
THE
Grace Paper

\$5.00

FAMILY, PARENTAL LEAVE & YOUR CAREER

Issue Two



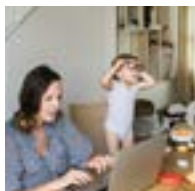
RETURN TO WORK
Don't settle for
LEFTOVERS

WORKPLACES:
DISMANTLING THE
maternal
WALL

JOB SHARING
How it
WORKS



JAMILA RIZVI
Q&A on bridging the confidence gap & what she wants other women to know
Page 06



FINDING JOY
A practical guide to the parenthood juggle
Page 08



LOVE LIST
Movies, books & things we love
Page 18



CHIEF PARENTING OFFICER
What I learnt
Page 23

WHAT IS GRACE PAPERS?

Grace Papers is your digital coach, with tips, tools and strategies that equip you to have smart and informed conversations about your career and family.

Think of us as...

A CAREER COACH
A COMMUNITY
A WORKING PARENT
A SUPPORTIVE FRIEND
A LEGAL EXPERT
AN ADVOCATE FOR GENDER EQUALITY
A PERSONALISED JOURNEY



@gracepapers

gracepapers.com.au

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| 04 | <u>EDITOR'S NOTE</u>
THE GRACE PAPER ISSUE TWO | 18 | <u>OUR LOVE LIST</u>
MOVIES, BOOKS & THINGS WE LOVE |
| 06 | <u>JAMILA RIZVI Q&A</u>
FUTURE WOMAN PRIME MINISTER | 19 | <u>KELLY CROSTHWAITE Q&A</u>
NAVIGATING FULL-TIME CARE & WORK |
| 08 | <u>FINDING JOY IN THE JUGGLE</u>
A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO PARENTING & WORK | 20 | <u>JOB SHARING</u>
HOW IT WORKS |
| 10 | <u>JULIE MCKAY Q&A</u>
THE PART-TIME PARTNER DOING IT LOUD & PROUD | 22 | <u>RETURNING TO WORK?</u>
THINGS YOU MUST KNOW |
| 12 | <u>DISMANTLING THE MATERNAL WALL</u>
THE WORKPLACES DRIVING CHANGE | 23 | <u>CHIEF PARENTING OFFICER</u>
WHAT I LEARN'T |
| 15 | <u>FIVE TIPS</u>
TO HELP YOU TELL YOUR BOSS YOU'RE EXPECTING | 25 | <u>KEEPING IN TOUCH</u>
WHY IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR BRAND |
| 16 | <u>DR. KIRSTIN FERGUSON & CATHERINE FOX Q&A</u>
WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN | 26 | <u>DOUBLE JEOPARDY</u>
WHAT IS INTERSECTIONAL FEMINISM & WHY DO WE NEED IT |
| | | 28 | <u>A NOTE FROM PRUE</u>
OUR VISION FOR GENDER EQUALITY |





“

The power in working as a collective is that we are saying you're not going to divide us...no matter what my income bracket, no matter what I'm doing. I deserve to be free of violence, and to work with dignity, and so does everyone else.

-Monica Ramirez

This edition of The Grace Paper comes on the heels of an unprecedented global movement for women's rights, equality and justice. Women all over the world are standing up and stepping forward together to stamp out discrimination, unfair systems and inappropriate behaviours. They are changing our future forever, to one where gender equality and equitable workplace paradigms are the norm.

Reflecting on the eight years since I stepped out on my own to build my business, it's been often that I've felt impatient with the rate of change. But as we continue to #pressforprogress, this year there are two themes that fill me with hope and optimism that this next wave of feminism will bring about sustained change.

Firstly, we see women working as a collective. They are increasingly supporting each other, and I believe more likely than ever to celebrate each other's success and raise each other up. Or, as Dr Kirstin Ferguson who initiated the #CelebratingWomen campaign so aptly put it, "forget lowering a ladder to support one woman at a time; drop down a fishing net to raise up many."

Secondly, and perhaps at least in part because of point #1, we are seeing men more than ever listening to the voices of women, stepping up as allies,

and increasingly using their power and privilege to tackle the systemic biases in our workplaces that have for so long prevented all women from rising.

Most importantly, it's working. The latest figures reveal that the national gender pay gap has reached its lowest level in 20 years at 14.6%. We are also seeing a higher proportion of mums returning to work with the same responsibilities, up from 59% in 2011 to 65% in 2017.

So as we go to print on this edition, we're celebrating initiatives like that of Woolworths Group. They've not only doubled their paid parental leave entitlements, but are also paying superannuation contributions on the unpaid parental leave component for up to 12 months and empowering every new and expectant parent and people leader with digital coaching support. Empowerment that is also being rolled out across several new departments within both the Victorian and NSW Governments.

Of course, the data also reminds us that for all the hope, we are not there yet. But the stories in this issue are a great reminder that we all have an opportunity to influence change; to be part of the solution. So, as you enjoy this edition, we hope that it nourishes you with further education about the gender inequities that still exist, that it inspires you to exercise your freedoms and advocate for change, and that it challenges you to be more inclusive in your own life.

Prue Gilbert, Grace Papers Founder

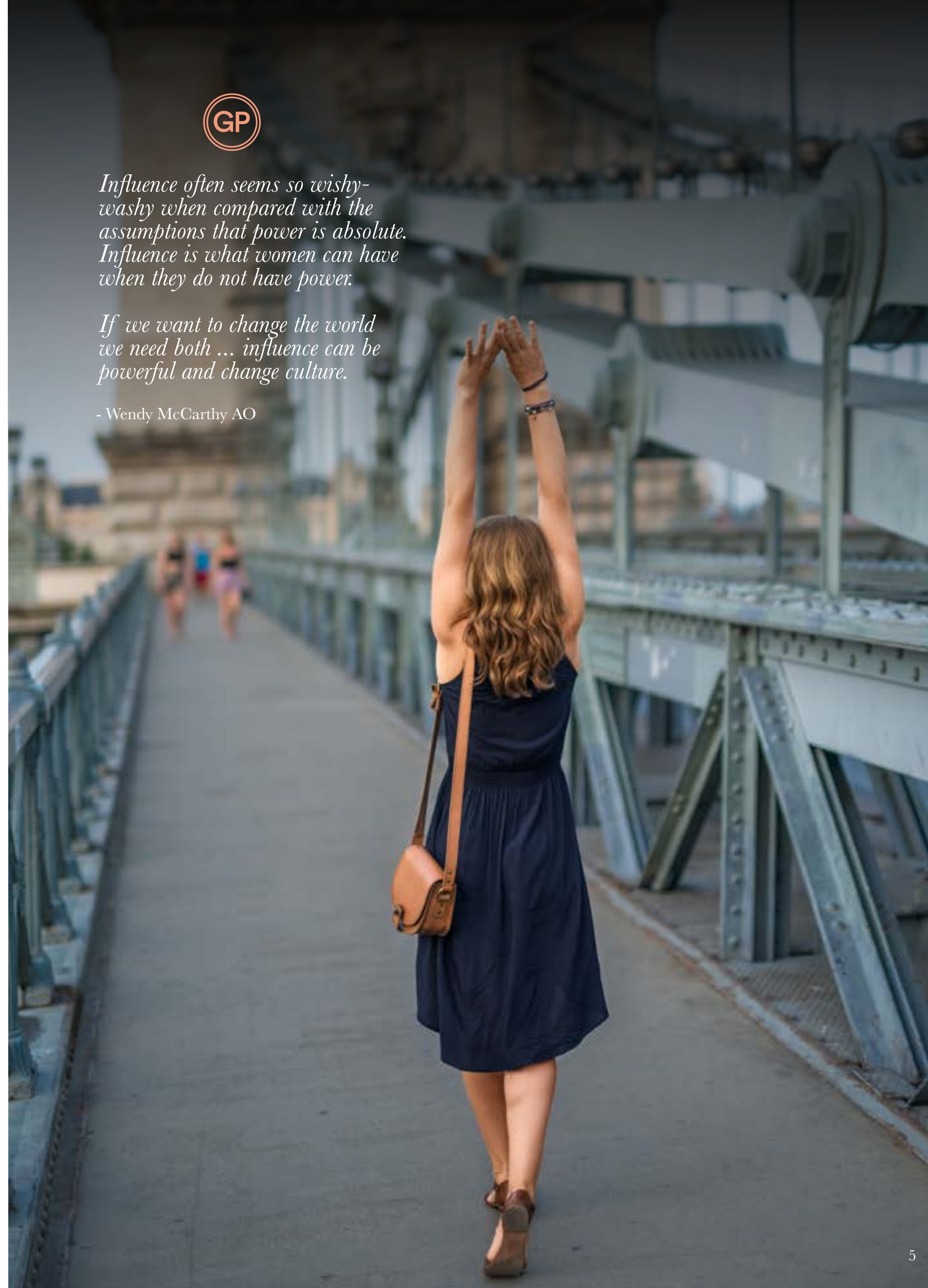
GRACEPAPERS.COM.AU | HELLO@GRACEPAPERS.COM.AU



Influence often seems so wishy-washy when compared with the assumptions that power is absolute. Influence is what women can have when they do not have power.

If we want to change the world we need both ... influence can be powerful and change culture.

- Wendy McCarthy AO



Prime Minister ~~FUTURE WOMAN~~

Author, presenter and political commentator, Jamila Rizvi is fast becoming one of the leading voices in Australian media. From her role as editor-at-large for Future Women and a regular commentator on The Project, The Drum, Today and Q&A to author of the best-selling Not Just Lucky and The Motherhood, Jamila is one to watch. We sat down with the policy advisor turned women's advocate to discuss the steps she has taken to truly 'own' her achievements, and what she wants other women to know.

It has been a combination of passion, education and talent that's propelled you and your career forward. What does your self-talk sound like as you take on big, high-profile roles such as editor-at-large at Future Women?

