

IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE IMPOSSIBLE ... POSSIBLE

ThirdPath has been working on these issues for almost 20 years ... isn't it time that work/life integration and flexibility become an option for all?

Following Anne-Marie Slaughter's mandates for change will make the impossible possible ... We launched our new season of Thursdays with ThirdPath webinars with Anne Marie Slaughter. Missed it? [Listen to it here!](#) It was an amazing conversation that included great advice on the benefits, challenges and next steps you can take to arrange work and life so you can succeed in both!

We need flex for ALL - men and women, young and old, hourly wage and professional careers ... Mika Cross from One Million for Work Flexibility will be joining us for our November webinar. We will explore how the needs for flexibility are different at the "[top and the bottom of the labor market.](#)" We'll also take a look at how [gender plays out around flexibility.](#) Then, all year long, an expert will be joining us for the second half of the webinar to help you figure out how to apply these ideas to your life.

It's about flexing for the ones we love ... Most people think about the need for flexibility when caring for children, but we also need flex to care for aging loved ones and others we care for. As you have heard, I've been dealing with this in my own life, and I will use some of the next webinar to share personal insights and lessons learned. Read on for great ideas to get you started.

Thanks for being part of the growing, vibrant, inspiring ThirdPath community!

/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

PS - Check out our [free resources](#) - including Anne Marie Slaughter's five mandates for change.

Get a Jump on Elder Care

Although elder care is often unpredictable, the following conversations may help reduce some of the stress connected to this life stage:

Have a Conversation with Your Spouse

Try talking with your spouse about these issues long before the need for elder care surfaces:

- What role do you both want to play? What role do you think each of your siblings will play? How will each of you be able to help when there is an unexpected elder care need?
- What are your belief systems around death and dying?
- How will you support one another through the following conversations?

Have a Conversation with Your Siblings

These discussions can be a little more difficult, emotionally and logistically, depending on your family. To help you better navigate through them:

- Consider how many different perspectives are at play.
- Recognize the intensity of the subject matter (death, family property, etc.).
- Be prepared to manage old family patterns that may start to play out again.
- Allow space for each sibling to take a role that suits their relationship with the parent.

Have a Conversation with Your Aging Parents

Amy Goyer, author of *Juggling Work and Caregiving*, recommends starting the conversation in the following way:

- Do your homework by observing the situation and identifying specific areas of concern.
- Be clear that your thoughts and actions come from a place of love and a desire to support them.
- Consider raising difficult issues by discussing them when someone you both know has just dealt with one of them. You can ask, "Have you thought about what you would do in this situation?"
- If your parent says "everything is fine", try asking, "When you think about a time when you need more support, what would that look like?" Or ask them, "What would you like to do more of? What would you like to do less of?"

Keep in mind that all of these discussions will evolve over time, but done well, they will be very appreciated by everyone involved.

Join this month's Thursday with ThirdPath webinar to hear heartfelt insights from Jessica DeGroot about her recent travels down this path.

Men as Partners for Change

We need to push for changes in public policy and more flexible organizations, but we also need to move away from rigid gender based roles and assumptions. Here are some dads doing just that.

Dads working full time ...

Dan - "My wife and I have developed a rhythm of working together. Most days I handle getting our daughter's things together for the sitter and drop off / pickup. Jen handles getting our daughter ready for the day and getting us out the door on time. In the evenings we share in the tasks of bath duty, laundry, story time and bed time routine ... This gives each of us one time with our daughter and we still have time together as a family."

Dads flexing work hours ...

Miguel - "I'm a stay at home dad who works part time and enjoys every minute of both. After 20+ years in the button down corporate world, I took a step back and decided that I wanted to stay home with our daughter since we knew she would be our only child. She brings me joy and excitement every day. I love being able to be around for all the big milestones as well as the silly little things. Of course it helps that my wife works full-time which covers our day to day necessities. Keeping my hand in the working world allows me to have some balance and engage in grown up conversations. I wouldn't trade this for anything!"

Dads staying home full time

Dan - "Our 'style' dates back to the end of 2005 when I left a high pressure banking job for what I thought would be a 12-18 month break to spend more time with our 3 boys and decompress. Almost 8 years later, I remain "retired" and a full time stay at home dad. My wife's career flourishes (I'm very proud of her), and I would not trade the time I have had seeing my boys grow and mature. Being the only dad at school events clearly designed for moms and continually asked why you aren't 'working' can be

tiring. But taking comfort in knowing you were there for your kids makes it all worthwhile."

Dads sharing in the care after school ...

When both parents learn how to navigate school closures, sick days, after school activities and summer schedules, it can make full time flexible work possible for both parents. And when men and women both learn how to share in these predictable and unpredictable changes, everyone wins - moms, dads, kids, and our workplaces. Want to learn more? [Here's a list of the benefits from following this approach.](#)

All year long we'll be hearing from Dads who redesigned their work to share in the care of their children. ***[Download the PDF of our complete season today!](#)***