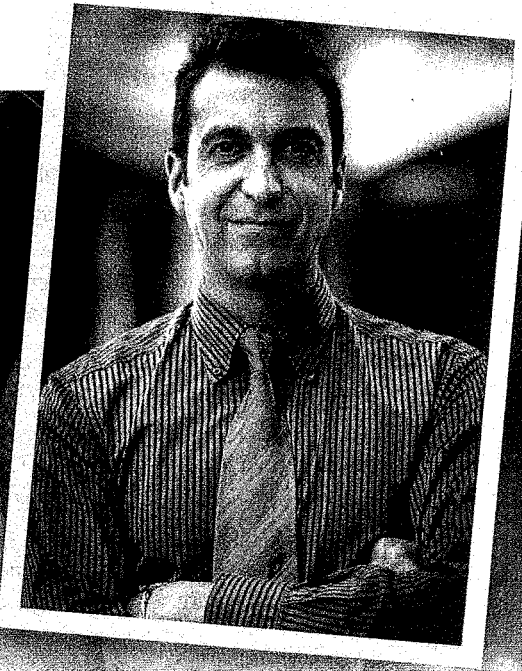


CHAPTER 11



Social Development: Relationships and Roles

Home at 3 A.M. from closing the store and hopefully to bed by 4. Then, Declan's life-love, Jamila, wakes up, gets the kids ready for school, and shuffles to the computer to begin her latest Web-design job.

Declan's first marriage to Prithy ended in a disastrous divorce. He feels blessed to have a second chance for happiness at age 35. Declan and Jamila feel confident that this marriage will last. They are older and more mature. In this uncertain economy, they are both blessed to have decent jobs. They understand that marriage involves sacrifice. They are committed to each other's emotional growth.

After struggling to connect with the twins, Declan finally feels that his stepchildren see him as their real dad—he knows he would give his life for these precious children. Declan wants to make enough money to give the kids a top-notch education and allow Jamila to enjoy motherhood, rather than enduring those exhausting weeks when she gets an assignment, then goes crazy finishing that project at superhuman speed.

That's why Declan "supplemented" his store manager position with driving for a ride-sharing company. Declan has no problem working two jobs. But he worries. Suppose he gets furloughed or permanently laid off. How will being unemployed affect his mission to provide for his family? It's a 24/7 struggle, but this marriage must last for life!

Do you know someone like Declan who is struggling to be a caring husband and sensitive father while supporting his family? Perhaps you are coping with the threat of unemployment, or, like Jamila, are overwhelmed

with bursts of high-stress work. If so, you are a contemporary adult.

This chapter is devoted to the main social challenges involved with being adult. It focuses on the three classic roles that define adult life: marriage (and living

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Marriage

Setting the Context: The Changing Landscape of Marriage

The Main Marital Pathway: Downhill and Then (Maybe) Up

The Triangular Theory Perspective on Happiness

Commitment, Sacrifice, and Compassion: Core Attitudes in Relationship Success

Couple Communications and Happiness

• *Interventions:* Staying Together Happily for Life

Final Notes: Divorce (and Remarriage)

Parenthood

Setting the Context: More Parenting Possibilities, Fewer Children

The Transition to Parenthood

Exploring Motherhood

Exploring Fatherhood

Work

Setting the Context: The Changing Landscape of Work

Exploring Career Happiness (and Success)

• *Trending in Developmental Science:* Exploring the Enduring Difficulties Women Face at Work

Final Thoughts: Reflections on a Timely Concern — Unemployment

Table 11.1: Stereotypes About Family and Work: A Quiz

Are the following statements “True” or “False”? To see how accurate your beliefs about family and work are, look at the correct answers below the table. As you read through the chapter, you’ll find out exactly why each statement is true or false.

_____	1. Poverty-level adults don’t get married because they are basically less interested in making a firm commitment.
_____	2. Couples who choose to live together rather than get married have more fragile relationships, even if they are affluent and fully committed.
_____	3. Couples are happiest in the honeymoon phase of a marriage.
_____	4. Having children brings couples closer.
_____	5. People who don’t have children are unhappy and narcissistic.
_____	6. Mothers used to spend more time with their children than they do today.
_____	7. Husbands share the child care 50/50 with wives.
_____	8. Technology always reduces the hours we spend at work.
_____	9. Being self-employed boosts workers’ wages.
_____	10. Gender roles are disappearing in the world of work.

Answers: 1. F, 2. F, 3. T, 4. F, 5. F, 6. F, 7. F, 8. F, 9. F, 10. F

together), parenthood, and work. Before beginning your reading, you might want to take the family and work quiz in Table 11.1. Soon you will learn why each stereotype is right or wrong.

Although I will discuss them separately, I must emphasize that we cannot look at marriage, parenthood, and career as separate. Having stable, well-paying jobs determines whether people choose to get

married (as I mentioned in Chapter 10). Having children dramatically changes a couple’s relationship and, as with Declan, shapes our career choices. As *developmental systems theory* suggests, marriage, parenthood, and career are tri-directional, interlocking roles. Moreover, how we approach these core adult roles depends on the time in history and the society in which we live.

Marriage

Ask young people to describe their ideal marriage and you may hear phrases such as “soul mates,” “caring,” and “mutual trust” (Lam and others, 2016). This vision of lovers for life is a luxury of living in our modern age.

Setting the Context: The Changing Landscape of Marriage

Throughout most of history, as I described in Chapter 1, life was short and harsh. Marriages were practical arrangements made to cement families, not fulfill a couple’s personal desires. The typical marriage used to last only a decade or two before one partner died.

Then, with the health advances of the early twentieth century, Western nations developed the idea that people should get married in their twenties and be lovers for a half-century or more. The traditional 1950s marriage, with defined gender roles, reflected this vision of enduring love (Amato, 2007; Cherlin, 2004; Coontz, 1992).

In the last third of the twentieth century, Western ideas about marriage took another turn. The women’s movement told us that women should have careers and that spouses should share the child care. As a result of the 1960s lifestyle revolution, which stressed personal fulfillment, we rejected the idea that people should stay in an unhappy marriage. We could get divorced, have babies without being married, and choose not to get married at all.

Learning Outcomes

- Describe historical changes in Western marriage compared to marital ideas in India and the Middle East.
- Evaluate under what conditions marriage is an ideal state.
- Outline changes in marriage over time and the forces that make for relationship satisfaction.
- Analyze divorce, remarriage, and stepparenthood.



From the 1950s stay-at-home mom and working dad to today's marriage equality, over a half-century, a revolution occurred in married life. How do you feel about these changes?

deinstitutionalization of marriage

The decline in marriage and the emergence of alternate family forms during the last third of the twentieth century.

serial cohabitation Living sequentially with different partners outside of marriage.

The outcome was a change called the **deinstitutionalization of marriage** (Cherlin, 2004). This phrase means that marriage was transformed from the standard “institution” into an optional choice (Cherlin, 2020).

Figure 11.1 shows one sign of this shift: a dramatic rise in cohabitation rates. In 1970, only 1 in 3 women dared move in with a romantic partner without a wedding ring. Today, with roughly 3 out of 4 emerging adults having cohabited, *not* living with a lover is an unusual event (Sassler & Lichter, 2020).

The most dramatic change relates to **serial cohabitation** — living unmarried with different partners during adult life. When emerging adults cohabit with only one person, they are more apt to see this arrangement as a prelude to engagement (“We want to see if we can make it as a married couple”). Serial cohabiters are less likely to have *any* wedding goals (Cherlin, 2020; Vespa, 2014). They may join the millions of contemporary women who give birth without a spouse.

This brings up that familiar U.S. change: unmarried parenthood. During the 1950s, if a U.S. woman dared to have a baby without being married, her family might ship her off to a home for unwed mothers or insist that she marry the dad (the infamously named “shotgun wedding”). In recent years, because only a fraction (2 out of 5) of U.S. women with a high school diploma are married before giving birth (Wildsmith, Manlove, & Cook, 2018), the disconnect between marriage and a baby carriage for less educated Americans is a predictable path (Cherlin, 2020).

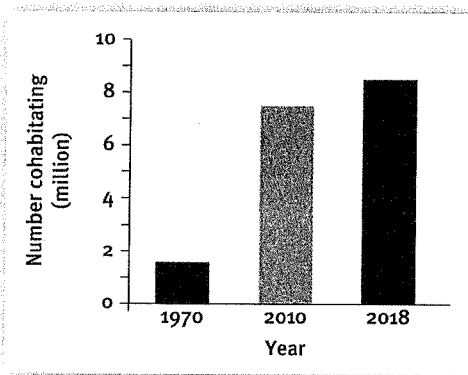
Feelings about cohabitation and single parenthood vary even in affluent nations. In northern Europe, as I described in Chapter 10, it’s typical to cohabit, have children, and then *perhaps* decide to get married (which explains why, in Norway, the median marriage age is almost 40, six years older than when that nation’s average woman gives birth!). In Catholic southern Europe, marriage used to be the only socially accepted path; but today, cohabitation rates are rising in Italy and Spain. Cohabitation is still very rare in Japan, although it’s increasing a bit in China and Taiwan (Sassler & Lichter, 2020).

