

Are You Returning to Work or Working at Home?

HISTORICALLY, 'Working Women' is a term used for women who work outside their home responsibilities.

The pandemic has reinforced that working at and from home is more, if not equally, challenging and requires multitasking and quick decision-making skills.

'Are you working?' is a question often asked out of ignorance of not valuing work at home. Very often people fail to appreciate how much work goes into building a family. Somehow there is an underlying judgment projected on homemakers of either lack of ambition, enterprise, or knowledge. How did we form this bias?

In reality, homemakers are creators, nurturers, and transformers; they play the trinity role; sadly, we do not acknowledge it. Women have the power to create life, nurture that life and transform that seed into a full-grown adult. Do we as a society value the multi-faceted role of a woman as a daughter, wife, mother, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law and a pastoral carer?

We as a society have segregated roles, and as a result, judgment gets typecast with those roles. When I lived in Germany, many of my friends were remunerated and encouraged to be full-time



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mothers by the government while their children were still young, which gave respect, appreciation, and financial independence given to a full-time mother.

In the corporate world, people talk about work-life balance for those who work for money. But what about shifting our attention to work-life balance for people who work not for money, but for

their family. It becomes a thankless role with minimal recognition and respect. It is time we recognised the role of homemakers and their contribution to society, economic growth and progress.

Many dreams and aspirations get crushed under pressure to perform to perfection. Should something go wrong at home, whose responsibility is it? Women often carry the guilt of either daring to dream or speaking of their dreams, leave alone fulfilling them. There are too many boxes on the checklist they have to tick before sleeping peacefully. Why can we not rethink these limiting and constricting beliefs, stifling our freedom of choice?

The biggest reason for sadness is the low self-worth syndrome, and the only way we can help combat this aspect is by respecting not only others' but also our own choices. Procrastination stems from the 'what ifs' of taking this bold step to the independence of thoughts, actions, and feelings.

Many women feel as if they are betraying their families by listening to their hearts. You have to let go of the false identification of operating as the perfect woman. Unless you drop this veil of performing from fear, your family may not know of your dreams. Collaboration from the family can make such a massive difference to the journey and transition.

Only when we can be each other's support system and accept help without any baggage can we shift towards work-life balance. We can gift one another the joys of choosing our lives the way we dream and desire. With this mindset, we can help our partners return to work and groom our children and our society, with an empowered way of living. **BW**

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