



ATLAS *of* MOTHERHOOD

TRANSITIONING
BACK TO WORK

For Atlas of Motherhood by Jennifer Santos



JENNIFER SANTOS

Hi, I'm Jennifer. I offer support and information to help women transition back to work after becoming a mother. From restarting your career/changing your career to launching your own business, I will help you in balancing motherhood and your career.

mothersreinvented.com

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON EMOTIONS THAT COME UP DURING THE TRANSITION BACK TO WORK?

The whole process of returning to work is filled with a lot of mixed emotions. Some of the most common that arise during this transition include:

Mom Guilt

You may experience the guilt of leaving your child at nursery or daycare, guilt that you can't spend as much time as you used to with your child, and/or guilt of wanting to have a career and go back to work.

Anxiety/Stress/Overwhelm

These types of emotions arise during any period of change or when your routine is disrupted.

Second Guessing Yourself

Motherhood has a way of stripping us of our professional identities and when you return to work, you may find yourself asking if you are doing the right thing if you still have what it takes to be successful in your career and if you can still deliver in your profession in the way that you did prior to motherhood.

Excitement

You may also be feeling excited about returning to work and the ability to have your career and "me time" again, as well as the opportunity to regain your professional identity.



4 WAYS TO
PREPARE FOR
THE TRANSITION
BACK TO WORK

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PLAN FOR YOUR RETURN TO WORK

Plan for your return to work by identifying the tasks and activities that you do at home that will change or need to be rearranged upon your return to work. It's important that before you return to work, you have a plan in place for how these everyday tasks will be shared or executed when you return back to work.

Activities/Tasks/Commitments	Will this be shared with you partner, family member, or outsourced
<i>Childcare</i>	
<i>Home</i>	
<i>Other</i>	

“You can be a working mom
and a good mom and you’re
allowed to be both.”

- JENNIFER SANTOS

WHAT ARE WAYS THAT FAMILY AND FRIENDS CAN SUPPORT A MOTHER IN THE TRANSITION BACK TO WORK?

Help is really crucial in the first few weeks as you return back to work in that period of adjustment. Your friends and family can help with practical tasks that you have detailed above or by listening to you.

Friends and family can support you during times of anxiety and overwhelm, by providing that listening ear as you navigate your emotions and face those fears. Family and friends can give the assurance that you are doing the right thing and providing an example to your children that mothers can successfully have a career at the same time as raising a family.

ASKING FOR HELP:

Some of the situations I need help with:

The kind of help I need:

Some ways that I can ask for help:

Things I can say when I need help:

Family, friends, and organizations that can help me:

HOW TO DISCUSS THE TRANSITION WITH YOUR BOSS, SUPERVISOR, OR COMPANY?

You should be having the conversation with your supervisor about what your return to work will look like:

1. Before you go on maternity leave
2. During your career break
3. As soon as you return to work

Even before your conversation with your supervisor takes place, you need to know exactly what you want to get out of that conversation and the boundaries you want to set before your return to work:

YOUR IDEAL WORK SITUATION:

Do you want flexibility when you return? If so, what type of flexible working arrangement would work best for you? Are there specific things that you want or need flexibility around?

What types of working arrangements would be ideal for you?

Would you prefer to work from home? (Full-time or a few days a week?)

Would you want to stagger your hours (i.e., a late start so you can still do school runs or an early start so you can leave earlier?)

If you're breastfeeding, what policies are in place when you are return to support your breastfeeding journey?

These are the things you need to think about and the conversations you should have with your supervisor before you take maternity leave, during your maternity leave a few weeks before you're due to return work to reinforce those arrangements and boundaries that you have set before maternity leave and make sure that both of you are still on the same page. Additionally, when you have returned to work, it's important to have the conversation about your arrangements with your colleagues so they understand your boundaries.

While it's difficult to feel obligated to work for a company because of finances, you need to remember your worth and if a company is not respecting your boundaries or working arrangements with motherhood, then maybe it's time to look elsewhere for a company that fully respects you and respects your boundaries.

WHAT IS THE RATE OF MOTHERS SWITCHING CAREERS AFTER BIRTH?

Studies show that a large percentage of highly qualified mothers change careers after birth, looking to find a new career that is more family-friendly and aligned to their new identity as a mother and as a working mother.

Having a job for you and that you're fully passionate and fulfilled by. A big part of our individual identities and our persona's is tied to our career and if you're not happy in your career that can transcend into other areas including being a mom. You deserve to have a career that you find fulfilling - whether that be changing careers or starting up your own company.

Changing careers can be stressful, and launching into the unknown can be terrifying. In looking for a new career, as yourself the following questions:

What are your priorities?

What are your values?

What is important to you?

What is your vision?

Where do you see yourself down the line?

Where do you want to be in five years?

What careers tick most of these boxes?

“You deserve to have a career
that makes you happy.”

- JENNIFER SANTOS



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