

It's February ... Let's Celebrate Love

One of our favorite activities at ThirdPath Institute is helping couples "get on the same page" around their work and family goals.

This month we're going to help you do this by celebrating the "LOVE" section of Brigid Schulte's book. Read on for a sneak peek of what's inside her book or to discover the variety of ways we can support you to create a more shared approach to work and family -- and to increase the love in your life!

After weaving her way through an analysis of the challenges we face, Brigid Schulte asks the questions: "What if not just women, but both men and women, worked smart, more flexible schedules? What if the workplace itself was more fluid than the rigid and narrow ladder to success of the ideal worker? And what if both men and women became responsible for raising children and managing the home, sharing work, love, and play? Could everyone then live whole lives?" We couldn't agree more!

So ... what's stopping us?

Brigid argues, we are all wrestling with "enormously powerful cultural expectations of who we are and how we're supposed to act; the work-devoted ideal worker, the self-sacrificing ideal mother, and the distant provider father." She also discovers, "the norms are what get us into the overwhelm, and the overwhelm keeps us from having the time to imagine a way out."

Our goal and Brigid's goal? An integrated life - a life that includes work, love and play!

As Brigid says, she didn't want to "wait for the ideal worker to retire, for businesses and governments to rewrite policies, for society to reshape its attitudes" -- although all of these things are important and necessary -- she wanted change now. Read her book and learn more about the changes she made. Or read on to learn about our upcoming Thursday calls to meet men and women who have succeeded in creating an integrated life.

Here's to successfully integrating work, love, play!
/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

Anna and James

The Unintended Slide into Traditional Roles

Brigid Schulte puts a big spotlight on ThirdPath Institute in her book, not only sharing Jessica DeGroot's personal journey, but also by sharing a few of the stories of how we have helped couples "learn to get on the same work/family page." Here's a quick peek at one of them

"When their second child was born, James planned to take leave. But after just one day off, his extreme-hour company called in a panic and said if he didn't return immediately, his job would be on the line. A big house and mounting expenses pushed them farther into their separate spheres ... At home, James was exhausted, snappish, and distracted. "If the kids tried to say something, I'd be thinking, 'Don't talk to me, I'm thinking about work,'" James told me. "If I read them a story, I'd read them the shortest one I could find because I was so stressed-out." James became physically ill. Anna was lonely and miserable. This wasn't the life either of them envisioned."

Working in collaboration with Jessica, Anna and James created dedicated time and space to think about their work and life goals, and then discovered new ideas for how to arrange things.

"Anna was shocked to discover that James really wanted to work a reduced schedule to have more time to be part of the family. "His own father died when he was fifty-five and James was worried that if he didn't destress his life, he'd die early, too," Anna said ... It took years of small, incremental steps, of trial and error and backsliding and a lot of talking, but they finally sold their big home and downsized. James took a job with flexible hours, works from home, schedules travel around school events, and has become a much more active parent and partner ...

"Both Anna and James ultimately aim to each work about thirty hours a week. James cooks. Anna mows. They have found time to walk in the nearby woods, have dates with each other, and laugh with their children ... James told me, "The other day the kids were listening to a silly song and I found myself singing along. That was an aha moment for me. A year or two ago, I wouldn't have even known the words."

The benefits are clear. We're not saying it's always going to be easy to create a shared approach to work and family - but once mastered - it's a skill you can use for a lifetime!

Join our next Thursday call on February 13th (12:30 - 1:30pm ET). Hear from a variety of couples who have discovered how to work as a team to create their preferred approach to balancing work and family.

Overwhelmed, Work, Love and Play When No One Has the Time

By Brigid Schulte

Launch date: March 11th 2014

Part I - TIME CONFETTI - Through good natured wit and raiser sharp observations, Schulte quickly discovers that our sense of overwhelm isn't just a personal problem - it's a topic being experienced, researched and discussed globally. She even discovers the problem of feeling overwhelmed - both personally and for society at large - is negatively impacting our ability to think.

Part II - WORK - Schulte then takes a cold hard look at just how much our workplaces continue to reward the ideal worker - the person who arrives first in the morning, leaves last at night, is always ready to travel, and never turns off work - even on vacation. However, Schulte also uses this section to highlight some of the most inspirational examples we've read about organizations that are doing it right. Bottom line, Schulte clearly demonstrates - white collar or blue collar - work can be done differently, ending with the section: "If the pentagon can do it, why can't you?"

PART III - LOVE - In this section Schulte shifts her focus to what's happening at home. It's here that she puts a big spotlight on ThirdPath Institute. [Click here](#) to read one of her ThirdPath case studies.

PART IV - PLAY - To better understand what happened to our leisure time Schulte travels to Denmark. She chooses this country because time studies report Danish women have more time for leisure then anywhere else. What she discovers is that the Danish people and government's progressive approach to work and family - including involvement of men at home - results in both men and women having more time for life. Schulte concludes this section by traveling back home and putting some of the information she's learned about play into action.

Want to learn more?

Join our February and March Thursdays with ThirdPath calls where we focus on creating more time for "LOVE" and "PLAY." Or join one of our local events planned for DC, New York or Philadelphia.