I've got a pretty solid baseline of backing myself. If I take some risks, some of them are going to pay off. Not all of them will pay off - I've stumbled many times - but for the most part, when I've taken a gamble and combined that with working hard, it's paid off, so I suppose my self-talk is actually pretty positive.

Alongside that, I'm a very rational right brained person. I enjoy evaluating, strategic decision making and planning. While I move very fast in my working life, I'm also a planner, so my self-talk is often quite logical. I've also got a good sense of who I am and what I'm good at, and the flipside of that is I know what I'm not good at.

Yes, so you've got a deep awareness of your strengths and weaknesses.

I think that takes a bit of time in your career but there is nothing better than being a manager of a lot of people to make you realise what you're not good at!

You've been appointed to some big roles at a young age - have you ever suffered from imposter syndrome?

I think everyone suffers from imposter syndrome to an extent. It's only at that point where you realise that no one's got it figured out, and no one knows what they're doing all the time, that you start to relax a little bit. In my career, I have learnt that no matter what industry, there is an element of risk and lack of understanding, but having a go is part of what everyone does and that's both reassuring and, sometimes, worrying!

Having other people support you can also give you the confidence to have a go. Who have been the key influencers in your life?

When I was younger, it was the influence of different teachers and definitely my mum who always put her kids ahead of everything else in the world. As I got older, Ian Chubb, the Vice Chancellor at ANU when I was studying there, was incredibly kind to me and was a really wonderful mentor. Kate Ellis, who I worked for in politics for several years, was also a great mentor and then Mia Freedman at Mamamia after that.

The last two gave you a real chance at a young age too in some ways...

They took pretty big risks. Kate hired me out of Kevin Rudd's office when I was 23 years old and into a policy adviser role that I had no business doing. She took the time to nurture and help me learn how politics worked. She was someone who was focused on achieving what she needed to, but at the same time really cared about her staff and our progression.

There is plenty of research out there that confirms the existence of the maternal wall. After the birth of your baby, you stepped back at Mamamia to lean into different opportunities all at the same time. How have you navigated the maternal wall, and how has your relationship with work changed since becoming a parent?

I still think the former me would be horrified at the way I work now. I very much didn't know what to expect when I had Rafi... I literally worked up to the day before he was born. When I was on parental leave I was itching to go back to work but when I did return I thought maybe I don't. It shows just how vicious the hormones are at that point in time, but also how much your world fundamentally shifts.

“ ***For me, the ambition and drive didn't disappear.*** ”

If anything, it increased but I needed to find a way to do it differently to accommodate parenthood. I had to find the flexibility and the role that would be compatible with how I was trying to run my home life, and enable me to have my finger in different pies.

I had previously always thought that the only way to be in a stimulating influential job was to work from 6am to 8pm and manage a whole lot of people, five days a week. But now I think not only is the economy changing so much, so too are my family's values around parenthood. For example, for the first two years of our son's life, my husband and I worked four days a week and it was such a lovely time. And that will keep evolving - it's about your needs and their needs and both of those are always changing. There is never a solution that's going to work for a long period of time. There's a solution that works for you and your family in that moment.

Your book Not Just Lucky interrogates why successful women attribute their careers to luck as opposed to talent, intelligence and hard work. How do you navigate the likeability bias while owning your achievements?

This is one of the most complex hurdles that women face at work and I don't pretend to have figured it out. The data tells us that likeability for women at work does not correlate with success. For men, the more successful you are, the more people like you and want to be around you. The more successful you are as a woman, the less people like you and want to be around you. So, women are left with this impossible trade-off between being liked and being successful in workplaces, and because we are socialised as girls to hold likeability above all else, we do. Many women find that very confronting in the workplace and will often relinquish ambition for jobs they really want for the sake of keeping that relationship they have with their colleagues, friends and family.

What I have tried to do with this book is say to women... don't let the world tell you that you're doing it wrong or you are thinking wrong. Be aware that some of the biases in your head - the ones that make you doubt yourself, think likeability is more important and make you judge other women who are successful - are not inherent beliefs and experiences that you have. They are the result of a patriarchal system. Simply knowing that can give you more confidence to push back against it.

Let's talk about the mental load - the domestic and

childcare responsibilities that so often fall to women. How have you navigated this common source of unequal gendered labour with your partner?

These are the moments when I go, gosh, I've got a good job. It's so much fun. It is similar to that decision around how you balance work and child rearing. The same goes when it comes to the mental load space with you and your partner. So many of us assume that you sort of fall into a pattern around the time that you settle down together, and that you hold that pattern forever, when really as your lives change and as you change, it has to change with you. I've noticed that we easily fall into gender stereotypes even when I've set my life up to be opposed to them - because it's easier, more comfortable and what everyone else is doing.

For us, it's been about an ongoing conversation. We get help and there is a lot of gentle ribbing of one another. But when it comes to the more mental or emotional load of organising the household, being in charge of things... it comes down to interrogating the patterns you take on. The single

best thing I've done is made my husband the 'parent one' and me, the 'parent two' contact at childcare, which means that if something happens at childcare, the first call is always to him so he can't not deal with it. He either has to ask me or he has to deal with it himself, so that gives him the ownership.

How do we unite as women for a stronger voice?

I think Australia really suffers from never having developed a single women's electoral lobby group. I would love to see a unified women's lobby, with various organisations coming together to look at giving a portion of their funding to a single representative body that represents their interests!

Critical to the economic empowerment of women is good policy that is inclusive of women and children. What policies should women be advocating for together?

For me, child care is the single most important issue at this moment in time. I worked in child care policy for a long time. Our child care system was essentially developed in the 70s without any real framework or an understanding of how integral to our workforce women would become. We have just tinkered with it, added bits and moved some things around. Labor creating the child care rebate payment was an enormous step forward but a lot of those costs end up being passed on by proprietors. We need to reach the point where a party is willing to say our child care system is fundamentally not the right system for the future of work.

We need to reframe the way people think about early childhood education and child care. There are still so many people who consider child care as just babysitting, as opposed to recognising how fundamental those first few years of life are - that being engaged in some sort of formal learning environment is outstanding for children. We need to see early learning as part of the schooling system and less as a babysitting service.

At the same time, we should be having a conversation about improving women's participation in the workforce. Women make up around 77% of the part-time workforce in Australia, which is very high, but many say they would like to be working more. One of the primary drivers of this is lack of availability of quality child care. There has been some great modelling done around how much our GDP and tax base would jump each year if we just had a small increase in the number of women in the workforce or working slightly longer hours. //

Finding Joy *IN THE JUGGLE*

I still vividly recall waking from a sleep-deprived fog and panicking as I searched under the covers and beside the bed for my first newborn - only to be calmed by my husband who reminded me that he was safely in his cot and I'd fed him an hour earlier. It was one of the many signs that, in my world, EVERYTHING had changed, writes Prue Gilbert.

What I didn't realise though, was that those 'maternal' feelings of intense love, worry, fear, protection and adoration were all tied to changes in my brain. According to scientists, "the way a woman acts (after and even just before birth) is definitively linked to what's happening in her prefrontal cortex, midbrain, parietal lobes, and elsewhere. Grey matter becomes more concentrated. Activity increases in regions that control empathy, anxiety, and social interaction."

But studies also confirm that the changes in the brain can be experienced by men:

“ Although only mothers experience pregnancy, birth, and lactation, and these provide powerful primers for the expression of maternal care via amygdala sensitisation... evolution created other pathways for adaptation to the parental role in human fathers, and these alternative pathways come with practice, attunement, and day-by-day caregiving.

We are all, it seems, wired for connection.

The juggle is real

The hard part for many is aligning family connection with workplace expectations of constant connectivity. Apparently the most likely response time to an email is just two minutes!

And while we've long known that conflict between work and family has a negative impact on the mental health of parents, recent research published in the *Journal of Social Science & Medicine* found that children's mental health also deteriorated when their mother or father experienced an increase in work-family conflict, but improved when parents' work-family conflict reduced.

More than ever, working parents need flexibility to prioritise what's most important in their heart. And when they are unable to achieve it, women in particular turn to the 'gig' economy, where their presence has more than doubled in the past 10 years. Most are working as professional freelancers, direct sellers, or are working through platforms, and 70% of female gig workers are also the primary caregivers in their homes.

The lure of working hours that fit in with their family needs, and often their partners' career, is strong; they often only later discover that the grass is no greener in the gig economy (and in many cases was a pre-emptive strike against the maternal wall they were otherwise likely to face).

Not only are they primary caregivers trying to win and deliver work to earn a living, but they are less likely to be contributing to their retirement savings and are also less likely to have life insurance. A majority of Australians have access to life insurance solely through the default opt-out cover provided via their super fund.

What they need is real flexibility from their workplaces. That comes with economic security, and practical tools that can support them to achieve balance between work that fulfils them and meets their workplace goals, but which also affords them the flexibility to meet their children's needs which are inextricably linked to their own.

Finding joy in the juggle

For me, it's a connection to my priority values that enables me to manage the demands of a busy young family and a thriving business. But I also use countless other tools. The 'weekly meeting', for example, has been a game changer for my partner and me, and the worry tree is a favourite for all of us.

To counter that inner voice that says "if you're not doing it all you're not doing it right", and help you to get the flexibility you need, we've created an evidence-based program, Find Joy in the Juggle, to support you to achieve your own balance - complete with your own 'juggler's toolkit'!

The tools help to ensure your heart is in balance, for balance is not solely about time; it's about ensuring you are investing in the values and rituals that are most important to you and your family. It includes tools for helping you find purpose in your work, for holding difficult conversations, seeds for planting your own worry tree, and so much more.