And, unfortunately, the United States is an outlier — the only highly developed nation where low-income adults move from partner to partner without a wedding ring. The reason, as I mentioned in Chapter 10, is that in the United States, marriage qualifies as a symbol of success; it’s a testament to *finally* being fully mature (Cherlin, 2020).

Think about your requirements for getting married if you are single. Or, if you are married, think of your goals before you were wed. In addition to finding the right person, if you are like most people, you probably believe that making this commitment demands reaching a certain place

Figure 11.1: Percent of heterosexual couples who cohabited in 1970, 2010, and 2018 This chart shows how cohabitation exploded, particularly during the late twentieth and early twenty-first century.

Data from Sassler & Lichter, 2020



in your development. It's important to have a solid sense of identity and to be financially secure (see Chapter 10). You want to avoid partners with debilitating emotional problems. You are looking for someone who can offer an economically secure life. Therefore, because we select mates according to *homogamy*, the marriage market for poverty-level women and men is dismal (Gibson-Davis, 2009; Gibson-Davis & Rackin, 2014). Even when couples are committed to each other, it can be difficult to move from living together to getting engaged.

Read what Candace, a 25-year-old, had to say about her marriage plans:

Um, we have . . . things . . . to do before we get married. We both want very good jobs. . . . He's been looking out for jobs . . . we're trying. We . . . we gotta have everything before we say, "Let's get married."

(quoted in Smock, Manning, & Porter, 2005, p. 690)

And, in addition to marriage having different meanings in richer world regions, there still are nations where *parents* decide who their sons and daughters wed.

India: From Arranged Marriages to a Hybrid Model of Marital Choice

India is the poster-child example, because of its *arranged marriages* — unions in which families choose their child's spouse. The reason is that, according to the traditional Hindu worldview, the search for personal happiness is irrelevant. We must fulfill our fated dharma — obligations in this world — in order to be rewarded in the next life (Bhattacharyya, 2020).

As late as 2005, most wives in India reported that their families had total control over whom they would wed. Many barely knew their husbands before their wedding day. Now, the intoxicating winds of individualism (and the vigorous rejection of an entrenched caste system) have produced a slow-moving earthquake in wedding rules.

Today, rather than uncritically accept their family's wishes, Hindu (and Indian Muslim) women now often collaborate with their parents to select a mate. Indian marital practices are still not fully Western because families have veto power over a specific spouse. But emerging adults in the world's largest democracy are now adopting a hybrid model — poised midway between their millennia-old values and modern ideas (Allendorf & Pandian, 2016).



This Indian mother would almost certainly have had an arranged marriage. Today, this daughter would probably work with her family to choose a mate.

Middle East: Male-Dominated Marriage

Another region struggling to reconcile its religious traditions with contemporary ideas is the Middle East. According to fundamentalist sharia (Muslim) law, marriage is the *only* acceptable path. Men have total power over women's lives. A girl must be a virgin until she marries, on pain of shaming the family name. To ensure that daughters don't have sex outside of marriage (or choose unacceptable men), in many Islamic nations, young people are not allowed to date without being chaperoned. Once a woman gets married, she must obey her spouse. Husbands can traditionally forbid their wives to go to school and to work, as a female's proper role is to care for children and the house.

Still, here, too, the times are changing. Muslim women are becoming well educated. In Iran, just as many women enroll in universities as men (Rahbari, 2016). In Saudi Arabia, where fundamentalist sharia law has its strongest hold, female activists have successfully agitated against child marriage, the once standard practice of marrying off a daughter as young as the pubertal years (Al-Hakami & McLaughlin, 2016; "Saudi Arabia moves to ban child marriage," 2019).

The most dramatic crack in traditional marriage concerns divorce: Sharia law stipulates that only men can end a marriage. Ex-wives are barred from receiving alimony.



This photo shows another landmark loosening of traditional sharia law rules. In 2018, Saudi women were *finally* allowed to drive. Now, they can even travel alone!

Husbands automatically get custody of sons and daughters once the children are over a certain age.

But, by the second decade of this century, according to one survey, half of all emerging adults living in Tehran approved of divorce if a couple isn't getting along (Sadeghi & Agadjanian, 2019). Iranian women are now free to initiate divorce proceedings. They can draw up prenuptial agreements spelling out their right to work. They can insist on getting half the property if a couple splits up. In fact, in recent years, divorce rates in this nation accelerated to outpace those in Catholic countries such as Ireland, Italy, and Spain (see Aghajanian & Thompson, 2013).

However, one online poll of divorced women shows just how differently Saudi Arabian citizens still view this “normal” Western change. Many women anguished about being outcasts: “I don’t belong to this society”; “I feel excluded”; “I’m treated as a criminal” (quoted in Saleh & Luppici, 2017, p. 187). While Westerners react with sympathy when they hear a family member is getting divorced (“I’m so sorry!”), these women had the opposite experience: “divorced women bring shame to their families” (p. 188); “It’s agony, since I was treated with a lot of rebuke. . . .” (p. 189).

Clearly, much of humanity is still wedded to lifelong marriage. Do these people have a point?

Is Being Married Better than Living Single?

Hundreds of Western comparisons suggest the answer is yes. Married couples are happier than the never married or divorced. Married couples are far richer (see Chapter 7). They live longer (Robles and others, 2014; Zueras, Rutigliano, & Trias-Llimós, 2020) and healthier into old age (Finkel, Simpson, & Eastwick, 2017; Slatcher & Selcuk, 2017; Zhang, Liu, & Yu, 2016).

Now consider the many life-enhancing advantages marriage provides — from offering economic security, to sharing parenting, to having a loving person take care of you in sickness (and health). As the consummate adult “secure base,” marriage cradles us from the storms of life.

But wait a minute! These benefits apply to *happy* marriages — not relationships riddled with angst (Margelisch and others, 2017). Who wants to come home to an uncaring, avoidantly attached spouse, someone who is chronically angry, a partner who minimizes your sense of self? In one typical comparison, people in miserable marriages were far less happy than their single counterparts (Chapman & Guven, 2016).

Moreover, contrasting married with unmarried adults in the United States is like comparing apples to oranges, because, as I mentioned, people who decide to marry are a self-selected group. Does marriage *itself* boost happiness and health, or are adults happier and healthier before they enter this state?

Is Being Married Basically Better Than Cohabiting for Life?

This brings up an interesting question. Suppose you are in a long-term relationship and *could* get married. You and your significant other have terrific jobs. You feel committed to each other but don’t believe in a wedding ring (“It’s just a piece of paper”). Are you making a mistake?

A careful British study implies the answer is no. When researchers controlled for childhood influences such as poverty and compared long-term cohabiting couples with their counterparts who got married, they found no differences in midlife happiness (Perelli-Harris & Styr, 2018). Fatherhood studies have the same theme: If a man is a committed dad, it doesn’t matter if he is married to his children’s mother or not (McClain & Brown, 2017; Nomaguchi, Brown, & Leyman, 2017).

The bottom line is that we need to go beyond that concrete marker (a wedding ceremony) to explore the quality of a couple’s life. What makes for happy, enduring relationships? The rest of this section tackles this question.

The Main Marital Pathway: Downhill and Then (Maybe) Up

Many of us enter marriage (or any romantic relationship) with blissful expectations. Then, disenchantment sets in. Decades of cross-sectional studies conducted in Western countries show that marital satisfaction is at its peak during the honeymoon and then decreases (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Glenn, 1990; Lavner & Bradbury, 2010). This same downslide appears in longitudinal research: When psychologists followed married couples over 16 years, both husbands and wives reported more bickering and irritation as the years passed. While women generally had more marital complaints than men, the real red flag for divorce was a major uptick in wives' distress (Williamson and others, 2016). Perhaps because they are more sensitive to communication issues, women are often the bellwether signaling a marriage will end.

Do flashpoints that typically provoke divorce ("We can't talk to each other"; "He is incredibly insensitive") appear at the beginning of a marriage or emerge over time? A study tracking couples from engagement through the first years of marriage supports the "emerging distress" pattern (Burditt and others, 2017). On their wedding day, couples seem blissful and in tune; then cracks appear ("I never knew he was so pig-headed"; "Why didn't I realize she is pathologically attached to her mother, and periodically erupts in rage?"). As the downslide is deepest during the first four years, one group of researchers believes that if couples can survive the early years of a marriage, they are less likely to divorce (Bradbury & Karney, 2004).

