

Brad - One Father's Journey to becoming a Whole Life Leader

Key to the journey of becoming a Whole Life Leader is (1) becoming clear about what you want time for outside of work and (2) getting support to move towards these goals.

To illustrate the importance of these truths read the following real-life story about Brad.

You can also find more details for each of these lessons at: <http://www.thirdpath.org/brads-story/>

Brad is a father who learned many important life lessons on his road to becoming a Whole Life Leader. Brad started his career in a large law firm, but over time made many changes to create a work and family solution that felt more in line with his goals. Below are a few of the "life lessons" from his journey.

Lesson #1: Taking parental leave makes a big difference

Lesson #2: Make sure each parent has alone time with the children

Lesson #3: Get support to leave an unsupportive workplace

Lesson #4: If you encounter resistance, develop a good track record and ask for a trial period

Lesson #5: When the going gets tough, don't let go off your goals

Brad's new boss had old-fashioned ideas about men's and women's roles. "My boss supported the reduced work schedules of female colleagues of mine who were doing similar jobs, but told me I should be working 100%." Brad was shocked, but Instead of leaving the organization, Brad decided to ride out each new challenge with a growing and clearer sense of what he was up against. "This was the first time that as a white male I could recall experiencing being faced with bigotry or an unfair bias," he explains. "I had this theory that the only obstacle to getting the schedule I wanted was in my head, but that clearly wasn't true. I was struck by how long it took to negotiate for what I wanted, and how each subsequent boss was reluctant to stick his or her neck out for me. And this was in a group that had women who were doing this. The pressure was not even coming from human resources," he concludes, "It was other peoples' own gender stereotypes of what I was *supposed* to be doing."

Lesson #6: Look for other role models

Lesson #7: It's a process, not a solution - things will keep on changing at work and at home

Lesson #8: Take a long-term approach to your collective goals. Step by step you'll get there

Lesson #9: Being a role model will allow others to follow in your foot steps

Brad notes, "My hope is that I can serve as a role model for other fathers to push for the work family solution that they are looking for. Sam was such an important role model for me and I want other fathers to know that people like Sam and me are out there. And that we are great examples of a different approach that can be really fulfilling. But it all really started with that initial four month paternity leave. If I hadn't taken that time off to be with our first son, I probably would never have known my sons the way I do now. I am so glad I have done things differently."