

A PERSONAL NOTE ON THE IMPORTANCE OF HOPEFULNESS ...

If Jessica DeGroot has learned one thing since founding ThirdPath almost 20 years ago, it's that it is possible to grow a community of progressive parents and leaders who are committed to change that supports gender equity AND thriving families.

What keeps our community moving forward? Learning from and being inspired by each other. Not only do the ideas we share make us smarter, they foster hope.

Why do we know this? Because we've seen the importance of hope over and over again. Change is hard and it often requires overcoming many obstacles. What helps someone stay the course? Read today's special edition of our newsletter to learn more.

Want hope? ... Click on the month for the perfect inspiration for you:

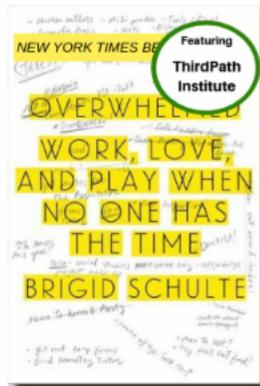
June	You'll find a recap of Anne-Marie Slaughter's 5 Mandates for Change
May	We re-published our interview with two leaders who Share Care
April	Two fathers explore balancing work and the care of school aged children
March	You'll find an excerpt from our exciting article, <i>Transformative Flex</i>
February	We highlight a dad blogger whose story will make you LOL
January	An expert on elder care shares lessons learned from her story

And don't forget to check our last summer's blogs about balancing work and [summer care](#), or learning how to [turn off work on vacations](#).

Enjoy this month's newsletter ... Read on to see Jessica's personal reflection on why this year was so challenging, and why hopefulness is key to achieving the lives we want.

Thanks for being part of the growing, vibrant, inspiring ThirdPath community!
/Jessica and the ThirdPath team

PS - Want to learn how to push back at overwork and create a more joyful approach to work and home? [Join our next OMG 12-call series.](#)



Fight Overwhelm!

Enter our raffle to win
Brigid Schulte's book

Take the Overwhelm survey

Join ThirdPath's Overwhelm Mitigation
Groups - OMG!

Find out more: www.ThirdPath.org



Our OMG 12-call series provides an opportunity to learn and master key integration skills. The 1-hour calls meet monthly with a skilled facilitator, like-minded peers, and proven methodology.

Thursdays with ThirdPath

Did you know over 71,000 people checked out our nonprofit's free resources this past year - like the live and recorded versions of our Thursdays with ThirdPath webinars?

Missed our most recent webinar?

Matt Schneider, co-founder of City Dads Group and ThirdPath board member, joined us to discuss how men across the country are redefining fatherhood. We also had some of these "modern fathers" join our 9th annual Father's Day webinar to share their stories. [Listen to it here.](#)

Download the [full list](#) of our interactive webinars. **Want to join the next one?**

Email: Rashis617@gmail.com **Subject:** Thursdays with ThirdPath

A personal reflection from Jessica DeGroot

What keeps the ThirdPath community moving forward? Learning from and being inspired by each other. Not only does this exchange of experiences make us smarter, it fosters hope. What derails others? Losing hope.

Why do I know this? Because for the past 20 years, I've seen this pattern over and over again. Change is hard and requires overcoming many obstacles. ***What helps someone stay the course:***

- Previous positive experiences around work-life integration - so even if they are failing at the moment - they stay motivated to keep making changes to achieve integration once again
- Strong support at home, including someone who keeps encouraging them to reach for an integrated solution, even if it means leaving an unsupportive workplace
- Role models who inspire them that integration can be done
- Taking time to recharge and replenish their energy so they can overcome the next obstacle

As long as people have some hope around what's possible, it keeps them from lowering their goals - as you can see eloquently illustrated in the box to the right.

Why do I know this even better today? Because of how personally challenging this past year has been.

I have always believed there is a "win-win" answer around work-life integration. This year, balancing my leadership role at ThirdPath with the unexpected and all-consuming demands of elder care, taught me that some years we will fall short of this goal. Sometimes life will demand more of us, and work will need to take a back seat.

If you think it's gotten easier for leaders to integrate work and life since ThirdPath was founded 20 years ago, think again. Here's what this past year taught me.

- Unpredictability - like what I experienced around elder care - makes planning for work-life integration much more challenging
- Unpredictability - due to lack of time and planning - is an increasing problem in chronically overworked workplaces
- Creating a high performing team that supports everyone's work-life integration goals is the best way a leader can achieve work-life integration themselves
- Creating a team like this is harder than you think, especially in a chronically overworked workplace

Given these truths, should we be surprised that so many leaders give up hope, lower their goals, and let work take over their nights, weekends and even vacations?

I know there is a better way. I know supporting leaders to model integrated lives is key to change. And this year also taught me to more fully appreciate how the road to work-life integration may feel pretty hopeless for too many leaders, and how this hopelessness might be an unexpected obstacle to change.

How do you renew hope? Find support. Take time to recharge. Recommit to your goals. It's also exactly what I will be doing as we look ahead to our 20th anniversary celebration.

Creative Tension

The gap between our vision and current reality may lead to feelings of anxiety, sadness, anger, discouragement, hopelessness, or worry.

But when we understand creative tension, and allow it to operate by not lowering our vision, our vision becomes an active force for change.

~ Peter Senge, *The Fifth Discipline*