Notice the interesting similarity to John Bowlby's ideas about the different attachment phases. In the first year or two of a relationship, couples are in the phase of clear-cut attachment, when they see their significant other as the center of life. As spouses move into their *working model* phase — developing more separate lives, getting involved in the wider world — they risk disconnecting from their mates.

The good news is that there can be a positive change to look forward to later on. According to the **U-shaped curve of marital satisfaction**, after it dips to a low point, couples get happier at the empty nest phase, when the children leave the house and partners have the luxury of focusing on each other again (Glenn, 1990; White & Edwards, 1990). And, at retirement, the curve can swing up even more. Compared to middle-aged couples, older spouses relate in kinder, less combative ways (Carstensen and others, 1996; Windsor & Butterworth, 2010).

Happy older couples actually embody many of the good love-relationship principles spelled out in Chapter 10. They idealize their mates ("Your grandma is the best woman in the world!"); and, you might be interested to know, men who rank themselves as disagreeable are especially likely to display this trait ("How did I deserve this woman? I married a saint!"). (See O'Rourke and others, 2010.) So, we are right to yearn to stay married "til death do us part" — *if* our marriage is a happy one.

Still, perhaps you are fortunate to know a couple who bucks the U-shaped curve and grows happier as the years pass. For some newlyweds, marital happiness declines sharply during the first four years; for others, it wanes slightly. And even though it's hard to predict future problems, we can find clues to a relationship's fate by examining partners' attitudes early on.

Virtually every couple who gets married is convinced the statistics don't apply to them: "We are going to live happily ever after. Our relationship will improve over time, and it certainly won't get worse." Ironically, in tracking newly married couples,

U-shaped curve of marital satisfaction The most common pathway of marital happiness in the West, in which satisfaction is highest at the honeymoon, declines during the child-rearing years, then rises after the children grow up.



Andrew Olney/Masterfile

The so-called "difficulties" of the empty nest are highly overrated. In fact, many couples find that, when the children leave, they can joyously rekindle marital love!

researchers found that women who held these optimistic ideas to an extreme were at special risk of being disenchanted, or totally turned off, in the next few years (Lavner, Karney, & Bradbury, 2013).

Why might seeing one's *marriage*, in particular, as flawless promote distress? For answers, researchers made the interesting distinction between being a generally optimistic person and being optimistic about a marriage. They found that people who were generally upbeat were prone to constructively solve marital conflicts. But spouses who magically believed "We can't have problems" developed a shocked, *learned-helplessness* attitude when reality hit. Unprepared for disagreements, expecting romance to conquer all, they were blindsided when things didn't go as planned and so were poorly equipped to deal with the normal ups and downs of married life (Neff & Geers, 2013).

What does it mean to constructively handle conflicts, and what other attitudes help us stay together happily for life? To offer some perspective on these issues, let's first spell out a familiar psychologist's conceptualizations about love (that is, from his theory of intelligence, described in Chapter 7) — Robert Sternberg's *triangular theory*.

triangular theory of love Robert

Sternberg's categorization of love relationships into three facets: passion, intimacy, and commitment. When arranged at the points of a triangle, their combinations describe all the different kinds of adult love relationships.

consummate love In Robert Sternberg's triangular theory of love, the ideal form of love, in which a couple's relationship involves all three of the major facets of love: passion, intimacy, and commitment.

Figure 11.2: Sternberg's triangle: The different types of love The three facets of love form the points of this triangle. The relationships along the triangle's sides reflect combinations of the facets. At the center is the ideal relationship: consummate love.

The Triangular Theory Perspective on Happiness

According to Sternberg's (1986, 1988, 2004) **triangular theory of love**, we can break down adult love relationships into three components: passion (sexual arousal), intimacy (feelings of closeness), and commitment (typically marriage, but also exclusive, lifelong cohabiting relationships). When we arrange them on a triangle such as Figure 11.2, we get a portrait of the different kinds of relationships in life.

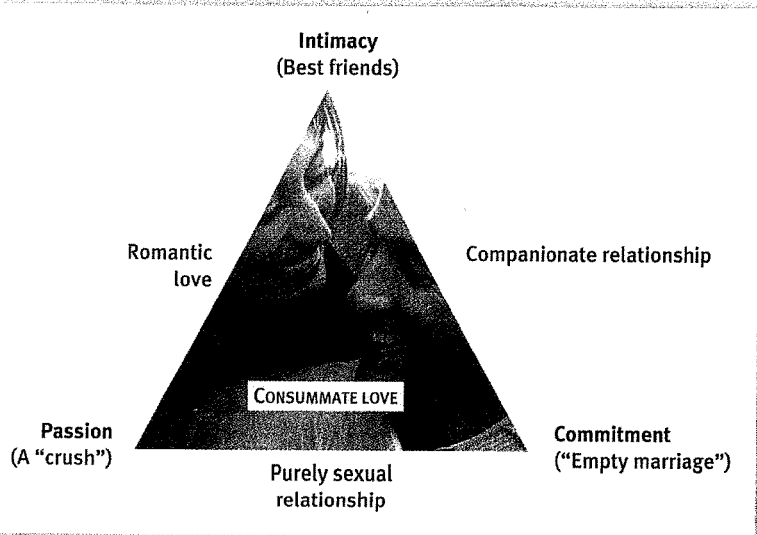
With passion alone, we have a crush — the fantasy obsession for the girl down the street or a handsome professor we don't really know. With intimacy alone, we have the caring that we feel for a best friend. *Romantic love* combines these two qualities. Walk around your campus or city and you can see this relationship. These couples are passionate and know each other well but have probably not made a commitment to form a lifelong bond.

On the marriage side of the triangle, commitment alone results in "empty marriages." In these emotionally barren, loveless marriages (luckily, fairly infrequent today), people stay together physically but live separate lives. Intimacy plus commitment produces *companionate marriages*, the best-friend relationships that long-married couples have after passion fades. At the bottom of the diagram, a few married couples stay together because they share *sexual passion* and nothing else. The ideal in our culture is **consummate love** — a relationship that combines passion, intimacy, and commitment.

Why is consummate love fragile? One reason is that, with familiarity, passion dwindles. It's hard to keep lusting after your mate when you wake up together day after day for years (Klusmann, 2002).

As couples enter into the working-model phase of their marriage and move out into the world, intimacy can also wane. You and your partner don't talk the way you used to. Work or the children are more absorbing. You may become "ships passing in the night."

Sternberg's theory beautifully alerts us to why marriages normally get less happy. But it does not offer clues as to how we can beat the odds and stay romantically connected for life. Actually, a fraction of couples (roughly 1 in 10



people) *do* stay passionate for decades (Acevedo & Aron, 2009). What are these relationship role models doing right? For answers, researchers decided to decode the experience of falling in love.

They discovered that when we fall in love, efficacy feelings are intense. We feel competent, creative, capable of doing wonderful things (Aron and others, 2002). Given that romantic love causes a joyous feeling of self-expansion, couldn't we teach people to preserve passion and intimacy by encouraging couples to share stimulating activities that expand the self?

To test this idea, psychologists asked married volunteers to list their most exciting activities — the passions that gave them a sense of flow (see Chapter 10). Then they instructed one group of husbands and wives to engage in the activities *both* partners had picked out (for example, mountain climbing or playing music) frequently over 10 weeks. As predicted, marital happiness rose among these couples compared to control groups who were told to engage in pleasant but not especially interesting activities (such as going out to dinner) or just to follow their normal routine (Reissman, Aron, & Bergen, 1993).

So, to stay passionate for decades, people may not need to take trips to Tahiti. The secret is to *continue* to engage in the flow-inducing activities that brought couples together in the first place. If you connected through your commitment to church, take mission trips with your mate. If you met through your passion for hiking, sharpen those skills with your spouse. The problem is that, during the working-model phase of a relationship, arousing activities that expand the self tend to migrate outside of married life. When work does become more compelling (or flow-inducing), people find their partner dull. Worse yet, they may fall in love with someone who is on the scene to promote their most efficacious, attractive self: "I feel so creative and energized at my job. Hey, wait a second! It's my co-worker, not my spouse, who brings out my best self!" Keeping "growth experiences" within a marriage helps keep marital (and sexual) passion alive.



This couple is doing more than sharing a wonderful experience — they are "working" on their relationship. Engaging in mutually exciting activities helps keep marital passion strong.

Commitment, Sacrifice, and Compassion: Core Attitudes in Relationship Success

Still, sharing exciting activities may not be sufficient to keep couples glued to each other during the storms of daily life. People must be committed to a mate.

