

**MILLENNIALS ARE JOINING  
OUR MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE!**

***Did you know two-thirds of millennial men want to share caregiving responsibilities at home?***

Just imagine what a positive impact this would have on families, workplaces, women's careers and our larger society. How can we support this new, energized group of dads (and moms) to follow their dreams and avoid the obstacles?

***A new season of Thursdays with ThirdPath webinars*** ... We were so excited to learn about the above statistic that we decided to focus our whole season of Thursday webinars on helping millennials - and you - follow an integrated approach to work and life. Here's the link to our [new season](#) of Thursday webinars. Here's the link to the [Center on Work & Family's](#) report on **The New Millennial Dad**. (See section 5.)

***Great advice in today's newsletter*** ... Can couples increase their chances of making "smart" choices that help them better navigate work and family? Read on to learn what two guest experts say about how you can increase your chances of making smart choices - options that will "promote the well-being of your family" - and how millennials can put these ideas into action right now.

***Getting started*** ... Today's newsletter also includes some inspiring stories from pioneering dads who have already put these ideas into practice. Here's a sneak peek at one of their insights:

"Parenting is a bit of a strange career in-and-of itself. It starts off as a full-time gig with lots of overtime, but within 4 years or so your hours begin to get cut back. 6 years in when you finally feel like you have your legs under you, you get cut back to a 50% schedule. And as you continue to get better and better at the job, you realize that the end is in sight - 18 years in with lots of blood, sweat and tears and your hours will be essentially cut back to zero. Tough bosses, these children!"

Together we are rewriting the narrative for work and family and we are glad to know millennials are joining the change process!

/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

***PS - Do you know a millennial who would like to put these ideas into action?  
Read the end of this email to learn more about our Millennial Working Group.***

**Pioneering fathers are already making "smart" choices ...**

***Smart work and family choices help families "experience a satisfying level of work-family balance that promotes the well-being of their families. (See previous section for more information.)***

For over 15 years, ThirdPath has been working with dads who are very proud of the smart choices they have made. Like today's millennials, these dads were interested in finding ways to share caregiving responsibilities - and they found many diverse ways to achieve this. Below are just a few excerpts from some of their stories.

***Bill started parenthood as an attorney working full time, Alexandra his partner, worked an 80% schedule in marketing.***

"After the birth of our first son, Alexandra worked an 80% schedule (every Friday off). Seven years later, after the birth of our third son, Alexandra asked me to reduce my schedule so I could take on more responsibility at home and she could maintain her career. In response, I went to an 80% schedule (every Monday off).

"One year later, with a newly assigned manager, I met resistance to my schedule because of the workplace and societal views of men's roles, and was told I would have to go full time. I pushed back and negotiated a 90% schedule (every other Friday off). Shortly thereafter, Alexandra was promoted and asked to go full time. In response, she followed my lead and negotiated a 90% schedule (taking the alternative Friday off). We maintained that for four years."

Ultimately Bill ended up changing his career and starting a web design business. Today, they have settled into a healthy dynamic, where Alexandra works from home two days a week and Bill has plenty of flexibility from owning his own business.

***Brett started parenthood as an attorney working full time. Together, he and his partner decided Angelike would become the stay at home parent.***

"Angelike and I have been very focused on insuring that each of us can live a fulfilling and varied life. That focus - mixed with an interest in being actively involved parents and role models for our children - have been the guiding principles of our family decision making and lead us both to career and caregiving identities.

"At the time my daughter was born, we were both lawyers. We discussed maintaining both of our careers and hiring a nanny, one of us working part-time and one of us staying at home. We both liked our jobs but we both realized I got a lot more satisfaction and enjoyment out of my job than she did. We also decided that the nanny route, during the early years was not for us. Angelike's boss was also not willing to accommodate a part-time schedule.

"Today, we are a family of an 8 year old, a 12 year old, a partner in a law firm and a mindfulness and self-compassion teacher whose work hours are increasing as her parenting hours get cut back. There are a lot of interests and needs to juggle and we approach them the same way we approached that first decision when my daughter was born: we sit down on the couch (all 4 of us), talk about all of our upcoming needs and, together, figure out the best path forward. Because that's the only path there is."

**Roger started parenthood as an engineer working reduced hours.  
His wife Shimul, also an engineer, did the same thing.**

When Roger's son was born, both he and Shimul decided to work reduced hours so they could share in the care of their new baby. To begin with - even though they both worked for the same employer and had the same benefits - Roger's wife assumed she would be the one who worked reduced hours. It was actually Roger who suggested they both could work part time. Now both parents have regular "alone" time with their child. Roger can see how this has helped the couple build a high level of trust. Both parents feel comfortable in the other's ability to take on any responsibility in their absence. This feeling of trust has also helped the couple feel closer in their relationship.

**What can we learn from these smart choices?**

**Families are diverse** - What you want might be very different from the family right next to you.

**Families keep changing** - Children change and work is probably going to change as well - change is part of the process.

**Supportive workplaces make a big difference** - Roger and Shimul work for a company where people role model moving ahead in their careers while working reduced hours. This made their smart choices much easier.

**Even in less supportive environments couples can work together to make smart choices.**

Join Brett and Bill on our next Thursday webinar. We'll learn more about their stories, and how we can support millennial dads (and moms) to follow their dreams and share in the care of their families.

Want to learn more about Roger? He's one of the pioneering men, women and leaders we feature on our "[Meet the Pioneers](#)" page of our website.

## **Making Work and Family Work: From Hard Choices to Smart Choices**

*When societies and organizations make smart choices it helps families make smart choices.*

**Smart choices**, Jeff Greenhaus and Gary Powell explain, allow people to: "combine work and family responsibilities in a way that enables them to experience a satisfying level of work-family balance and that promotes the well-being of their families." Smart choices are also made (or not made) at every level: societies, organizations, employees and families.

When societies and organizations do not make smart choices, they increase the likelihood that families are forced to make **hard choices** - ones that compromise their work and family goals.

**So how can we help young professional couples - aka "millennials" - increase their chances of making smart choices?** And how in particular can we do this when they live in the U.S. where there is so little support from societies and organizations?

In their book, *Making Work and Family Work: From Hard Choices to Smart Choices*, Jeff and Gary make a number of recommendations - **see below list**. We were pleased to see how they correspond with the work we've done with progressive couples. We've also learned how following recommendations like these will work well in both supportive AND less supportive environments.

**To increase the likelihood of making "smart choices" couples need to:**

- 1** - Understand their own and each other's family identities ... and understand that families keep changing
- 2** - Aim for solutions that enhance their definition of family well-being
- 3** - Seek support from others - in particular from each other
- 4** - Make collaborative decisions - moving from a "me" to a "we" perspective
- 5** - Understand and resist traditional gender roles

We couldn't agree more with these recommendations. Jeff and Gary also give a couple of nice shout outs to ThirdPath in their book!

Clearly millennials are beginning to think about these issues. The majority even want to share caregiving responsibilities - something that will dramatically impact women's careers and transform organizations. So how can we support them to make "smart" choices and follow their dreams?

*Join us on Thursday 10/13 at 1pm ET to hear Jeff and Gary explore this important topic. We'll even have a few pioneering dads join us to share how they have put these ideas into practice!*