

HOLDING WORK AND FAMILY TOGETHER

Certainly, the most difficult issues for modern couples is the ability to commit ones' self to a personal relationship as well as to a career or demanding work. In an article recently in Style Magazine; Actress Julian Moore in the March issue was quoted as saying "At the end of the day, the thing that gives me meaning is my family. But work is a huge expression of who I am, what my interests are in the world. It would be hard not to have both things. There is no career vs. family- its' both. It's life."

In my years of practice in the field of psychology, I have encountered the issue of personal self-worth and achievement as well as maintaining a functional, healthy relationship. It is especially difficult for a woman in today's society to have a career which is highly competitive and demanding as well the demands of being mother and wife. It is my opinion that the most difficult job that any of us have is that of parenting. It is especially true for a woman who has to bare the child, feed the child, and nurture the child. This is true for the first years of the child's life.

Certainly, a fathers' involvement is important but a mothers' consistent involvement and time is not just important but vital to survival. I am not a believer that there is such a thing as quality time. This concept existed 20 years ago when women were introduced into the work force and worked long hours away from family settings. In order to cope with a woman's guilt and stress of not being their for her children and spouse, the concept of quality time was invented that it was primarily the if a women spent half hour concentrated effort, no distraction with her child, that this was equal to half a day that a mother might spend in activities with her child. It is my opinion that there is no such thing as quality time that all there really is time. The more time a parent invests with their children, the more benefits that will result in a child's' growth.

Unfortunately, there is no substitute for mothering. A mother is the most important person in any of our lives and is the person who we often look too for nurturance and guidance. A healthy relationships with our mothers in our societies seem to benefit and have an easier time of adjustment in society than those who have had dysfunctional relationships with their mother.

In psychology, it is quite interesting that many of the diagnoses in the DSM IV relate to the relationship that one has with their mothers and approximately 70% of all mental disorders have a connection to the initial relationship with our mothers. This puts a great burden on the responsibility of being a parent and especial that of motherhood. It is certainly a lot easier for males in our society to be a father since the traditional role of father is to be a provider and not so much a nurturer. If both parents choose to work to meet their life goals then it is necessary that the father be a nurturer in order to provide for the needs of the children.

Now it is also possible in our society to be a family and not have children. That is a new definition of a family. An adult committed relationship without children is now considered a family. This type of family is confronted with the commitment of both people to the relationship. Relationships are like living entities and need to be continuously addressed. The most difficult part of life for most human beings seems to be having a functional relationship. When one looks at an individuals career vs. relationship a person can have highly successful career, eg. note: Movie Stars and Public Officials but not have a successful relationship. This again points to how difficult it is to have a successful relationship.

Article two to be placed end of May and removed end of July.