Researchers are passionate to identify the glue called *commitment*, inner attitudes that keep couples cemented together over years. Committed couples, as you read in the chapter-opening vignette, are literally wedded to staying married. Their value system won't allow them to consider divorce (Epstein, Pandit, & Thakar, 2013). As one long-married African American man explained:

I was committed to proving them [others' predictions] wrong . . . somewhere along in trying . . . to prove everyone wrong, I fell in love. I probably should have fallen in love before I said "I do" . . . but I wasn't you know . . . — it's amazing!

(quoted in Hurt, 2013, p. 870)

But if you assume commitment means joylessly slogging through a relationship, you are wrong. Commitment involves immensely positive emotions, too.

Committed spouses are dedicated to a partner's "inner growth" (Finkel, Simpson, & Eastwick, 2017). So a person who prefers urban life may choose to move to a small town to further a partner's career. As in the chapter vignette, a husband may work 70-hour weeks so that his wife can spend more time with the kids. These decisions demand sacrifice, giving up one's desires to further the other person's joy.



Andersen Ross Photography, Inc./Getty Images

Imagine how this father-to-be feels when he pampers his wife and you will understand why the thrill of “sacrificing” for a loved one helps relationships lovingly survive.

When people sacrifice for their loved one, they are also benefiting themselves. Drawing on our natural high from performing costly prosocial acts (discussed in Chapter 4), there is no greater joy than performing personally difficult acts for the people we love (Kogan and others, 2010).

Intrinsic to sacrifice is compassion, being devoted to the other person’s well-being. In one study, older couples who checked items such as “I spend a lot of time concerned about my partner” were particularly likely to have happy married lives (Sabey, Rauer, & Jensen, 2014). Here, too, compassion benefited givers more than receivers. Feeling compassion for a spouse — not believing one’s partner had that feeling — cemented one’s attachment to a mate. These commitment attitudes translate into specific communication styles.

Couple Communications and Happiness

Watch happy couples, whether they are age 80 or 18, and you will be struck by the way they relate. Like mothers and babies enjoying the dance of attachment, loving couples share joyous experiences. They are playful, affectionate. They use humor to signal, “I love you,” even when they disagree (Gottman & Gottman, 2017). During disagreements, women in happy relationships regulate their emotions. They dampen down angry feelings rather than letting the situation get out of hand (Bloch, Haase, & Levenson, 2014).

But have you ever spent an evening with married friends and had the uneasy feeling, “This relationship isn’t working

out”? By listening to couples talk, psychologists John and Julie Gottman (2017) can tell, with uncanny accuracy, whether a marriage is becoming unglued. Here are four communication styles that distinguish thriving relationships from those with serious problems:

- **Happy couples engage in a high ratio of positive to negative comments.** People can fight a good deal and still have happy marriages. The key is to have caring comments *strongly* outweigh critical ones. In recording couples discussing problems in their “love lab,” the Gottmans discovered that when the ratio of positive to negative interactions dips well below 5 to 1, the risk of getting divorced escalates.
- **Happy couples don’t get personal when they disagree.** When happy couples fight, they confine themselves to the problem: “I get upset when I come home and the house is messy. What can we do?” Unhappy couples personalize their conflicts: They use put-downs and sarcasm. They look disgusted. They roll their eyes. Expressions of contempt for a partner are poisonous to married life.
- **Happy couples are sensitive to a partner’s need for “space.”** Another classic way of interacting that signals a relationship is in trouble occurs when one person provides too much “support.” A husband gives his wife excessive advice about her clothes or raising the children; a wife intrusively micromanages her partner’s life. You would not be surprised to learn that these actions don’t qualify as compassion, even when a person says, “I’m doing this for your well-being.” People who sensitively perform the dance of attachment — whether mothers with infants, or loving couples — know when to be close *and* when to back off (Brock & Lawrence, 2014).

- **Happy couples listen nondefensively to complaints.** Relating lovingly also means trying not to take criticisms personally, being able to step back and listen to a mate's point of view. In one fascinating intervention study, just being instructed to spend 20 minutes thinking about how to compromise during disagreements predicted marital happiness two years down the road! (See Finkel, Simpson, & Eastwick, 2017.)

Feeling listened-to has long-term benefits. In one longitudinal study, when spouses reported that their partner “understands the way I feel about things,” they felt more competent 10 years later (Selcuk and others, 2016). As Bowlby would predict, responsive attachment figures — people who lovingly relate in *mind-minded* ways (see Chapters 4 and 5) — promote development at any age!

STAYING TOGETHER HAPPILY FOR LIFE

How can you draw on *all* of these insights to have an enduring, happy relationship? Understand the natural time course of love. Be fully committed to your partner. Act on that feeling by being devoted to the person's development and taking joy in sacrificing for your mate. Preserve intimacy and passion by sharing arousing, exciting activities. Be very, very positive after you get negative. Avoid getting personal when you fight. Be sensitive to your partner's need for space. Rather than lashing out during disagreements, take time to listen to your spouse!

Table 11.2 offers a checklist based on these points to evaluate your current relationship or to keep on hand for the love relationships you will have as you travel through life.

Table 11.2: Evaluating Your Close Relationship: A Checklist

Answer these questions as honestly as you can. The more “yes” boxes you check, the stronger your relationship is likely to be.

	Yes	No
1. Do you have realistic expectations about your relationship—realizing that passion and intimacy don't magically last forever?	☐	☐
2. Do you both engage in activities that your partner feels as passionate about as you do?	☐	☐
3. Does sacrificing your own needs to make your partner happy give you pleasure, and are you devoted to your mate's emotional growth?	☐	☐
4. Are you affectionate and positive with your partner?	☐	☐
5. Do you solve differences of opinion in a constructive way—and not get personal when you fight?	☐	☐
6. Do you give your partner space to make their own decisions and choices?	☐	☐
7. Do you listen to your lover's complaints without getting defensive?	☐	☐

Before leaving this topic, I must stress that there is an interesting (but not totally unexpected!) gender difference in the emotional effect of giving support. In a laboratory study, older couples were told to each discuss a health concern. In one condition, the wife was instructed to comfort the husband; in another, the husband comforted the wife. When wives comforted husbands, the man's blood pressure and heart rate declined. But when the comforter roles were reversed, *wives*

got more distressed (Monin and others, 2019). Do women feel uneasy when they are asked to give up the classic female emotional comforter role? What power do gender stereotypes *generally* play in family life? Let's return to this tantalizing question after exploring what happens when marriages break apart.

Final Notes: Divorce (and Remarriage)

When people consider leaving a marriage, they weigh the costs against the benefits (Allen & Hawkins, 2017). You and your partner are not getting along, but perhaps you should hang on. One deterrent is financial: "Can I afford to lose my mate's wages and health insurance if we divorce?" (Sohn, 2015). But if the couple has children, money issues are trumped by a more critical concern: "How will divorce affect my parenting?" "Will this damage my daughter or son?" (See Chapter 7.) At this stage, people may feel that they are on an emotional seesaw: "Every time I felt like the scales balanced in one direction (either for divorce or reconciliation), something would happen and the scales would tip. . . . It's been a . . . battle to keep the scales balanced" (quoted in Doherty & Harris, 2017, p. 111).

Once a couple separates, they experience an overload of changes: the need to move or perhaps find a better-paying job (Amato, 2010). Housework burdens rise, particularly for men (Hewitt, Haynes, & Baxter, 2013). There are the legal hassles, anxieties about the children, and telling loved ones ("How will my friends and family feel?").

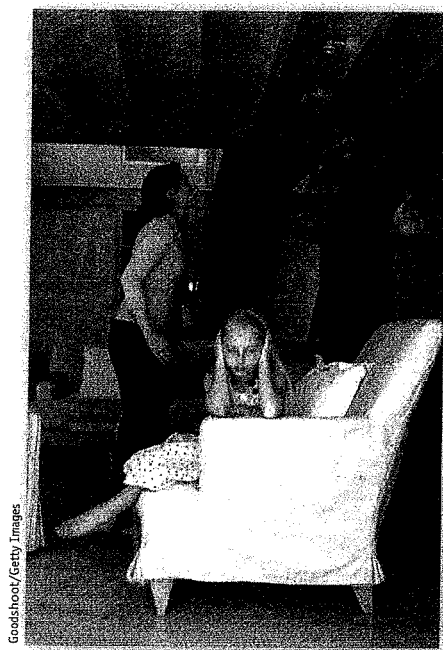
Still, divorce can produce emotional growth and enhanced efficacy feelings as people learn they can make it on their own (Fahs, 2007; Hetherington & Kelly, 2002). And, of course, ending an unhappy marriage can come as a welcome relief. Perhaps aided by a burst of testosterone, some women rediscover their sexuality (Montemurro, 2014). Listen to a 58-year-old woman who divorced her spouse after years of an unfulfilling sexual relationship: "I've been like reborn almost . . . in the sexual realm. . . . It's like a renewal" (quoted on p. 83).

