



Muffins with Mom

Is there a work-life balance?

By Holly N. Boyer

It was Mother's Day, and while I hadn't made it to the 50 other kindergarten events for my son throughout the school year, I made it to this one: "Muffins with Mom."

As all of us mothers took our seats in the teeny tiny chairs and around the kidney-shaped tables, we were each presented with a booklet prepared by the children entitled "All About My Mom." One of the first pages instructed the kids to draw a picture of what their mom did during the day while they were at school. My son drew me at my desk writing "breefs."

The mom sitting next to me chuckled when she saw hers – she is a stay-at-home mom, and her daughter drew her lying in bed. The next page had several fill-in-the blanks for the children to describe their mom's likes and dislikes. One of the prompts stated: "My mom's favorite thing to do is ____." My son wrote "*work*." When one of the teachers saw this, she gave me a hug and a sympathetic half-smile and whispered, "kids say the darndest things" in my ear.

Wait, what?

Admittedly, my eyes had welled up with tears when I read it, but it was not because I was sad. Nope. I was proud. My son was absolutely right – I love my work. At that moment, I realized that my son had been listening when I told him how important it is to love what you do. He didn't see it as a bad thing at all – so, why would I?

I am constantly telling my children to find something that they love, that they are good at, and that makes them and others feel good. My kids are six, three and nine months – so the delivery is more like "if you love Legos, find a job building Legos!" I want them to know that if Mom is working late, or misses the Groundhog Day parade or some other event planned during the worst time in the workday, it is because I have found a career doing something that I enjoy. I "leaned in" to my career, and I am so grateful I did.

For me, because I am mentally stimulated at work, challenged in my practice, and endlessly entertained by the amazing attorneys I work with, I am a happier person and a better mom to my children. I try to fill each day with things that I love – my family, my friends, yoga, trashy reality TV – and *work*. There is no work-life balance. There is just life. Being a mom gives me purpose, and being a lawyer gives me purpose. Why should the two be mutually exclusive?



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