YOUR JUGGLER'S TOOLKIT:

- **Values assessment** - which values are most important to you, and why?
- Tools to create your **professional vision** and a parenting legacy so you have clarity on what energises you, and what doesn't, both in care and in career.
- A **role redesign assessment** to use in consultation with your people leader, ensuring you are fulfilled, but not doing a full-time role in three days (and only getting paid for three days!).
- Tips for ruthlessly **prioritising**.
- A **delegation** system so you're never caught off guard.
- The 'how to' on creating your own **personal board** of directors.
- A script for **holding difficult conversations** (so you don't bottle it up, take it home and miss out on the joys of your babies' unconditional love).
- The seeds for planting your own **worry tree**.

The days are long but the years are short

The period from birth until children start school can feel like groundhog day as parents struggle with sleep deprivation, physical and emotional demands of little people, a seemingly endless number of illnesses, and an increase in laundry and household duties that sees you and your partner in a constant state of competition about who is more fatigued and who has done more! But it is important to remember that this period also ends, evidenced by the reduction in Panadol bills and a return to morning exercise (OK, occasionally)!

I often wonder if this is why changes to parental leave and child care are so slow - because the minute you are out of it, you set the old challenges aside to tackle the new ones.

But throughout it all, it's important to keep your eye on the big picture, to access support from policies such as flexibility, services such as employee assistance programs and empowerment tools like ours, provided by your employer to enable you to stay true to your values, and to ultimately find joy in your juggle. //



When I became Transport Secretary, I asked my wife about the scariest day of her career and having children. She told me it was her first day back from six months of parental leave and the lack of confidence that came at a time when you're off nurturing a newborn - that your career had been put on ice and you had to prove yourself again. I found that so unfair and so unjustified. It has stuck with me ever since.

That moment of truth motivates me to do whatever I can to champion working parents and facilitate a smooth transition out of and back into the workplace.

- Tim Reardon
Secretary, Department of Premier and Cabinet,
NSW



The part-time partner **DOING IT LOUD AND PROUD**

Julie McKay was appointed to the role of Executive Director, UN Women Australia at just 23. Within the first five years, the organisation had raised \$1 million towards projects that impact the lives of women and girls. She was named Telstra Young Business Woman of the Year in 2011, ACT Young Australian of the Year in 2013 and was also the gender advisor to the Chief of Defence. But when she fell pregnant mid-negotiations with PwC CEO Luke Sayers, she wondered whether those two pink lines meant the end of the conversation. As she embarks on her second parental leave, we spoke to the now PwC Partner for Diversity and Inclusion about her career to date, and how she makes it work as a partner working 3.5 days a week.

Tell us a bit about your childhood. How has your family influenced your career and parenthood? Did you have strong role models around you?

I have a very close family. They believed very strongly in the importance of education, but also instilled in both my brother and I, a sense of responsibility to live a life that involved passion and commitment to making a difference in whatever area we chose to work.

I lost my brother when I was 25, and it had a profound impact on me. Suddenly, I had lost the person I thought I was guaranteed to have with me for my entire life – the person who gave me courage and challenged me to think bigger and differently about the issues I was working on. I made a commitment back then to live for us both – to try and make sure that all the amazing things he should have gone on to achieve weren't just missing – I guess that is a key driver for me now.

If you have your way, where will women be in the workplace in ten years?

Everywhere. Ten years from now, I really hope we are not still having conversations about 30% targets for women on boards and how we might attract women into 'non-traditional' roles. I would love to see the conversation about women in the workplace addressing the fundamental issues of needing to rebalance power and privilege in our society. I hope that more men have had the opportunity to be primary carers and that the balance of unpaid care work has shifted to be more equal.

You began your new role at PwC upon returning from parental leave. What were the benefits and challenges of transitioning from parental leave into a new role?

After my partner and parents, the next person to find out that I was pregnant was PwC CEO, Luke Sayers.

We had been talking about this role for a number of months and when I found out I was pregnant, I suddenly thought that will be the end of the partnership discussion and this incredible opportunity.

To Luke's credit – he didn't miss a beat, congratulating me on my news and then continuing to talk about the role. I started in the role twelve months after it was announced, having initially committed to taking six months' leave and then freaking out that I wasn't ready to come back to work, and requesting six more months. Luke's response in that moment gave me a lot of confidence about the leadership of the firm and what I was walking into.



I'm not sure if I would recommend that someone move cities and change jobs while on parental leave, as I did – it was tough. New organisation, new systems, new people and new guilt about just about everything. But, being new, I was able to establish clear boundaries around my role and how I wanted to work and was lucky to have a fantastic team who were excited to support me.

As a Partner at PwC, how do you balance the expectations of partnership with a part-time arrangement?

I have worked part-time for a number of years. Before having my daughter, I worked part-time at UN Women and part-time as Gender Advisor to the Chief of Defence, so more than a full-time role – but two different organisations, half a week at each – and this set me up well for returning to work part-time. What I came to realise is that I was far more efficient and productive part-time!

At PwC, our offices are conducive to working flexibly which helps. I am part-time which isn't overly common, but I try to set boundaries, which means saying no to meetings that are on my non-work days, and be flexible to change my days if something critical comes up.

In my first few weeks, I actually found myself saying, "I am currently part-time, but hoping to be full-time ASAP." Thankfully, I was called out on this by my Director who said, "There are a lot of people looking at you and hoping that you can demonstrate what success looks like in a part-time capacity. You undermine that when you promise to be full-time soon." What amazing advice – from that day, I committed to being very loud and proud about being part-time.

I also have honest conversations with clients about being part-time and, to date, have had nothing but support.

I think there is a lot of excuse making in professional services about the client not accepting someone who is part-time. The hardest thing has been my own expectations of what I can achieve in 3.5 days, learning to delegate more effectively and say no more often.

How do you think your second parental leave might differ from your first? What, if anything, will you do differently?

Ha, I wish I had a crystal ball. I suspect my two-year-old won't put up with me going for long lovely walks, or having coffees and reading while the baby sleeps. She seems excited about the impending baby – though has suggested that we put the baby's car seat in the boot and leave the baby at home when we go to the park. I'm going to try and relax and enjoy the time a bit more.

As a first-time parent, I was so nervous, constantly reading books or blogs and seeking advice. Trusting myself a bit more is something I am hoping to do.

I also haven't set ridiculous expectations about reading X many books, deepening my knowledge of some obscure issue that I really should know about or running 10 kilometres before returning to work. Partly I haven't had time to do any of that planning, and partly I realise now that it isn't really necessary.

A struggle that mothers often share with us at Grace Papers - and that we are working furiously to address - is the mental load. How do you and your partner make it work?

I think the issue of who carries the mental load is a really significant barrier to gender equality. We have generations of women being brought up to expect they can do anything they want, many of whom partner with men who have not been having similar conversations throughout their lives about how they might need to think differently about their roles, jobs and family life – there's a big gap emerging.

As I am sure you can imagine, I have fairly strong views about these issues and have been incredibly lucky that my partner was open to having really good conversations about sharing care work and the mental load before we had our daughter. At the time, those conversations were difficult and tedious – but they have set us up well I think.

Sam took three months off when I started at PwC - which I realise is not possible for every family - but that time was amazing for him and our daughter, as well as allowed me to start back at work feeling much more comfortable about things at home.

In your Ted Talk, you speak about your approach to gender equality with an emphasis on the individual as a site of change, which we love. What is your advice to others wanting to advocate for change?

Jump in. Don't wait for your CEO or HR leader to make the changes or invite you to participate. If you see something that you think needs addressing – address it. For each and every one of us, the cultural norms are set by the standards we walk past.

Supporting employee networks, calling out, in the right way, attitudes or behaviours that impact equality and just being curious about those around you – seeking to understand what makes them tick and supporting them to be their authentic selves - will have a huge impact.

Since the UN Women's Conference in Beijing in 1995, the UN is increasingly addressing gender inequality through an intersectional lens. What can businesses do to put an intersectional lens on gender equality in the workplace?

The mistake most businesses make is that they start designing their diversity and inclusion strategies before they understand the experiences of their people and where they are at on their journey.

I believe that all businesses need to be addressing diversity and inclusion through an intersectional lens, and underpinning that, they need to understand what their data tells them and the experiences of their staff. We are doing a lot of work in this space now with clients, which I hope will yield a step change in diversity and inclusion in the years ahead. //



Dismantling the *MATERNAL WALL*

how workplaces are doing it

“Why shouldn't a workplace be customized to fit women as much as it is to fit men? We are large in number. We can have power and influence to figure things out for our daughters.”

- Anne-Marie Slaughter, International lawyer & former U.S. State Department Director of Policy Planning

In January 2017, world champion athlete Serena Williams walked off the court at the Australian Open, having earned her place as the world's number one tennis player, despite playing the tournament whilst in her first trimester. Yet, when she stepped onto the court at the 2018 French Open, she was ranked just 451st globally. The reason for Williams' dramatic descent in the rankings? Her decision to take a year of maternity leave to have her first child.

In some ways, Williams' experience is specific to the world of tennis, with much of the debate centring around a practice known as 'seeding', which protects top players - just not those returning from maternity leave. But away from the court, Williams' experience reflects a daily reality for working mothers around the world as they encounter the maternal wall.

While we would have liked to see Williams challenge the WTA for discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy (maybe she still will!), we also understand her desire to prove herself on the court. Because that's what women often feel they need to do: prove their value, their worth, all over again. But this time, it comes with a whole lot more pressure.

The maternal wall

The maternal wall is a term coined to describe the drop in career success that female employees often experience when they become pregnant or return to work after parental leave.

The problem with the maternal wall is it isn't something women can smash or see through. It's solid, and built on gendered beliefs that continue to pigeon-hole working mothers as lacking ambition and commitment to their workplaces.

According to *The New York Times*, there are over 20 lab studies which prove that pregnancy bias exists. And Williams' experience is testament to the fact that, when the system is broken, no amount of power or money can shield you from the inherent societal biases that deliver discriminatory blows.