Who feels relieved or sexually energized after divorce? Insights come from considering why people separate. In one U.S. study tracking married couples, researchers categorized divorced couples into two groups: (1) spouses who reported being miserable in their marriage, and (2) couples who divorced, even though they had previously judged their marital happiness as "fairly good" (Amato, 2010; Amato & Hohmann-Marriott, 2007).

People in very unhappy marriages did feel much happier after divorcing. But relatively satisfied couples who later divorced, perhaps thinking, "I just don't find our relationship fulfilling," reported declines in well-being! Given this finding, family expert Paul Amato (2007, 2010) suggests that perhaps our fantasy of finding a life soul mate (or the sense that something is missing if we don't *automatically* have intimacy and passion for life) lures people into leaving a marriage when they might be better off remaining with their spouse. And what happens to children when couples make this choice? If your house is a battleground, as I described in Chapter 7, it's better for the children if you divorce. But imagine being shocked to learn that your parents are separating when you always believed their marriage was perfectly fine. Then think of having to adjust to a new family when your mom or dad remarries.

This brings up that common sequel to divorce: remarriage. Are people, like Declan and Jamila in the opening vignette, correct that they will do better the second or third time around?

Remarried couples often *report* that the answer is yes. But studies tracking divorced couples years into their new marriages offer a more clear-eyed, objective look (Johnson & Neyer, 2019). Yes, as people first remarry, there is tremendous joy.



Goodshot/Getty Images

The fact that their marriage is so conflict-ridden suggests that this couple may feel much better after they divorce—but simply splitting up because you find your relationship "somewhat unfulfilling" predicts feeling more depressed after a marriage breaks up.

("I've found the partner of my dreams, after that terrible mistake!"). But when they leave the honeymoon phase, sadly, the same sense of disenchantment can naturally set in.

Worse yet, if the new partners have children, second marriages involve complications that go beyond just relating to a husband or wife (Mirecki and others, 2013).

Stepchildren are a loose cannon in marriage because they naturally feel resentful of a stepparent for "replacing" their real mom or dad. Therefore, it makes sense that some people are wary about marrying potential partners who have children, as stepchildren issues are one reason these relationships fail (DeLongis & Zwicker, 2017).

Still, there can be tremendous emotional benefits for people who embrace their new family (Jensen, Shafer, & Larson, 2014). Stepfathers are likely to be seen as "real fathers" the longer they live with children — provided they are caring and sensitive dads.

Most important, these new sons and daughters provide incredible joy. As one woman reported: "I don't look at her as a stepdaughter because that implies they are not . . . your child . . . She's my only child and I just accept the fact that she has another mother as well" (quoted in Whiting and others, 2007, p. 102). And a stepfather put it more bluntly: "I don't introduce her as my stepdaughter because I didn't step on her. I introduce her, 'This is my daughter.' . . . I'd go crazy if something happened to her" (quoted in Marsiglio, 2004, p. 32).

Now, let's explore these feelings by turning to parenthood, that second important adult role.

Tying It All Together

- Wei is describing marriage around the world today. Which *two* statements can he make?
 - In Saudi Arabia, divorced women can still be socially shunned.
 - In the United States, we no longer believe in marriage.
 - In India, emerging adults, as long as they have their family's approval, are now free to choose a mate.
- U.S. couples who never get married are more likely to be at the lower end of the economic scale (*true/false*).
- Three couples are celebrating their twenty-fifth wedding anniversaries. Which relationship has followed the "classic" marital pathway?
 - After being extremely happy with each other during the first three years, Ted and Elena now find that their marriage has gone steadily downhill.
 - Stavros and Destiny's marriage has had many unpredictable ups and downs over the years.
 - Larten and Bec's marital satisfaction declined, especially during the first four years, but has improved now that their children have left home.
- Describe the triangular theory to a friend and give an example of (a) romantic love, (b) consummate love, and (c) a companionate marriage. Can you think of couples who fit each category? At what stage of life are couples most likely to have companionate marriages?
- Gina says, "I am trying to do exciting things with my spouse." Yahya says, "I'm passionate about focusing on my wife's well-being." Explain in a sentence why each strategy promotes marital happiness.
- Your close friend is marrying the person of her dreams after her divorce. In a sentence, explain what you might be thinking (but don't tell your friend!).

Answers to the Tying It All Together questions can be found at the end of this chapter.

Learning Outcomes

- Survey the transition to parenthood and its variations.
- Evaluate motherhood and fatherhood.

Parenthood

I have never felt the joy that my daughter brings me when I wake up and see her . . . when you are laying there and . . . and feel this little hand tapping on your hand . . . that has been the most joyful thing I ever have experienced. . . . I've never been able to get that type of joy anywhere else.

(quoted in Palkovitz, 2002, p. 96)



Rachel Epstein/Photo Edit, Inc.

In the past, LGBTQ+ couples could never have hoped to be parents. Today, they proudly can fulfill their life dream.

Setting the Context: More Parenting Possibilities, Fewer Children

Poll parents and you will hear similar comments: “The love and joy you have with children is impossible to describe.” The great benefit of the 1960s lifestyle revolution is that more people than ever can participate in this life-changing experience, from stepparents to LGBTQ+ couples to never-married adults.

At the same time, people also have the freedom *not* to be parents — and more adults are making that choice. One sign of the times is a continuing decline in **fertility rates**, or the average number of births per woman, in nations worldwide (Perelli-Harris & Hilton, 2020; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020).

Are people who decide not to have any children unfulfilled and narcissistic? (See Ashburn-Nardo, 2017.) The answer is no! Childless adults — especially if they have freely chosen this path — are just as happy as parents (Nelson, Kushlev, & Lyubomirsky, 2014). Moreover, the stereotype that having children makes a relationship stronger (or that having a child saves an unhappy relationship) is equally false. How *exactly* does having a baby change people's lives?

The Transition to Parenthood

To see how becoming parents can affect a marriage, researchers conduct longitudinal studies, selecting couples when the wife is pregnant, then tracking families for a few years after the baby's birth. Understanding that parenthood arrives via many routes, social scientists have explored how having a child affects the bond between gay partners (Goldberg, Smith, & Kashy, 2010), cohabiting couples (McClain & Brown, 2017), and even parents of preterm infants (Porat-Zyman, Taubman-Ben-Ari, & Spielman, 2017). Here are the conclusions of these studies exploring the *transition to parenthood*:

- **Parenthood makes couples less intimate and happy.** Look back to the infancy chapters — especially the discussion of infant sleep in Chapter 3 — and you will immediately see why a baby's birth is apt to change passion and intimacy for the worse. In fact, look at any couple struggling with an infant at a local restaurant and you will understand why researchers find that feelings about one's partner shift from lover to “fellow worker” after the baby arrives (Belsky, Lang, & Rovine, 1985).
- **If the couple is heterosexual, parenthood often produces more traditional (and potentially conflict-ridden) marital roles.** Among heterosexual partners, having children accentuates traditional gender roles (Ralph, 2016). Even when the man and woman have been sharing the household tasks fairly equally, wives often take over most of the housework and child care after the baby arrives. Often this occurs because, as you will see later in this chapter, after having children, a woman may leave her job or reduce her hours at work. However, even when both spouses work full time, mothers tend to do far more diaper changing and household chores than dads do (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). This change can provoke conflicts centered on **marital equity**, or feelings of unfairness: Women get angry with men for not doing their share around the house (Dew & Wilcox, 2011).

fertility rate The average number of children a woman in a given country has during her lifetime.

marital equity Fairness in the “work” of a couple's life together. If a relationship lacks equity, with one partner doing more than the other, the outcome is typically marital dissatisfaction.

Developmental Psychology Videos

Interview with Jay Belsky

In this video, you will explore how a parent's upbringing influences their later approach to parenting with psychologist Jay Belsky. Achieve

What compounds the sense of over-sacrificing are clashes centered on differing parenting styles (discussed in Chapter 7). One unhappy wife described this kind of disagreement when she informed her husband: “What’s really getting to me . . . is that we hardly ever agree on how to handle [the baby]. I think you are too rough, and you think I’m spoiling her, and none of us wants to change” (quoted in Cowan & Cowan, 1992, p. 112).

These examples show exactly why we can’t expect that having a child will draw people closer together, whether the partners are gay, transgender, nonbinary, or heterosexual. (Here the relevant saying may be, “Three is a crowd.”) However, after becoming parents, a classic study revealed that about 1 in 3 married couples did report more love for a husband or wife (Belsky & Rovine, 1990). As one woman beautifully explained: “We feel more what the other is feeling . . . we understand each other more . . . It [the baby] is the icing on the cake of a relationship” (quoted in Klobucar, 2016, p. 1350).

