

IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE TWO CAREERS AND NOT SACRIFICE YOUR RELATIONSHIP OR YOUR VALUES?

That's exactly what Monique Valcour asked in the wonderful article she just wrote about ThirdPath Institute highlighting our upcoming [Pioneering Leaders Summit](#). In it, she shared some of the wonderful wisdom we've learned over the years:

Be Intentional

Even when couples feel like they are "paddling against a strong tide of professional and societal norms" - by being intentional they can use their collective creativity to craft successful careers and rich personal lives.

Develop a Common Vision and Keep Each Other on Track

Honest conversations help couples renew their commitment to their shared vision. And just like practicing any other skill, keeping each other on track becomes easier over time.

Be Willing to Experiment

Monique then provides great examples of how the leaders with whom ThirdPath has been working with have applied these concepts to their careers.

Interestingly, Brigid Schulte then applied these concepts in a second article spotlighting ThirdPath in April. Brigid was interviewed by Working Mother magazine on how she and her husband Tom ended the "Chore Wars" and found a more satisfying approach to sharing household task.

Read on for an excerpt from both of these wonderful April articles.

Or join us next Thursday (5/14) when we talk to **Jackie James** from the **Sloan Center on Aging and Work** to discuss how these concepts can be applied at all points in the life cycle. One of our original Shared Care dads - now phasing into retirement - will also join the call.

Let's hope these "April showers" sprout seeds of change for many months to come.

/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

5 Ways to Win the Chore Wars at Home

Below are 5 suggestions Brigid Schulte discusses in the recent Working Mother article about the Chore Wars. The article highlights how she and her husband learned to share household chores. In this version, Jessica DeGroot added her two cents as well.

Say bye-bye to stereotype and hello to personality type.

If he likes to grocery shop and you're good with yard work, then embrace those chores. Do the housework that suits your schedule and personality rather than the chores that moms or dads are expected to do.

Make specific agreements on chore division.

When everyday tasks are explicitly assigned to one person there are fewer opportunities for lingering resentments.

Brigid Schulte suggests: If one of you loads the dishwasher, then the other should unload. If the dishwasher hasn't been loaded, for example, the owner of that job can be dispassionately texted a photo of the full sink.

Jessica adds: My husband has always cooked dinner. When he kindly asks me what I want for dinner, I always reply, "whatever you cook."

Agree on standards.

Take time to agree on standards that feel important to both of you.

Brigid suggests: Don't expect your partner to do it just the way you would without an explicit agreement. (Also, don't complain about how your partner does his or her assigned chore. If you're willing to hand it over, be willing to accept the other person's standards.)

Jessica adds: Sometimes my husband and I would disagree before we could develop a common standard. But we both knew this was a short term challenge that would create long term benefits.

Get the family involved.

Some chores benefit from getting the whole family involved.

Brigid suggests: Get the family involved with travel. Assign specific tasks (researching flights, booking accommodations, planning outings and so on) and then schedule regular check-in meetings to make sure all preparations are made with time to spare.

Jessica adds: As children get older, get them involved with cooking dinner, walking the dog, emptying the dishwasher - with the goal of making it such a normal part of family life that you no longer need to monitor that it gets done.

Let it go.

Cut yourself - and your partner - a little slack. Some days (and some weeks) are tougher than others. If this is the week to let it all go, then so be it.

Navigating Tradeoffs in a Dual-Career Marriage

Is it possible to have two successful careers without sacrificing your relationship or your values in the process?

Here's an excerpt from Monique Valcour's recent HBR blog post that answers this exact question. You'll see that she also shines a big spotlight on ThirdPath's work with integrated leaders.

"The experience of ThirdPath Institute, a Philadelphia think tank that works with dual-career couples, shows that it is.

"Over the past fourteen years, founder and president Jessica DeGroot has learned a great deal about how these couples can create and sustain two careers and a shared life that aligns with what matters most to the couple. She shared with me three lessons that stand out in particular.

"Be intentional - The path of least resistance is simply to let work and traditional gender roles take over -- whoever has the better (i.e. higher paying) job has first dibs on a career, or the woman's career takes a back seat after they've had kids. This is what happens when couples don't actively work to build and maintain consensus on what they want.

"ThirdPath creates communities of support to help people bravely and creatively craft successful careers and rich personal lives, even when it feels like they're paddling against a strong tide of professional and societal norms. These communities -- their "[Pioneering Leaders](#)" -- convene to share ideas and experiences on how to pursue a work life that allows time for family and community. For instance, these leaders are very intentional about when they take on big assignments at work, carefully thinking through the potential implications on family life and only taking on extra commitments in ways and at times that are healthy for family as well as work.

"Develop a common vision, then keep each other on track - You and your partner need to see eye-to-eye on the kind of life you want to lead and stick to it when circumstances change. For example, when couples have children, their intention of sharing responsibilities is often undermined by the demands of parenting and traditional gender roles. A common pattern is that mothers resist relinquishing control and fathers feel inadequate about their parenting abilities.

"Nate Lewis, a senior director at Eli Lilly [and one of ThirdPath's Pioneering Leaders] and his wife had always wanted to share family responsibilities, agreeing they should both be active, involved parents. During Robin's first business trip after the birth of their baby, she called home with extensive instructions for Nate. Mindful of their agreement, Nate recalls saying "Hey honey, if this is going to work, I need to learn how to parent while you're traveling." Honest conversations like this help couples renew their commitment to their shared vision. Just like practicing any other skill, keeping each other on track becomes easier over time.

"Be willing to experiment - Michelle Hickox, the chief financial officer of Independent Bank in Texas, and her husband Rob both worked as accountants for many years, a field that can require long hours at tax time. Unlike most accountants, however, they found a way to achieve their desired vision of shared parenting by looking for ways to spread out workload and parent availability over the course of each year. Michelle negotiated a flex-year schedule that was intense at tax time but light during the summer. Rob, meanwhile, negotiated a position that kept his schedule calm during tax season.

Thank you Monique Valcour for this wonderful spotlight on our work.