The maternal wall hurts women's careers: it causes women to lose their clients, their career opportunities and their reputations, not to mention the long-term financial implications which last well into retirement. The Australian Human Rights Commission has found that experiences of bias and discrimination also have a significant impact on mental health. But the maternal wall also hurts our workplaces, our communities and our economy.

Unconscious bias: busting the ambition myth

It is still commonly assumed that women, once they become mothers, are less ambitious than men. This is especially the case for those seeking to work part-time. According to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, while women make up nearly half of the workforce, full-time women comprise just one in five employees. And only 6.1% of management positions are part-time.

It begs the question: do women opt out of career progression for love of their children? Does having a baby cause a woman to lose her professional ambition?

A Boston Consulting Group survey of more than 200,000 employees - including 141,000 women - from 189 countries has turned the premises behind those questions into myths. The survey showed that the ambition gap between women and men aged 30 to 40 was 17% at firms that employees felt were least progressive on gender diversity. At these firms, 66% of women sought promotion, compared with 83% of men. But there was almost no ambition gap between women and men aged 30 to 40 at firms where employees felt gender diversity was improving. In these firms, 85% of women had sought promotion, compared with 87% of men.

The research is clear: ambition is influenced by company culture more than a woman's desire to have a family.

Nine ways workplaces are successfully dismantling the maternal wall

In Australia, we're buoyed by positive stories about the unprecedented numbers of women returning to work after maternity leave. The latest figures show that more than three-quarters of women are returning to their previous positions after having children.

But if getting back to work is the battle, ensuring there is the right support in place to combine career and care is the war. OECD figures show that Australia's maternal workforce (categorised as mothers with at least one dependent child aged 0 to 14), at 64%, is well below that of comparable countries such as Canada, at 75%, and Sweden, at 85%.

If talent is distributed equally between men and women, then Boston Consulting Group's findings suggest the businesses that are the most progressive on gender diversity will win the war for talent, and therefore reap the performance benefits associated with gender equality.

Working with clients across a mix of industries and government, we've analysed data and experiences to be able to state with strong authority the mix of actions workplaces need to take to dismantle the maternal wall.

1. They set targets that overcome biases.

Targets for the sake of targets can invoke push-back within workplaces. But when the targets are connected to a clear business case that is also focused on addressing the ambition myths - for example, a target that sees the top 30% of fee earners as women like EY has introduced - then the targets also overcome inherent gendered biases.

2. They have leaders who have clearly articulated the business case for gender equality, and hold their people leaders accountable.

We still expect women to conform to the traditional stereotype of mother/carer, but continue to wonder why there aren't more women in leadership. We proactively explore what we need to do to 'help' women get there, but ignore their efforts when they do 'lean in' and 'ask for more.'

So, to drive culture change, the conversation must start at the top. Leaders with a clearly articulated business case, and who are able to imagine a vision for equality, will prioritise gender-based strategies and are therefore better able to eradicate pervasive and outdated stereotypes. Leaders must also give permission to staff to speak up and call out behaviours and systems that inadvertently impact women's careers, without fear of recrimination. This can only be achieved when people leaders have accountabilities connected to the business case.

3. They empower those who have most to gain through coaching and education - and leave no woman behind.

Social change theory says the most effective way to drive social change is to empower those who have most to gain. This means investing in your working parents who are most likely to experience a high degree of work/life conflict, a key driver of turnover.

The cornerstone of your parental leave transition support must therefore be empowerment - educating and equipping staff with coaching, tools and strategies to make smart and informed decisions about career and care. You're otherwise leaving it to chance (1 in 2) as to whether they will experience pregnancy-related discrimination or not. Acknowledging the double jeopardy experienced by some and affording additional support helps to ensure that as a society, we leave no woman behind and you retain your talent.

4. They sponsor the success and promotion of their talent.

To address the unconscious and conscious biases, smart workplaces educate and coach their people leaders. Equipping people leaders who possess the know-how to sponsor talent with the tools to explore their own biases and education to understand their workplace responsibilities, means those with authority to drive change can and do.

5. They engage millennial dads to disrupt the traditional stereotypes.

Critical to achieving gender equality in the workplace is a shared responsibility for care and domestic responsibilities outside the workplace. And, refreshingly, millennial dads readily believe that their role is more than breadwinner and are keen to take up opportunities to partake in caregiving. But there's a catch: the 'flexibility stigma' continues to see men twice as likely to have a request for flexibility denied than women. And the strong male/breadwinner stereotype continues to see less than 5% of primary carer's leave adopted by men.

Progressive workplaces have introduced parental leave policies with a specific allocation for dads and partners. This is important, as the evidence shows that when a leave scheme is positioned as being specifically for dads and partners (rather than a scheme which can be shared between parents), fathers are more likely to take it up. This is how places like Norway, Sweden and Quebec, with partner-dedicated, use-it-or-lose-it policies, have substantially increased paternity

leave rates.

6. They believe that keeping in touch is a shared accountability between the parental leaver and their people leader.

When staff engage with keeping in touch programs while on parental leave, they are more likely to stay connected with their career over the longer-term. Research conducted by RMIT suggests that keeping in touch programs help primary carers to mitigate the ambition biases often faced by those who take long periods of parental leave.

7. They introduce policies to close the gap in retirement savings.

Women's retirement savings balances are, on average, less than half that of men's. This is because women are more likely to take unpaid parental leave, and return to work in a part-time capacity.

Progressive workplaces are leveling the playing field by paying superannuation on the unpaid component of parental leave, and, in some cases (Viva Energy being an example), they are paying the full-time superannuation contribution to those working part-time for up to five years after returning to work from parental leave.

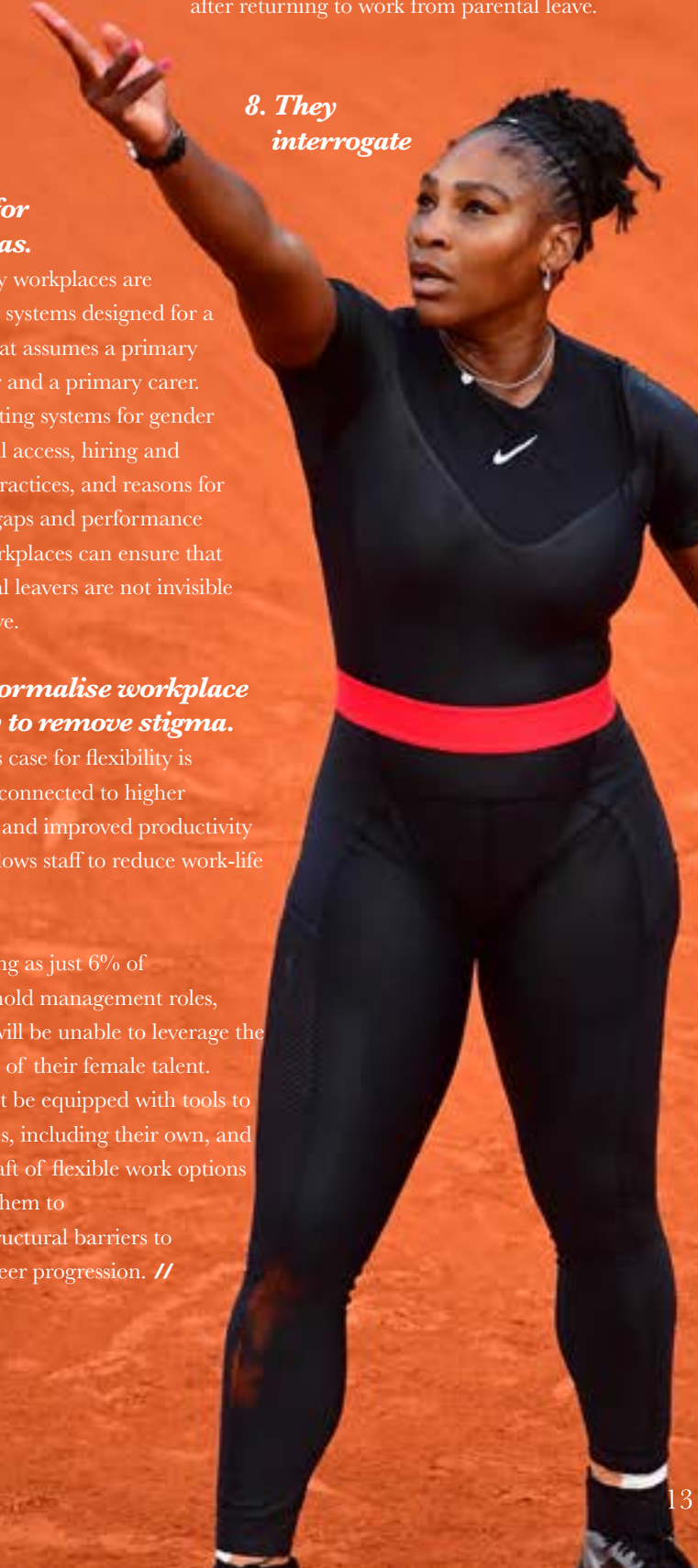
8. They interrogate their systems for gender bias.

Far too many workplaces are held back by systems designed for a workforce that assumes a primary breadwinner and a primary carer. By interrogating systems for gender biases - email access, hiring and promotion practices, and reasons for gender pay gaps and performance reviews - workplaces can ensure that their parental leavers are not invisible while on leave.

9. They normalise workplace flexibility to remove stigma.

The business case for flexibility is inextricably connected to higher engagement and improved productivity because it allows staff to reduce work-life conflict.