Which couples are most likely to see a baby as the icing on their shared cake? As you might imagine, clues come from scanning the pre-baby attachment dance. Was the couple able to relate well before the child arrived (Alves and others, 2019; Gallegos, Jacobvitz, & Hazan, 2020; Sheedy & Gambrel, 2019)? Having the *mind-minded* skills to consider a partner’s perspective is crucial. As one new father put it, “(I) just sort of reason through (the conflict) . . . and try to see where (Barbara) is coming from” (Sheedy & Gambrel, 2019, p. 73).

For this reason, it may be optimal if wives bend and take on the lion’s share of the housework and child care when a husband is firmly wedded to the provider role (Turner-Zwinkels & Spini, 2020; more about this later). But, above all, a man’s behavior with the baby looms large. If women think their partners are terrific fathers, relationships are apt to thrive (McClain & Brown, 2017; Pedersen, 2017). What is parenthood *really* like from the point of view of mothers and fathers?



JGZ/Daniel Grill/Blend Images/Media Bakery

Will this young couple’s relationship seriously deteriorate after having the baby? Will it improve? To answer these questions, we need to look at what their marriage was like before having a child, their ability to compromise, and this father’s hands-on parenting skills.

Exploring Motherhood

I’ve already talked about the love that mothers feel for their children, especially in the infancy section of this book. Drawing on the earlier chapter discussion, children are our prime vehicles for expressing compassion. They embody the joy we get from sacrificing for a beloved person’s well-being.

Still, the downside of this 24/7 commitment — lack of sleep, financial strains, spending hours in far-less-than-fun activities, such as coping with child meltdowns and a messy house — can tip the balance from pleasure to pain. In surveys, mothers rank child care on an emotional par with housekeeping, and it’s much less enjoyable than shopping and watching TV. Studies routinely show mothers are no happier (and sometimes far less happy) on a daily basis than their counterparts without children or people in the empty nest (Chen, Enright, & Tun, 2016; Nelson, Kushlev, & Lyubomirsky, 2014). What exactly produces these dips in well-being? For answers, let’s turn to a decades-old interview study exploring the motherhood experience in the flesh.

The Inner Motherhood Experience

This national survey suggested that motherhood is tailor-made to destroy cherished fantasies people have about how they expected to behave (Genevieve & Margolies, 1987). One in two mothers in this poll admitted that they had trouble controlling their temper. Disobedience, disrespect, and even typical behaviors such as a child’s whining might provoke reactions bordering on rage. When confronted with real-life

children, these mothers found that their dream of being calm, empathetic, and always in control came tumbling down (Genevie & Margolies, 1987).

Given the bidirectional quality of the parent-child bond, it should come as no surprise that a main force that affected how closely a woman fit her motherhood image lay in her attachment with a given child. Children who were temperamentally difficult provoked more irritation and lowered a mother's self-esteem. An easy child evoked loving feelings and made that mother feel competent in her role. As one woman wrote:

Lee Ann has been my godsend. My other two have given me so many problems and are rude and disrespectful. Not Lee Ann. . . . I disciplined her in the same way . . . except that she seemed to require less of it. Usually she just seemed to do the right thing. She is . . . my chance for supreme success after two devastating failures.

(quoted in Genevie & Margolies, 1987, pp. 220–221)

These emotions destroy another motherhood ideal: Mothers love all their children equally. Many women in this study did admit they had favorites. Typically, a favorite child was “easy” and successful in the wider world. However, most important (again) was the attachment relationship, the feeling of being totally loved by a particular child. As one woman reported:

There will always be a special closeness with Darrell. He likes to test my word. . . . There are times he makes me feel like pulling my hair out. . . . But when he comes to “talk” to mom, that’s an important feeling to me.

(quoted in Genevie & Margolies, 1987, p. 248)

Not only does the experience of motherhood vary dramatically from child to child, it shifts from minute to minute and day to day:

Good days are getting hugs and kisses and hearing “I love you.” The bad days are hearing “you are not my friend.” Good days are not knowing the color of the refrigerator because of the paintings and drawings all over it. Bad days are seeing a new drawing on a just painted wall.

(quoted in Genevie & Margolies, 1987, p. 412)

In sum, motherhood is *both* wonderful and terrible. It evokes the most uplifting emotions and offers painful insights into oneself. Now that we understand what makes motherhood challenging, let’s explore how the wider world can amplify mothers’ distress.

Expectations and Motherhood Stress

Society provides women with an airbrushed view of motherhood—from the movie stars who wax enthusiastic about the joys of having babies (“much better than that terrible old career”) to the family members who gush at bleary-eyed, sleep-deprived new mothers: “How wonderful you must feel!” By portraying motherhood as total bliss, are we doing women a disservice when they realize that their own experience does not live up to this glorified image? (See Douglas & Michaels, 2004.)

What compounds the problem are unrealistic performance pressures. Good children, as you saw in the above quotes, make a mother feel competent. “Difficult” children can make a woman feel like a failure. Despite all we know about the crucial role of genetics, peers, and the wider society in affecting development, mothers still bear the primary responsibility for the way their children turn out (Coontz, 1992; Crittenden, 2001; Douglas & Michaels, 2004).



The blissful image of a mother and baby is nothing like contending with the reality of continual sleep deprivation and a screaming newborn—explaining why idealized media images can make the first months of motherhood come as a total shock.

Single mothers face the most intense pressures as they struggle with financial hurdles, working full time, plus trying to fulfill the “blissful” mother, nurturer ideal. But *every* woman is subject to the intense pressures of contemporary motherhood: be patient; cram in reading; provide enriching lessons; produce a perfect child. To what degree is the so-called epidemic of micromanaging mothers a by-product of these intense demands, which compel women to go overboard in their hovering to prove that they are not slacking off in the motherhood role?

I’m sure you’ve heard that today’s moms are not giving children the same attention as in “the good old days.” Figure 11.3 proves this “obvious” assumption is wrong. Notice that many twenty-first-century Western mothers are spending at least twice as much time in hands-on child care as their counterparts did 50 years ago!

Where are fathers in his picture? Earlier, when I talked about equity issues during the transition to parenthood, I might have given the impression that many contemporary dads are slacking off. Not so! In every Western nation, fathers are also spending far more time in child care than their twentieth-century grandfathers and fathers did (“Parents now spend twice as much time with their children,” 2017).

Exploring Fatherhood

When women first entered the workforce in large numbers in the 1970s, it became a badge of honor for fathers, in addition to fulfilling the traditional **breadwinner role**, to change the diapers and to be deeply involved in caring for their children. The **nurturer father** became one masculine ideal. In addition, we expect fathers to be good gender-role models and moral teachers. They must be disciplinarians, people responsible for laying down the family rules — as in the old saying: “Wait until your father gets home!” (See Valiquette-Tessier and others, 2019.)

These contradictory guidelines leave fathers with confusing demands. “Should I be strict or nurturing, sensitive or strong? Should I work full time to feed my family or reduce my hours at work and stay home to feed my child?” (Björk, 2013; McGill, 2014; Mooney and others, 2013). Given that there may be no “right” way to be a father, how do men carry out their role?

How Fathers Act

As you would expect from the principle that they should be good gender-role models, fathers, on average, spend more time with their sons than with their daughters (Bronstein, 1988). They play with their children in classically “male,” rough-and-tumble ways. Fathers run, wrestle, and chase. They dangle infants upside down (Belsky & Volling, 1987). This high-energy daddy style stimulates baby’s intellectual growth, as I mentioned in Chapter 4 (St George, Wroe, & Cashin, 2018). Although children (and their dads) adore this whirl-the-baby-around-by-the-feet play (in our house, we called it “going to Six Flags”), it can give mothers palpitations as they wonder, “Help! Is my baby going to be hurt?”

