sim with a similar hobby and work together. Start a research project with someone. And there's always the holodeck. The options there are as varied as your imagination.

If you go into writing with the idea of having a balance between work and play, you should always have something you can do.

On several sims, I've had my character fall for another character and not have it reciprocated. I actually got some good posts out of that. I did warn the other player and assured them that I expected nothing in return, and that my character would move on.

Fluffy Killer, 5:41:25 PM

I'm off to make dinner. Thanks for hosting this session @[TF] Qazzy and @[TF] Kathryn Burke

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:41:39 PM

Thanks for your comments!

[TF] Qazzy, 5:41:52 PM

Thank you for attending

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:42:01 PM

What are some ideas you can come up with that we didn't cover? How can you benefit from adding balance to your character's life?

And do you have any further questions or comments?

Beautiful Night, 5:43:52 PM

I've had occasions where players have, in 48 hours of game time, met, fallen in love, lover dies, and become suicidally depressed. How do you put the breaks on 'too much relationship stuff' when players are keen to post?

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:44:55 PM

That's hard since it's organic.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:44:56 PM

A VERY gentle reminder that there are other things that need to be done on the ship and not to rush things.

But then, I've covered three months in two weeks with posts because no one else was doing anything.

I've also seen where two characters meet, fall in love, move in together and get pregnant in the space of a week.

If you are too harsh, they'll quit the sim. If you let it go, it can get out of hand.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:46:03 PM

As I said hard because of the organic nature of relationships.

Beautiful Night, 5:46:26 PM

I think that's a particular problem with the sim is slow moving. I've seen relationships like that. The posting took months OC, but IC barely two weeks had gone by

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:46:32 PM

It depends on how it develops.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:47:25 PM

Try to get them both involved in other posts so they'll slow down.

But that is a problem intrinsic to the nature of simming. Time is an accordion. Some people post fast, some slow.

And some post months in advance because they're waiting for the mission to move forward.

I agree that it depends on how it develops and if it feels like it would work out that way. If it feels plausible.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:48:35 PM

If they're posting that frequent, other post might not help either. They could simply breeze through those too.

Lia, 5:48:37 PM

<https://tenor.com/view/seven-of-nine-voyager-startrek-borg-gif-11060018>

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:49:21 PM

Beautiful Night, you have to go case by case, and sometimes let the players bend the rules.

I've actually been on both sides of this one.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:50:15 PM

It's Captain's discretion.

[TF] Qazzy, 5:51:00 PM

It's really a case by case situation depending on what else is going on on the sim as well

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:51:42 PM

Absolutely. Ultimately it is the Captain's discretion and it does have to be case by case.

Thanks, Shepherd. 😊

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:52:31 PM

This is where communicating with you crew is important. If you communicate your concerns in private with both parties it will always end up a better result.

Beautiful Night, 5:53:05 PM

Yes, the two cases I'm thinking off were very diifernt. The first one was a single player having a relationships with one of her own nPCs, not writing with anyone else, off in her own little world. The other was two really good writers, who developed the relationship really well, wasn't their fault the then CO wasn't moving things on particularly fast

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:53:12 PM

And be considerate when you do so.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:54:13 PM

That's why it is in private so not to disrupt sim flow or to bring it out where it doesn't need to be.

Beautiful Night, 5:54:45 PM

@Capt_G_Shepherd STF absolutely. no one like to be humiliated in public

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:55:11 PM

Or to have the CO come down on them like a ton of bricks. 😊

I've seen that happen, too. It didn't end well.

Capt_G_Shepherd STF, 5:55:58 PM

I would have the XO be the mediator first. Then the last resort the CO.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:56:12 PM

Good idea.

[BF] greenfelt22, 5:56:19 PM(edited)

4 minutes remain for this session.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:56:30 PM

Thanks for the warning. 😊

Thank you all for the comments and advice. 😊

We have two minutes before the Closing Ceremonies. 😊

Marty, 5:58:26 PM

Good stuff @[TF] Kathryn Burke 😊

[BF] greenfelt22, 5:58:49 PM

Great stuff! You can still use #overflow-one if you need to continue for a few minutes.

If not, we'll just prepare for the close.

[TF] Kathryn Burke, 5:59:16 PM

I think we're done here. 😊

[BF] greenfelt22, 6:00:01 PM

Again, great job!