But for as long as just 6% of part-timers hold management roles, workplaces will be unable to leverage the full potential of their female talent. Leaders must be equipped with tools to redesign roles, including their own, and allow for a raft of flexible work options that enable them to dismantle structural barriers to women's career progression. //





It is so important for employees to make well-informed decisions about their parental leave, long-term career planning and transition from parental leave back to work – not only for the empowerment of women, but for their long-term economic security.

When you support workers as parents, you retain talented people. It's not only the right thing to do, it's the smart thing to do.

- Natalie Hutchins
Minister for Women, VIC



Five tips to help you tell your boss YOU'RE EXPECTING

“ I’ll be Prime Minister and a mum, and Clarke will be ‘first man of fishing’ and stay at home dad.
- Jacinda Ardern, New Zealand Prime Minister

It has to be one of the strangest moments... communicating the most personal of information about yourself and your body to a human being you usually only have a professional relationship with – and often after trying to hide bouts of morning sickness and extreme fatigue while maintaining business as usual. No wonder it can go so horribly wrong!

What’s more, research by the Australian Human Rights Commission has found that 1 in 2 women experience some form of pregnancy-related discrimination. All of which can impact an expectant parent’s confidence, mental health and financial security.

So, how do you tell your boss you’re pregnant and keep your career on track?

1. KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

Come prepared with the right legal information about your rights and responsibilities, not so that you can take action if things go wrong (although it is an option), but to help you identify and call out discrimination, if needed.

Under the Sex Discrimination Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against, either directly or indirectly - or treat differently - an employee on the basis of their sex, pregnancy, potential pregnancy, family responsibilities or because they are breastfeeding. For example, being told you are ineligible to apply for a role or a pay rise because you are pregnant constitutes discrimination.

Depending on your circumstances, you may also need to understand your workplace health and safety rights to have a conversation with your workplace about any role adjustments or the need to transfer to a safe role, if available.

Remember to also refer to your workplace’s parental leave policy to understand your parental leave - both paid and unpaid - entitlements, relevant notice periods, as well as your rights while on parental leave and ahead of your return, particularly with respect to keeping in touch, tools of the trade and access to part-time and flexible work arrangements.

2. DEVELOP A PREGNANCY PITCH

While you have had the time to prepare for this conversation, this wouldn’t have been the case for your boss. Be thoughtful about what you want to say, how you want your boss to feel and respond to you. This will help position the content and tone of your ‘pregnancy pitch’.

Prepare to position your pregnancy pitch around your professional vision. Your professional vision is like your career elevator pitch, and it is a great reminder to your boss of your talents, achievements and aspirations at a time when they may be assuming you’re about to check out.

3. THINK ABOUT THE TIMING

Now that we’ve covered the how, it’s equally important to consider the when. While it’s common to announce a pregnancy towards the end of the first trimester, there are a number of factors to consider when deciding on the timing of your announcement.

If, for example, you’re experiencing morning sickness or other pregnancy-related conditions or complications, you may need to share your news with your boss earlier.

Similarly, if you’re looking at a promotion or moving into a new role, you may want to hold off from telling your manager, to ensure that biases don’t creep into the decision-making process.

4. BE RESPECTFUL AND PROFESSIONAL

While it’s your personal news, it can be beneficial to share your news with your boss before they find out about it from your team. Remember, your boss can be your sponsor – someone who has your back, and when armed with your professional vision, can continue supporting you as you share this news with other stakeholders.

It helps to think about how you would like to experience this conversation as a people leader, and then set the tone for the conversation.

5. ANTICIPATE BIASES

Think about the life of your boss - their experiences, attitudes and treatment of others. What does it reveal about their potential biases towards the information you are about to share?

This doesn’t necessarily mean that your boss isn’t inclusive or empathetic towards expectant parents, but unconscious biases are a powerful and real thing. And, well, unconscious. Taking the time to reflect on what experiences or attitudes might colour your boss’s reaction will enable you to address the biases in the moment, which will mean they are less likely to manifest as discrimination.

ASK YOURSELF THE FOLLOWING:

- My manager is a parent. Y/N
- My manager has taken parental leave. Y/N
- My manager has a partner who also has a career. Y/N
- My manager encourages both men & women to work flexibly. Y/N
- My manager supports other working parents in our team. Y/N
- Males & females are equally represented in my team. Y/N
- My manager is an advocate for working parents. Y/N
- My manager works or has worked flexibly. Y/N

If you need more help with perfecting your pregnancy pitch, check out the Grace Papers’ Career Confident Mama program. //

**Material in this article is intended for guidance only, not as legal advice. For help or further advice, contact The Fair Work Ombudsman or your employer.*

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN

The empowerment of one woman has the ability to unlock the potential of any number of women she is connected to in work and in our community. So what could be better than a book dedicated to women supporting women? Well, that's just what esteemed Company Director Dr. Kirstin Ferguson and Walkley-award winning journalist Catherine Fox have produced - Women Kind. They spoke to us about their careers and what drove them to write on this topic.

Last year, you launched the incredible social media campaign #CelebratingWomen, where you shone a spotlight on two incredible women everyday. What prompted you to start this campaign?

Kirstin: I started #CelebratingWomen because I had had enough. I love using social media but was fed up with seeing the ways women were being treated online. I wanted to see more celebration, and less denigration, of women online. I believe every woman is a role model to someone else, whether they realise it or not, and so I wanted to share women's stories and see those women celebrated. I made a very public commitment to try and celebrate two women every day and from all walks of life. I had no idea where I was going to find so many women willing to share personal stories and photos and worried the whole idea might fizzle out very quickly. But much to my surprise, and thanks to so many women who were willing to put themselves forward as role models to others, I ended up celebrating 757 women from 37 countries and inadvertently created a movement of women around the world celebrating and supporting one another.

We love your idea that we should all forget the idea of the corporate ladder and that we can all bring many women up together. Tell us more.

Kirstin:

We have always been told that if we should be so successful to achieve our own goals, whatever they might be, we must remember to drop the ladder back down behind us to help another woman up. Well I think we need to forget the ladder. A ladder will only ever help one woman at a time and is designed so that you hold on tight, so you don't fall, ultimately blocking the way for others.

What I learnt through #CelebratingWomen is that we can throw down a fishing net and bring up many women together. We can all hold the sides of the fishing net and it removes this idea of competing for that one spot at the top of the ladder. We all benefit when women rise up together.

While researching this book, what showed up that surprised and delighted you?

Catherine: I hadn't realised what a long and sustained history there was behind women's solidarity - not just the suffragettes but well before them, with women striking for better pay and conditions in the mid-nineteenth century and the work of community organisations like the YWCA and the CWA. Some of these bodies have been trivialised and even ridiculed despite helping women in poverty and women suffering from domestic violence over many decades, which made me think this collective action has gone under the radar for centuries. Women helping each other through unwanted pregnancies and in violent marriages, looking out for their sisters, daughters and mothers.

On a personal level, the research of so many networks and women's groups made me understand how much women's support for each other has been hidden by necessity because it was at best the target of jokes and at worst seen as threatening. And I realised I could do much more to support women in all kinds of settings - by backing and amplifying them, ensuring their voices are heard.

You've spoken about the positive impact men can have by working alongside women. How can women speak up so that men in power listen to our voices?

Catherine: Seize the moment, I say. This is the time to speak up because, frankly, the social media movements of the last 18 months have been deeply unsettling for many men and particularly those running organisations. Many men had no idea that harassment and sexism was so widespread and are shocked by the evidence of thousands of women. The men in leadership also see the reputational damage that can emerge when women are ignored and they are listening like never before instead of expecting women to prove the case over and over again.

While interviewing for the book, and in the last few weeks speaking to audiences of women around Australia, so many have told me they are speaking out now about these issues in a way they never would have dreamed of a year ago. That's because the men they work with are finally listening to them - and some are stepping up beside them too. Women have always known how to speak up but faced penalties for doing just that because their male colleagues didn't believe them and failed to take them seriously. But that's changing fast.

Why are workplaces so obsessed with fixing women?

Catherine: It's so much easier to disband the deficit model that defines how we see women in the workforce - risk-averse, low-confidence and ambition that wanes after having a baby - than disrupting the status quo.

The deficit model means men are never involved and their behaviour and attitudes go unchallenged - and that's the messy, unpopular and often emotional part of tackling gender inequity. Telling women they need fixing leaves the current rules and practices untouched but also holds out the false promise that behaving in a certain way (very much based on masculine norms) will deliver success - and that's simply not the case for anyone.

Fixing women doesn't just hamper progress, it hinders change. Lecturing women and telling them to buck up, lean in, network and negotiate better, reinforces all the stereotypes that caused the problem in the first place. Some of this advice may occasionally allow a few women to take a step ahead. But if it was truly effective then there would have been a significant increase in the overall numbers of women in management/ leadership and in male-dominated sectors, a decrease in the gender pay gap and a boost to women's retirement earnings.

What do you believe is the secret sauce to women supporting women? What's one thing each of us can do to support other women?

Kirstin: Women are already supporting other women in their lives every single day. Whether it is catching up with a girlfriend who is having a hard time, mentoring a woman at work, helping mind a friend's child while they go for a job interview or making a positive comment on a social media post about an achievement. There is no limit to the ways we can support each other, yet too often the ways women support other women, whether through simple everyday tasks or more formal ways such as women's networks, have not been taken seriously or have been denigrated as being a waste of time.

The shift I think we have seen over recent years, and social media has made it much more pronounced, is that women are no longer shying away from loudly and proudly celebrating one another. And even better, we are joining together to support each other in ways that really drive substantive change. Carrie Gracie, who became the public face of the BBC women seeking pay equality, captures the power behind women supporting women brilliantly. In an interview with the New Yorker she said, "The reason the BBC thought they could get away with it is that they hadn't factored in the multiplier effect of solidarity. If you tell me I'm rubbish, I might believe you, but if you tell me she's rubbish I know it's not true." //

Dr Kirstin Ferguson and Catherine Fox's new book, Women Kind, is available in stores now.