How much hands-on nurturing do today’s fathers perform? Diary studies show that although, in Western countries, a genuine father-as-caregiver revolution occurred about 30 years ago, statistically speaking, contemporary child care remains primarily

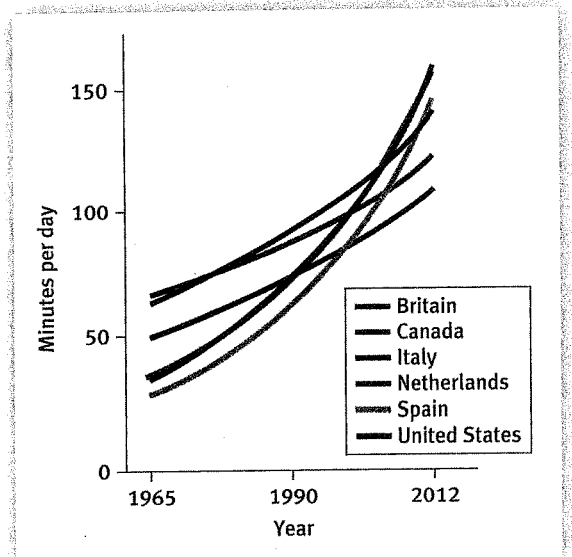
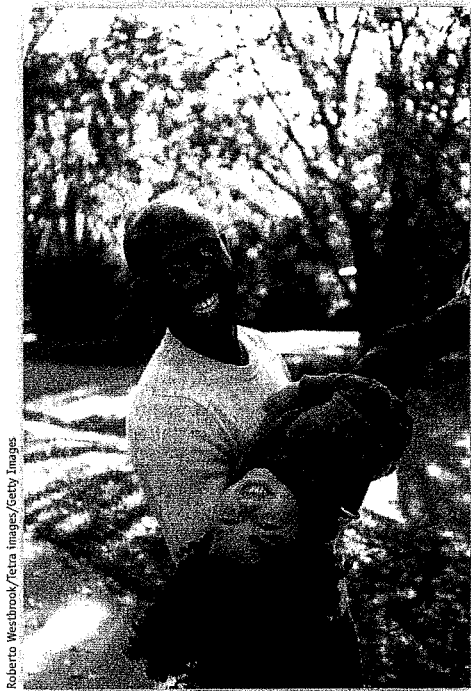


Figure 11.3: Minutes per day devoted to child care by mothers in select Western nations, from 1965 to 2012 In sharp contrast to our assumptions, mothers in many affluent Western nations are typically spending more than twice as much time with their children today as during the mid-twentieth-century “stay-at-home-mom” years.

Information from “Parents now spend twice as much time with their children,” 2017

breadwinner role Traditional concept that a man’s job is to support a wife and children.

nurturer father Husband who actively participates in hands-on child care.



Think back to the thrilled expressions on the faces of the boys engaged in rough-and-tumble play in Chapter 5 and you can understand why this male “upside down” play style is a compelling bonding experience benefiting both fathers and their sons.



Contemporary fathers differ in how willing they are to change diapers. To explain this young man’s behavior, we would predict that he is able to regulate his emotions, had an involved dad, and feels competent as a caregiver!

a female job. Before the COVID-19 crisis, a survey of 37 countries showed that women still did roughly three-quarters of the hands-on parenting (Samman and others, 2016). And, after the pandemic hit, women ages 25 to 44 were almost three times as likely as men to give up their jobs due to childcare demands (Heggeness & Fields, 2020)!

Moreover, even when both spouses work full time, women typically take bottom-line responsibility for the children — making that dentist appointment, arranging for a babysitter, planning the meals, and being on call when a child is sick. Having bottom-line responsibility may not translate into many hours spent physically with a daughter or son, but the weight and worry make this aspect of parenting a 24/7 job. Therefore, when we look at who is *ultimately* in charge, the gender dimension of being a parent is clear (Lamb, 1997).

In sum, although today’s fathers are doing far more hands-on child care than in the past, their involvement still is skewed toward play activities, particularly of the rough-and-tumble, “Six Flags” kind. Mothers typically take primary responsibility for children’s day-to-day care. So it is no wonder that — on a minute-to-minute basis — dads feel far happier during child-care “episodes” than moms (McDonnell, Luke, & Short, 2019).

Variations in Fathers’ Involvement

If you look at the fathers you know, however, you will be struck by the variations in this profile. There are divorced men who never see their children, and traditional “I never touch a diaper” dads; there are househusbands who assume primary caregiving responsibilities, and single dads who have full custody of the kids. What statistical forces predict how involved a given father is likely to be?

A good deal depends on a man’s attitudes. In one Israeli comparison of divorced fathers, men who could regulate their emotions and felt they got more care from their own fathers were most apt to take an active caregiving role (Finzi-Dottan & Cohen, 2017). It’s important to feel efficacious at child care (“I’m a world-class diaper changer!”) (Trahan, 2017) and to be thrilled about the pregnancy (Lindberg, Kost, & Maddow-Zimet, 2017). Fathers are more interested in being hands-on nurturers (no surprise) when they feel competent at nurturing and really wanted that child.

Who takes the ultimate hands-on nurturer step and chooses to be a stay-at-home father with a working spouse? As the following quotations from a study that polled wives in this situation suggest, personality preferences loom large (Rushing & Sparks, 2017):

He was more suited to being at home . . . like . . . he would manage . . . better than I would.

(quoted on p. 1265)

Practical concerns weigh heavily:

The salary discrepancy was enormous. . . . I earn . . . 20 times what he was earning.

(quoted on p. 1264)

My husband worked crazy long hours . . . and we . . . made this choice. . . . So we are pretty thrilled.

(quoted on p. 1265)

As I will describe in the next section on work, it can take courage to reject entrenched gender norms because the “male-should-be-breadwinner” model still endures (see Valiquette-Tessier & others, 2019). How much are things *really* changing in the real world of careers? First, let’s sum up this section’s messages in Table 11.3, and then explore this question as we turn to the third vital adult role: work.

Table 11.3: Advice for Parents: A Checklist**Coping with the Transition to Parenthood**

- Don't expect your romantic feelings about each other to stay the same—they won't.
- Try to agree on who is going to do what around the house, but understand that you may fall into more traditional roles.
- Work on your communication skills before the baby arrives, and be open to compromise and listening empathically when you disagree.

For Mothers

- Understand that you won't and can't be the perfect mother—in fact, sometimes you will be utterly terrible—and accept yourself for being human!
- Don't buy into the fantasy of producing a perfect child. Children cannot be micromanaged into being perfect. Focus on enjoying and loving the unique person you have (see also Chapter 7).
- Don't listen to people who say that working full time automatically means that you can't be an involved mother. Remember the findings discussed in this section.

For Fathers

- Understand that your role is full of contradictions—and that there is no “perfect” way to be a dad.
- Be aware of your attitudes toward hands-on child care. If working is all-important in your life, communicate these feelings to your spouse.
- On the other hand, be a sensitive, loving dad! A strong research message is that if your partner feels you are a great father, your relationship is most likely to thrive.

Ⓐ Tying It All Together

1. Dulce and Kamel, a married couple, are expecting their first child. According to the research, how might their marital satisfaction change after having the baby? What forces will predict coping well with this change?
2. Akisha, a new mother, is feeling stressed and unhappy. She and other mothers might cope better if they had (select *two* statements):
 - a. a less rosy, more accurate picture about motherhood from the media.
 - b. more experts giving them parenting advice.
 - c. less pressure placed on them from the outside world to “be perfect.”
3. Your grandmother is complaining that children today don't get the same attention from their parents that they did in the “good old days.” How should you respond, based on this chapter? Be specific with regard to both mothers and fathers.
4. Construct a questionnaire to predict how heavily involved in child care a particular man is likely to be, and give it to some fathers you know.

Answers to the Tying It All Together questions can be found at the end of this chapter.

Work

What is work like in the Western world, and how can you construct a fulfilling career life?

Setting the Context: The Changing Landscape of Work

Let's begin our discussion by spelling out three dramatic changes in the developed-world career landscape. (I'll be discussing that other twentieth-century sea change, women in the work force, late in the section.)

Learning Outcomes

- List four major changes in the modern work world.
- Discuss which qualities make for career happiness.
- Evaluate how work differs for women and for men.

traditional stable career A career path in which people settle into their permanent life's work in their twenties and often stay with the same organization until they retire.

boundaryless career Today's most common career path for Western workers, in which people change jobs or professions periodically during their working lives.

More Career (and Job) Changes

During much of the twentieth century, work had a structured path. Right after high school or college, men found a job and often stayed in that same organization until they retired (Super, 1957). This **traditional stable career** is now atypical. People move from job to job, or change direction, starting new careers as they travel through life. Today, adults experience a shifting work pattern called **boundaryless careers** (Flecker, Fibich, & Kraemer, 2017; Korunka & Kubicek, 2017). This less defined career pathway is mirrored by less defined hours at work.

A Disappeared Barrier Between Work and Family

Work used to be separate from home life. You went to your job from 9 to 5 on Monday through Friday and spent weekends and evenings with your children and spouse. Today, the online revolution has moved work out of the office to permeate family life (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017).

This transformation in the work world — which accelerated due to the COVID-19 pandemic — offers unparalleled flexibility. People can Zoom with colleagues who live halfway around the world and work on their own schedule at home. Because it eliminates those exhausting commutes, working from home may offer workers extra time to spend in flow-inducing leisure activities, from watching movies on Netflix, to exercising, to reading, or simply talking to a spouse (Clark and others, 2020). This melding of work and home time, however, can be a double-edged sword. Yes, not having to go to an office allows you to take the kids to the dentist or pick them up from school — but you are potentially on call 24 hours a day.

Therefore, sadly, technology can translate into working longer hours. Plus, the digital revolution has accelerated the *pace* at which we must perform (Korunka & Kubicek, 2017; Paškvan & Kubicek, 2017). So, as the morning progresses, emails and texts multiply. You need to respond to each communication ASAP. Ironically, you feel more enslaved by the very devices that liberated you to work at home (Fleming, 2017)!



