

## Love and Work—Clarifying your Values

**Goals** are something we can achieve, but **values** determine how we want to achieve them. In other words, **goals are a destination**, and our **values guide how we get to where we are going**.

There are many areas of life where we have both goals and values. Two of the most important ones are our work lives and our parenting lives.

For *motivated professionals* our goals may be financial reward, recognition, and public contribution. The values associated with these goals are to be ambitious, hard-working, persistent, and achievement-oriented.

For *devoted parents* our goals are to have rewarding and joyous relationships, and healthy and happy children. The values associated with these goals are to be present in mind and body, a willing to put your children's needs first, and enjoy being deeply engaged in relationships.

If you are both a motivated professional and a devoted parent, your goals—and the values they are associated with—compete against each other for your limited resources. It's tricky to be an ambitious professional and a devoted parent at the very same time. However, if you can clarify your values, you can be more effective in choosing how to live. This questionnaire encourages you to reflect on your values in your work and family worlds and to consider how you would like your values to guide your way of living.

**\*\*Please note that whichever way you organize your priorities and values, you can still be a successful ambitious professional and an effective loving parent\*\***

From the following sets of statements, choose the statement that *best* reflects your values:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. If I had to name my top value, it is to be to a loving and present parent.
  - b. If I had to name my top value, it is to be ambitious and achievement-oriented at work.
  - c. If I had to name my top value, it is to find balance between my desire to be an ambitious professional and a devoted parent.
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. It pains me to miss out on professional opportunities.
  - b. It pains me to miss out on moments of parenting life.
  - c. I am often in pain since I struggle with missing out on both professional and parenting opportunities.
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. At the end of my life, I most want to be remembered as a person who consistently focused on engaging as a parent to my children.
  - b. At the end of my life, I most want to be remembered as a person who was hard-working and who made significant contributions to the world outside my home.
  - c. At the end of my life, I most want to be remembered as a person who found the balance between my ambitious drive and my love of family.
  
4. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. My identity is best captured in my role as a parent.
  - b. My identity is best captured in my role as a professional.
  - c. My identity is best captured as someone who maintains a presence as both a parent and as a professional.
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. I find great meaning from devoting myself to parenting.
  - b. I find great meaning from pouring myself into professional life.
  - c. I find great meaning from keeping a foot in both work and parenting life.
  
6. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. My most satisfying weeks are those where I spent the majority of my time engaging with my children.
  - b. My most satisfying weeks are those where I accomplished a lot in my professional life.
  - c. My most satisfying weeks are those where I found some time to get work done (even if it wasn't enough) and some time to devote to my children (even if it wasn't enough).
  
7. \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. I believe an effective parent stays at home with their children.
  - b. I believe that an effective worker dedicates themselves to their job.
  - c. I believe that an effective individual finds a way to balance devotion to parenting with devotion to making contributions outside of the family.

The final item gets to the heart of the challenge of fully leaning in to both worlds. Reflect carefully on this:

- \*\* . \_\_\_\_\_
- A. I value being excellent at one thing.
  - B. I value being good at a lot of different things.

## **Scoring**

Number of a's: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of b's: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of c's: \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary Score:** Which lower-case letter did you pick *most* in items 1-7 and what was your response to item \*\*?

(a or b) \_\_\_\_\_ *and* (A or B) \_\_\_\_\_.

Take home message from your quiz score:

- **If you picked more a's and A**, then you place a premium on being uniquely devoted to your family. This may mean that you step back (or even down) from an ambitious career to allow yourself to commit fully to your value of engaged parenting. If for financial or other reasons you cannot step away from your career, you may elect to put firmer boundaries around your work life in order to allow yourself to be more present during the moments you are in the parenting role.
- **If you picked more b's and A**, then you place a premium on excellence in your work life. Folks who can identify as such will benefit from picking behaviors consistent with the value of prioritizing their professional role. You can do so in ways that still allow you to be an excellent parent. This means you delegate parenting tasks in thoughtful ways, like carefully selecting childcare providers or sharing parenting responsibilities with your partner, in order to allow yourself to ambitiously pursue goals in your professional life.
- **If you picked more c's and B**, then you place a premium on finding balance between work and family life. You understand and accept that the balance may cost you excellence in either world, but will reap the rewards in increasing the richness of your life.
- **If you picked more a's or more b's and A**, then you likely struggle to find a way to balance your desire to engage as a devoted parent and your desire to succeed as an ambitious professional. In order to exit this no-(wo)man's land, you may need to reflect on your options. You might consider whether it is worthwhile to hold on to a value of excellence in either world and step down or away from the other. Alternatively, you might consider elevating a value of moderation in order to maintain a foothold in both your parenting and work world.