NAVIGATING FULL-TIME CARE & WORK



We're strongly committed to ensuring we're benefiting from all that gender equality can deliver to our workplace, communities, and to the individuals whose lives we impact. We believe achieving diversity is about more than targets. So we're taking a holistic approach, which includes challenging the biases in our systems and providing practical support for our people.

- John Bradley, Secretary, Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, VIC

for periods within the last nine years across two states and four government agencies (State and Federal).

All those workplaces have been incredibly flexible and supportive, and we have benefitted from the great conditions and policies that government agencies implement (or at least the ones we've worked in).

The policies and practices that have made the most difference to us are the same ones that make a difference to any family:

- 1. Parental leave:** we have clearly defined access to parental leave for mothers who give birth and for non-birth parents.
- 2. Flexibility:** we have the ability to work part-time and to work flexibly.
- 3. Job sharing:** we have the opportunity to job share – this one is an important ingredient to have in the mix so that the part-timer doesn't get delegated 'other' more menial work in a workplace; and that the teams that you are a part of don't have to 'carry' a position.

As with all HR policies and procedures, it is the practice of them that really makes the biggest impact and the intangibles that can make or break your experience.

For me, being in a workplace like the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning that so proactively deals with gender equity means that drawing boundaries around my time is seen as a good thing not a bad thing.

Then there is your boss. He or she is one of the most important factors in navigating parenthood and career and we have been fortunate to have caring and supportive supervisors who have made things easy.

The second biggest influence is the team that you're in. My teams have been fun, inclusive, caring and generous – and I have benefited from that as much as anyone else in the team. Those people that are extra thoughtful are so important in a situation where you might be made to feel on the outside. I know that my teammates in Adelaide celebrated the birth of our son with me just as much as if I had given birth - that meant the world to me. And taught me lessons about how to do the same for others. //

Kelly Crosthwaite and her partner Beth have taken turns being the full-time stay-at-home parent as well as the full-time worker. She writes about how they have supported each other, their family and the important role her workplace has played.

We are a two-Mum family. My partner Beth and I have two children, a nine-year-old son and a six-year-old daughter. We each gave birth to one of our children - our donor is a friend and our kids know him and his own children well. Our kids have known, since they were very young, how they were created, and our donor is involved with our family but not as a parent. Why am I sharing this with you?

It is because we feel like it is normal to talk about our family situation, and we would like other people to feel normal talking about it too. The more easily and naturally these things can be put out in the open, then the better off our kids will be in the future.

But we're also very conscious that not every rainbow family likes to disclose the details of how their family is put together or who is in it. Like the rest of the population - some people are inherently private and keep that stuff to themselves.

There isn't any right or wrong approach. But it is something to be mindful of for rainbow families – you need to respect people's boundaries, and sensitively work them out as you go.

Beth and I have taken turns not only in giving birth, but also in being the full-time stay-at-home parent or full-time worker. We have both worked part-time



WHAT WE'RE BUYING...

BYO Bag (byobags.com.au) - We've ditched the plastic bags for this innovative and sustainable homegrown label. These reusable bags are compact, light and super strong - for all our shopping needs.



WHAT WE'RE READING...

Work. Life. Mama. The Journal - Our empowerment dose from the team at Work. Life. Mama. We love Ina's authentic and practical take on work, life and parenthood.



WHAT WE'RE DANCING TO...

Janelle Monae - With her latest album release, Dirty Computer, Janelle is one of the industry's biggest feminist powerhouses. Lyrically and sonically, she proves she's not afraid to push boundaries, speak-up and pave the way for all women to be heard!



WHAT WE'RE WATCHING...

Hannah Gadsby, Nanette on Netflix - The stand-up queen has taken her latest show, Nanette, to a whole new level. This thought-provoking LGBTI-centred masterpiece has us in awe of her bravery, heart and blatant vulnerability.



WHAT WE'RE SEEING...

The Notorious RBG at the movies - This remarkable biography tells a story of the very first women to be elected into the Supreme Court, Ruth Bader Ginsburg. In a world full of generational divides, Ginsburg is a pure transformative.



Our LOVE LIST





Photo credit: Georgia Haynes

JOB SHARING: *How it works*

“If you intend to work Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, but there’s a court matter on a Friday, then I would find myself desperately calling daycare for a casual day, or asking Mum to rearrange her life to come down on a different day. There was so much guilt that it was affecting my husband, my mother, my kids and me because I was so stressed all the time about how I can keep these balls in the air that probably would not have been sustainable in the long-term. And where I wasn’t able to rejig my day I was feeling very guilty that I was then handing over work to people cold,” said Emma Purdue.

In another example of innovative thinking from a leader determined to keep his female talent, Daniel Proietto, Head of the Employment Practice at Lander & Rogers, heard about a successful job-share from one of his clients, and pitched it to long-term colleagues, Amie Frydenberg and Emma Purdue. Because frankly, if two workplace relations lawyers can’t work it out, then who can?

This was parental leave number two for both Amie and Emma. Why were you looking for a new solution?

Daniel: We have got a predominantly female work force in our group and we had three employees at the time who were on parental leave or had just returned from parental leave and I didn’t think we’d handled it particularly well the first time round. For me, job share was a potential solution for a litigation team in which three days a week was not working.

So, how does it work practically?

Emma: Practically, we split the week in half and we have an overlap day on Wednesday. So on a Wednesday morning once we’ve got in and checked

our emails, we have a catch-up meeting. We’ve got a running sheet of all of our matters and we spend 15 minutes updating each other on what’s been happening in the first half of the week. Then at the end of the day Amie will send me an email with an update of that running sheet and anything that’s carried over that I need to pick up on and things that are going to carry over to the next week for her. I work through that list on Thursday and Friday and then before I sign off on a Friday, I send that email back to Amie with my comments on what’s been done and what needs to be handed over.

Amie: You know I probably feel more organised and efficient than ever in a way because I come to work everyday and I’ve got this sheet that sets out everything. We also have the comfort that if it gets to (for me) Wednesday night and I haven’t been able to finish something then Emma will finish it for me if it needs to be done by Friday, or it can be rolled over to the next week if it’s not urgent. We’re both the kind of people that don’t just leave things for the other to do. We probably do a little bit extra because we don’t want to put the other one out.

“ Our success has a lot to do with our relationship, and good communication. We’re very open and honest with each other, which builds trust and I think that they’re really the key ingredients to making it work.

What about for clients - how have they adapted to working with both of you?

Emma: For the most part really, really well. I’ve had some clients who have expressed an interest and support, particularly in the public sector. One of my clients said, “Go Landers. That’s great; really great to hear.”

Daniel, tell us about the business benefits?

Daniel: They’ve been significant because Amie and Emma are so much more engaged this time around than they were last time. We’ve also been more proactive from before they both returned. And this has led to two fantastic senior lawyers who are great role models for our team being highly engaged in the life of the group and the life of the firm, which is an absolute benefit for the firm and our clients.

Of course we are going to have to continue to work at it. There will be times when someone comes back from maternity leave and there’s no one to job share with. But we’re quite excited by the challenge and with the number of female graduates we want to attract, we know we’ve got to get it right. These are two fantastic, quality lawyers and quality people. And so we don’t want to lose good people, so that’s what we’ve had to do.

Do you think it’s a long-term, viable option? Can you actually do job share as partners?

Daniel: I certainly hope so - we’ve had part-time partners in the past and surely this is just an improvement on a part-time relationship. But there’s always a dialogue to have there because it might well be that one job share partner wants to eventually move to full-time, for example. But I think we just have to be open to that, because the whole future of law, or work, is becoming more flexible. And I hope to see this available to dads too.

Your first time round parental leave experiences are relatable to many - tell us about the difference this time?

Amie: In addition to the anxiety Emma has described, I felt the work I was given was work that was being given to me because it was something I could do in three days or by a first-year lawyer. So I was sort of coming back to work after my first child feeling a little sensitive and thinking, ‘well I’m not at home, and I’m not contributing much at work - what am I doing?’ The job share arrangement, as well as the workplace better understanding the challenges, and Emma and I being provided with additional support, has completely transformed that experience.

Emma: Returning to work from my first maternity leave, and knowing at the back of my head that I wanted another child, I was just trying to get as much done as I could. It was a bit of a scatter-gun approach. I was saying yes to everything and just constantly re-juggling instead of being thoughtful about how I would actually achieve the most in that time. And that’s where I think the job share structure and the coaching support has really helped focus my mind - it’s been a strategic approach to my return to work.

“ The coaching support this time round has given me the ability to really map out what my vision is for my home-life and my work-life, with practical strategies for balancing the two and making it work for me. I’ve learned that if it works for me it’ll work for everybody else around me as well.

I think I thought of everybody else first and had a lot of guilt about that. But the support from Grace Papers has made me realise it’s okay to think about what’s good for me, because at the end of the day it’s going to be good for everybody else too. //

JOB SHARE TIPS

1. Pick the right partner

The selection of a job share partner is obviously limited to colleagues performing a comparable role who are interested in a job share arrangement. However, picking the right person is critical. Ideally, you will have a similar work ethic and sense of accountability. Far from being a disadvantage, divergent skill sets and different character strengths may be a bonus as together you bring a diversity of thought and skills to the role. As they say, ‘two heads are better than one’.

2. Communicate, communicate, communicate

Establish robust and non-negotiable handover procedures. An overlapping work day is ideal as you can meet in person and review your handover checklist together. Work out how you are going to keep each other across the detail. Will you be contactable or responsive on your home days? Communication includes having the ‘hard’ conversations. It is in both your interests for the arrangement to work successfully so raise any potential issues with your job share partner early.

3. It is all about the service

It is important to remember that the job share arrangement will only be regarded as a success if the output from the role meets expectations. It is important that job share partners both feel responsible for delivering outcomes. This means not leaving the less desirable, but nonetheless important, tasks to the other partner. By all means, play to your strengths but keep in mind that you are there to get the job done and your partner isn’t there to mop up after you.

4. Be open with your stakeholders

As one client put it, stakeholders want a ‘throat to choke’ when things go wrong. Put another way, people want to know who to call. Work out your points of contact. Will you have a single email address and phone line? Will you automatically copy the other on all correspondence? This might depend, in part, on how the work is split. Will you divide it up by task or job in an ‘islands’ model or purely by days of the week in a ‘twins’ model? Perhaps it will be a hybrid of the two. Clients and other stakeholders are more likely to endorse the job share model if it is transparent.

5. Check in

Like all flexible work arrangements, it is important to periodically assess whether the job share arrangement is meeting the needs and expectations of the job share partners, their manager, colleagues and external stakeholders. Establishing review periods (perhaps quarterly) upfront provides opportunities to reflect and assess and make any adjustments. Inevitably, circumstances will change and unforeseen considerations will arise and the job share arrangement must be regularly evaluated to ensure it continues to benefit the business and the individuals alike.

Written by Grace Papers executive coach Genevieve Simkiss

Returning to work?

Don't settle for leftovers

For many women, the decision to return to work after having a child can be focused far more on how many days they want to work, rather than what they actually want to do and what they ultimately want from their career.

But approaching your return to work after parental leave without considering your career objectives can leave your manager to assume that you've lost your ambition. Especially if you haven't kept in touch.

There are of course many 'push' factors that make women feel they need to position the number of days they work as the non-negotiable – unaffordable child care, cultures that value facetime over output, a lack of flexibility and, of course, a minefield of unconscious biases. But when you reposition your flexibility request as secondary, and articulate your employee value proposition first, you're much more likely to get the part-time arrangement you need. Not to mention an acknowledgement of your contribution, quality work to perform upon your return, and a confidence boost.

Here are our tips for negotiating a successful and part-time return to work:

- 1. Reach out well in advance** of your return to work to explore, in consultation with your people leader, how you might use some of your keeping in touch days to reconnect with your workplace and find out about any changes to your existing role.
- 2. Reflect on your previous role** - likes and dislikes - and start to redesign your role with a focus on your likes as they are more likely to align to your strengths.
- 3. Check your new role aligns to your professional vision.** If you're not feeling the love for your role, it's a great time to redo your professional vision and tap into your imagination. Make sure you don't limit your potential to what you can see has been achieved before. The more energised you are about your work, the easier the juggle will be.
- 4. Build your employee value proposition** and business case. Develop a proposal for working flexibly that also supports the business to achieve its objectives.
- 5. Communicate with grace.** That is, approach your return to work meeting with your manager as a two-way conversation. Listen to their concerns so that you understand them and can address them. But be prepared to speak up and ask for what you need, and call out both conscious and unconscious biases.
- 6. Draw on the Grace Papers community** and experts if you need that extra support.

Don't just settle for the leftovers of everybody else's 'don't have enough time to get done' list. Choose the path you want to trek and empower yourself to live the life you choose.

If you're returning to work, make sure you have registered for the Grace Papers' Return to Work With Confidence program. Return to work and thrive, not just survive. //



What I learnt as CHIEF PARENTING OFFICER

With three kids under five and his wife about to launch a new business, Ben Gilbert rather enthusiastically, yet perhaps naively, decided that he would assume the role of Chief Parenting Officer.

Envisioning a three-month break of lazy breakfasts, coffees, babycinos and newspapers, afternoon naps (for all) and playing in the park, he took leave from his corporate strategy role to take on the responsibilities of primary carer. A role just 5% of men assume. He shares his insights with us.

It's fair to say that after 20 years of navigating the politics of the corporate world, I was not envisaging life at home with three small people to be my greatest challenge. By the end of week one, it became very clear to me that the role of Chief Parenting Officer was not going to be all Pop Tops and Tiny Teddies. But the return on this investment? Well, both personally and professionally - and for the four people who matter most to me - was something I had not factored in when I suggested I take on this role. Here's what I learnt:

Caring + domestic work = 2 jobs

I've had an awakening now, but my assumption was that because Prue worked part-time and was home all day for two to three days, it meant she could look after the house as well. When I took the leave, I couldn't keep the house clean (and I mean I couldn't keep the house clean) as well as care for my 4-month-old and 2-year-old and 4-year old.

Don't ignore the routine

It would be fair to say that I rolled my eyes aplenty at routines. I mean seriously, it's family not the military. Let's just say I learnt the hard way.

Take swimming class for example. The routine they were used to sounded like this: "Swimming: 11am. Start preparing at 10.15am. Check the swimming bag for 2 x bathers, 1 x swimming nappy (and extra). Put your bathers on and the 2 older kids' bathers on. Tracksuits are easiest. Check for 3 towels, 2 goggles, a spare nappy and undies for afterwards. The soap there is bad for Freddie's skin so take the QV. You'll need snacks to get them out of the shower after swimming and into the car. DO NOT GIVE IT TO THEM UNTIL YOU GET IN THE CAR."

And this timeline didn't even accommodate for lost 'essential for swimming' toys, tantrums, nappy explosions and 'just one more Peppa Pig, plllllleeeassse'.

The number of times I got to 10.40am and thought 'crap - where are the bathers, where are the goggles, why are there no snacks?' - and ended up missing the first half of swimming and spending \$45 on killer pythons and milkshakes at the pool - don't ask!

Proud to say we eventually got there, and the approach did resemble the original routine, but with a switch - cheesy-mite scrolls from Bakers Delight are the absolute bomb!

Dinner time is chaos

When I'd sit at work at 5pm reading over a document and fixing the neck-tie around my Egyptian cotton shirt to get a bit more comfortable, I had no appreciation of the chaos that was about to hit at home.

Describing the 5 to 7pm period as the "witching hour" is a complete understatement. My tip for inexperienced dads - start planning for dinner at 4:30pm to give yourself a solid chance of getting it on the table by 5:15pm (see learnings above about routine).



And have a back-up plan and a back-up, back-up plan, because they probably won't want to eat the dinner you serve, or the back-up meal, and then it's 7pm when your wife walks in and they're supposed to be in bed. But no, the kids are still sitting around the table eating toast and honey and drinking milk. It's fair to say it took me all of three months to get my head around how this part of the day works!

You have to include yourself

We have a long way to go to normalise routines that see men at school and kindergarten gates at 9am and 3pm. I felt like a fish out of water when it came to engaging with teachers. Added to which, the "day off today Ben?" comments from the mums were a constant reminder that I wasn't conforming to the stereotypes, so initially I stuck with the 'kiss and drop' approach. But that becomes a pretty lonely existence, and your home can start to feel like a prison. Plus, you have no idea what is going on in your child's world if you don't talk to teachers and parents. By doing kinder duty, going to park dates with other parents and organising playdates for your kids, I became so much more in tune with my kids' lives, and I'm a better parent for accepting that it takes a village to raise a child.

I know their secrets too

When I worked full-time, I relied upon my wife to tell me what was going on with the kids and didn't understand what I was missing out on until I experienced them telling me their stuff themselves. When you take time to walk your kids to kinder or school, sort through the dirty washing basket while they tell you about their day from the bath and counter-offer their unreasonable demands for more sugar and television with trampoline time and laughter in the sunshine, your children tell you stuff.

“

Kids' secrets make your heart burst with joy and pride, but they also make you want to wrap them up in cotton wool to protect their innocence from all of life's more challenging experiences.

For me though, it's these times that I'll treasure forever, because the experience of love for my children is of a love so deep it is almost painful. Without a shadow of a doubt, I learnt more about myself, people, inclusion and exclusion, gained more empathy and, better negotiation and organisation skills, became equipped at putting out spot fires and multitasking in three months than any executive development program has taught me.

If you are a dad looking to unlock your parenting and career potential, take parental leave or explore workplace flexibility, check out the Grace Papers' Just for Dads program. //



Paternity leave is a privilege for men and their partners, something uniquely special that only comes round once in a career – multiple for those fortunate enough – and therefore should be relished.

Once the decision and plans have been made, the urge to remain connected to work will be strong. However, it is important to disconnect as work will go on, the time is short and, most importantly, your family will benefit most from your undivided attention.

- Richard Taylor,
Ernst & Young, Director



Why keeping in touch is good for your brand

It's still commonly assumed that when you have a baby, two things are inevitable: firstly, you will fall so in love with that baby that you will lose all your career ambition, and secondly, that you'll lose your confidence.

There is ample evidence that women do not lose their career ambition. This includes a recent report by PwC, *Time to Talk: What has to change for women at work*, revealing that women are determined to succeed professionally: 73% responded they are actively seeking career advancement opportunities. Yet their research also revealed that 42% of women felt nervous about the impact children might have on their career. With good reason too: almost one in five (18%) mothers reported that they were made redundant, restructured, dismissed or their contract was not renewed either during their pregnancy, when they requested or took parental leave, or when they returned to work.

While we advocate for the addressing of bias to be a shared accountability within the workplace, the reality is this responsibility still largely falls to women.

What can you do to address the bias?

Researchers from Canada and Australia surveyed 558 Canadian employees and asked them to review a job application for a marketing manager role where the candidate had taken a year of maternity leave.

Survey participants were randomly presented with one of four scenarios:

- the would-be marketing manager had used a keeping in touch program while on maternity leave
- the keeping in touch program existed but the would-be marketing manager hadn't used it while on maternity leave
- there was no information about whether the keeping in touch program had been used while on maternity leave
- there was no reference to a keeping in touch program

Agency perceptions, job commitment and hireability were the highest when the candidate had used the keeping in touch program while on maternity leave.

While economists have looked at maternity leave length and career impact, the study, published in the prestigious *Journal of Applied Psychology*, was the first of its kind to investigate why women often experienced penalties after taking a longer maternity leave, and strategies to overcome this.

According to RMIT School of Management lecturer, Raymond Trau:



When a woman takes a longer period of maternity leave, such as a year off work, they're often perceived as caring and nurturing but less ambitious and driven, whereas, when a woman takes one month off, they're often perceived as ambitious, assertive, driven and committed to their career.

What is keeping in touch (KIT)?

KIT is a strategy or program that allows team members to remain connected to their workplaces while on parental leave. Under the Fair Work Act, employees can access up to ten KIT days while on unpaid primary carer's leave.

A KIT activity might include:

- doing training or attending a conference
- support for transitioning back to the workplace such as using coaching and transition programs
- becoming familiar with new processes and refreshing your skills, and
- participating in conversations with your people leader about changes to your role

Keeping in touch is good for your personal brand, and is a great way to reduce the likelihood of losing your confidence and missing out on potential opportunities while you are on parental leave.

OUR TIPS

Our advice to women on keeping in touch is to ensure you:

- Create a calendar of activities you may like to attend as the basis for your KIT plan - e.g. conferences and Christmas parties.
- Work with your people leader to set the parameters and agree on a keeping in touch plan. There shall be a shared responsibility for keeping in touch (and therefore addressing biases) between you and your people leader.
- Share your professional vision and keeping in touch plan with your people leader, and ask them to look out for career advancement opportunities for you.
- Engage additional sponsors - if you know there is a project, deal, or opportunity likely to come up while you're on leave, ask to be consulted about it so you can decide whether you might like to return sooner.
- Share your handover notes with your people leader - we can't tell you how many women going off on parental leave have been replaced with not one, but two people once they list ALL that they were doing and responsible for.
- Know your rights - the Fair Work Act provides for you to, in agreement with your people leader, access to up to ten paid keeping in touch days while on unpaid parental leave.

For step-by-step support, including downloadable templates, check out the Grace Papers' Career Confident Mama program. //

DOUBLE JEOPARDY:

what is intersectional feminism and why do we need it?

To see feminism only through the lens of white, middle-class, able-bodied and cisgendered is to leave our sisters to fight alone the compounding factors of oppression - race, sex, gender and disability. As a society, we must ensure our gender inclusion policies and practices are made with those who can give voice to the lived experiences of all our sisters.

To understand intersectional feminism, we spoke with Dr Emma Fulu, who offers both her expertise and lived experience of intersectional feminism.

What is intersectional feminism?

Intersectional feminism is an approach, or a way of seeing and understanding how the different dimensions of people's lives – their gender, race, sexual identity, class, ability – interact and relate to shape their experiences of discrimination. Intersectionality isn't a theory of difference, it is a theory of oppression and power.

However, I think a lot of people tend to view intersectional feminism in quite a basic way that simply layers different forms of oppression on top of each other – a black, lesbian woman has a triple-level of disadvantage. It's important to consider how any individual might have lived through and confronted multiple and varying forms of oppression. But what is really powerful about intersectional feminism is the way that it starts to tease out how all these forms of bigotry – sexism, racism, classism, ableism – are connected, systemic and in fact, disadvantage all of us in different ways. When you consider it that way, it's not just about working out who is the most marginalised, but about forging bonds between individuals and across movements to create change.

Intersectional feminism in practice requires us all to work to better understand each other, to recognise our own areas of privilege and to actively work to dismantle the systems of oppression.

What is it about intersectional feminism that first resonated with you as a young woman of colour?

When I was first introduced to feminism, in an academic sense, it was a 70s western version of feminism. The nature of white supremacy is such that 'whiteness' is paraded as the norm and is unquestioned. And the feminism I first learnt about was, by default, "white". But, growing up I experienced more overt racism than I experienced overt sexism, so that definition of feminism didn't resonate with me.

It defined gender as the primary cause of oppression. But in reality, we all have multiple identities and they are intertwined. I couldn't disentangle my experience as a woman from my experience as a woman of colour. So when I discovered what at the time was being called black feminism, or third world feminism, that spoke to me. Now intersectional feminism has progressed even further and is integrating a much more holistic understanding of our experiences as complex and diverse human beings.

In Australia, the focus of gender equality is often on the middle-class, able-bodied, white woman. How can we better account for the intersection of privilege and oppression that impacts every woman's freedom?

It is not simply about how we account for these issues of intersectionality through our discourse, but how do we all act to ensure that the full variety of voices are present, engaged and able to create and contribute to the public discourse on their own terms. There is a lot to be done in Australia to add to the voices that get heard in our public and cultural spheres. To get there, we need the people who work in media, curate events, lecture at universities to actively think about who is present at the table.

The same goes for government policy.

There is great work being done to address intersectionality, as well as great new resources like Our Watch's 'Changing the story: preventing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women'.

But there is still a culture in policy making where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, or women with disabilities, are seen as bodies to be consulted with as a tick-box exercise. They are not always involved or supported in the initial design and development of policies and programs. There needs to be a shift in whose voices are involved in setting the agenda, rather than simply accounting for intersectionality.

Furthermore, while there might be an attempt to understand and account for the individual experiences of people from diverse backgrounds, there is much less being done to tackle the deep-rooted systems of discrimination and oppression, including our history of colonisation. Until we do that I don't think we will see real change.

What impact does a lack of focus on intersectional feminism have on policy, funding and access to resources for women living with violence?

A lack of focus on intersectional feminism unfortunately means that people who need the resources the most aren't receiving them.

For example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience violence at higher rates than non-Indigenous women, and are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised as a result of family violence-related assaults.

“The national rate of imprisonment is 15 times higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women comprise 34% of women behind bars, while only making up 2% of the adult female Australian population.

In prison, these women, and people, are not getting the help they need and are dying every day and, yet, this is overlooked and undermined again and again.

Also, it means that the types of programs and policies being developed are not as effective as they could be because they are not addressing the multiple and complex causes of violence for different groups of people.

Our report, *Preventing and Responding to Violence: Taking an intersectional approach to address violence in diverse Australian communities*, provides snapshots of how violence is experienced differently by various groups within our community, depending on their culture, ethnicity, age, faith, etcetera. There are a number of specific actions that must be taken, but in an overarching sense we need policies and programs that address inequality, discrimination and abuse across societal, community and individual levels. Our efforts also need to be tailored to reflect the different ways that social norms, structures and practices vary between and within communities.

Our Watch's work has shown there are three key drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women that need to be considered and implemented across a range of portfolio areas:

1. We must address the legacies and ongoing impacts of colonisation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This includes strengthening justice and support systems for ATSI families.
2. We must also address the ongoing impacts of colonisation for non-Indigenous people across Australian societies. This includes challenging all forms of racism and disrespect towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.
3. We must address the gendered drivers of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, which amongst other things means supporting ATSI women's participation in leadership and decision making.

Women of colour in the workforce face a 'double jeopardy'. The stereotypes that surround both women and people of colour are often mutually exclusive to how we define what it means to be a good worker. What can workplaces do to ensure that the potential of women of colour isn't limited by overt discrimination and unconscious bias?

Businesses should recognise that diversity is a strength. Companies with diverse teams consistently outperform homogenous teams when managed well. Businesses can do more than just avoid overt discrimination and unconscious bias. We must recognise that certain groups of people have had fewer opportunities because of discrimination and we need to proactively

Dr Emma Fulu is the founder of the Equality Institute, a global feminist research and creative agency focused on building the right evidence to prevent violence against women, making it accessible to anyone who wants to be a part of that movement and conversation. For more information, go to www.equalityinstitute.org

work to balance out the wrongs of the past.

To promote long-term, sustainable change, businesses need to undertake research to understand their culture and the unconscious biases that are playing out in their workplaces, and then develop tailored policies, training and workshops to address them. Unfortunately, one-off online training modules or workshops do not work. Some actions they might consider include:

- Training on cultural competency and cross-cultural communication.
- Training to address unconscious biases.
- Promoting flexible work arrangements.
- Setting targets and closely monitoring progress.
- Disrupting traditional recruitment processes and reaching out through non-traditional avenues.
- Taking complaints seriously, and implementing transparent and responsive mechanisms to address instances of discrimination no matter how small, in order to create a safe and respectful workplace for all.

As we understand more about intersectional feminism, women who experience significant privileges are increasingly looking to our sisters, whether they be Indigenous, disabled, of a refugee background or living in the global south, and wondering how we can use our resources to better support these women. How can we advocate for our sisters, whilst ensuring that we don't enforce our own cultural norms, judgement of 'what is best', and values onto them?

I think our first job is to educate ourselves as much as possible about other people's experiences and not always put the onus on those who are less privileged to educate us. Take some time to reflect on your own beliefs, attitudes, unconscious bias and gaps in knowledge.

Second, I think our role is to listen, and use our own privilege to create spaces for our sisters to share their own stories and articulate their own needs. Always question whose voices are missing from conversations.

Then we have a responsibility to act, to proactively work to challenge the unequal system we live in. Use your privilege to challenge racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination whenever you see it. If you are in a position to hire people, actively try to recruit Indigenous women, refugee women or women from the global south. //

Our vision for gender equality is to leave this world more just and whole hearted than it is now. To build a world in which women can realise their full potential and live free from workplace oppression, where women are recognised and valued for the extraordinary contribution they make as carers and as professionals.

A world that addresses the impact gender inequality has on men: our work will be balanced in order to leave the world as a place in which men can continue to lead fulfilling professional lives, one in which they can be vulnerable, care freely, and express fear.

Our vision would be unfulfilled if we didn't carve out the flexibility to prioritise our family's needs, and to care for ourselves so that we may bring the best version of ourselves to each new day.

This is your invitation to be part of a movement that can achieve just that.

Prue Gilbert - Grace Papers