Working at home is definitely a double-edged sword. Not only are you tempted to Zoom with colleagues when you should be paying attention to your child, but you may be working far longer hours.

The Rise of Independent Contract, "Gig" Work

The same good-news-can-turn-into-bad-news issue applies to that other twenty-first-century job transformation: People always worked for a specific employer. Now, workers increasingly function as free agents, selling their skills to different companies for a limited time. The iconic example is Uber. But from Web designers to editors to per-diem nurses; from adjunct instructors at your university to textbook writers such as me, this new "gig" economy is metastasizing at a rapid pace. As Figure 11.4 shows, during the second decade of the twenty-first century, the fraction of U.S. jobholders who perform "alternative work" rose from 1 in 10 to almost 1 in 6 (Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017)!

Advocates tout the freedom of being your own boss. What could be better than choosing exactly when and where we work? Now we can explore *all* of our career passions rather than feeling forced to choose a single work identity as emerging adults: filling in as EMTs on Mondays and Wednesdays, designing logos on Friday, and starting an app-based baking business on the side.

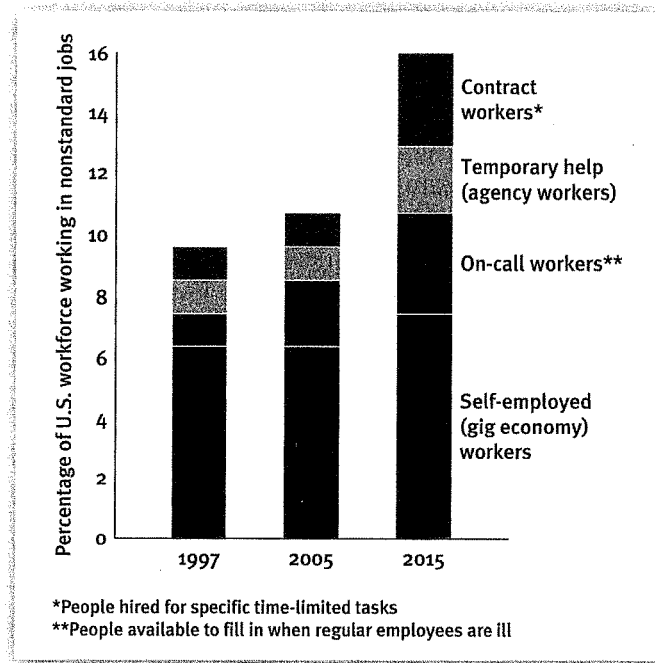


Figure 11.4: The fraction of the U.S. workforce working in nonstandard jobs in 1997, 2005, and 2015 This chart shows how dramatically temporary work has mushroomed during the twenty-first century. It also lists the fraction of U.S. jobholders who are employed in different types of “nonpermanent jobs.”

Data from Spreitzer, Cameron & Garrett, 2017, p. 474.

Unfortunately, however, the liberation is heavily skewed to the employer’s side. Companies typically don’t give contract workers health insurance or retirement benefits. They can hire and fire people at will. Actually, British statistics show that when an industry shifts to more self-employed employees, the overall income of that profession declines (Fleming, 2017).

If you, like me, regularly take Ubers (and have honest conversations with your driver), you are probably aware of these economic downsides — from having to dole out extra funds to keep your car in tip-top shape, to the hours you spend wasting in traffic or helplessly waiting in vain for rides. As one gig-working earner sadly described, “It’s just a fantastic way to always stay at the poverty level” (Schor, 2020).

Will the new gig economy greatly magnify income inequalities, producing a huge underclass of drone workers scrambling for temporary jobs (see Fleming, 2017)? Will self-directed careers deprive twenty-first-century workers of the job security that is the bedrock of career happiness (see Punzo, Castellano, & Buonocore, 2017)? What *exactly* makes for career happiness and success?

Exploring Career Happiness (and Success)

Suppose you wanted to predict which high school classmates would be successful at their careers. It’s a no-brainer that you might bet on the class valedictorian or your friend from an affluent family. But some of you may know Harvard Ph.D.s or people with billionaire parents who are failing miserably to live up to their career potential. What are these people missing in life?

Clues come from the annual University of Michigan poll exploring health behaviors and attitudes in different cohorts of teens (discussed in Chapter 9). At their first evaluation, sampling high schoolers in 1979, the researchers measured what they called “core self-evaluations”: whether a person had high self-esteem, was optimistic or depressed, and felt in control of life. Among people who graduated college, this single adolescent evaluation predicted work success by early midlife! (See Judge & Hurst, 2007.)

Why do attitudes such as optimism and self-efficacy matter so much when we are on the college or graduate track? One reason is that people who feel good

about themselves gravitate to more rewarding fields (Drago, 2011). So, given equal GPAs, your college classmates with high self-esteem will tend to “go for” a more fulfilling career.

Once at work, people who have high self-efficacy proactively shape their jobs. They search out realistic feedback from their supervisors and craft their work to best fulfill their personalities and needs (L. Li and others, 2014; W. Li and others, 2014).

Other traits that go along with work success include (again) having a “worker-oriented” temperament (Ilies and others, 2017) — to love excelling at a career. The goal is to see our job as a calling — perfectly expressing our identity, embodying our mission in life.

Are you blessed to see your work as a life calling? As I can tell you, there is no greater gratification than finding a career that you feel called to do. We might think that living a calling causes us to be committed to our work. One longitudinal study suggested the reverse. Developing this feeling grows out of time spent committed to a career (Duffy and others, 2014). So the reason I see writing textbooks as my life calling came from years spent making writing the center of my life.

People don’t need to work at jobs that society sees as “desirable” to have a calling. Minimum-wage workers, such as home health aides and day-care workers, can get tremendous generative joy from their jobs (see Chapter 4 and, in particular, Chapter 14).

Why do these people thrive? One reason is that they found careers that perfectly match their nurturing personalities!

Strategy 1: Match Career to Your Personality

According to John Holland’s (1997) classic theory, the key to work happiness is to find your best personality–career match: People who are sociable, those who crave human interaction, should not be textbook writers. If I needed to spend a lot of time outside, I would not be happy devoting days to staring at this computer screen. The closer we get to our ideal personality–career fit, Holland argues, the more satisfied and successful we can be at our jobs.

To promote this fit, Holland classifies six personality types, described in Table 11.4, and fits them to occupations. Based on their answers to items on a career inventory,

Table 11.4: Holland’s Six Personality Work Types

Realistic type: These people enjoy manipulating machinery or working with tools. They like physical activity and being outdoors. If you fit this profile, your ideal career might be in construction, farming, or car repair.

Investigative type: These people like to find things out through doing research, analyzing information, and collecting data. If you fit this pattern, you might get special satisfaction in a scientific career.

Artistic type: These people are creative and nonconforming, and they love to freely express themselves in the arts. If this is your type, a career as a decorator, dancer, musician, or writer might be ideal.

Social type: These people enjoy helping others and come alive when they are talking with other human beings. If this description fits you, a career as a bartender, practicing physician, or social worker might be right.

Entrepreneurial type: These people like to lead others, and they enjoy working on organizational goals. As this kind of person, you might find special joy as a company manager, in sales, or in starting your own business.

Conventional type: These people have a passion for manipulating data and getting things organized. If you fit this type, you would probably be happy as an accountant, copyeditor, or clerk.

people get a three-letter code, showing the three main categories that they fit, in descending order of importance. A person whose ranking is SAE (social, artistic, and entrepreneurial) might find fulfillment directing an art gallery or managing a beautiful restaurant. If your code is SIE (social, investigative, and entrepreneurial), you might be better off marketing a new medicine for heart disease, or spending your work life as a practicing vet.

Still, even when people find work that fits their personality, there is no guarantee that they will be happy at a particular job. What if your gallery director or home health-care job involves mountains of paperwork and little time exercising your creative or social skills? In order to find work happiness, it's vital to consider the unique workplace, too.

Strategy 2: Find an Optimal Workplace

What constitutes an ideal workplace? Workers agree that jobs should give us autonomy to exercise our creativity and offer a sense of control over the conditions of our work (Levenson, 2017). They want organizations that are employee friendly and bosses who are fair and sensitive to their needs (Jiang & Men, 2017). As I mentioned in Chapter 7, these same qualities — autonomy, nurturing, and relatedness — define ideal schools. In our jobs, we are looking for **intrinsic career rewards** — work that is fulfilling in itself.

Extrinsic career rewards, or external reinforcers (such as salary), can also be crucial, depending on a person's situation. For instance, one longitudinal study showed intrinsic career rewards become less vital to work satisfaction as people (particularly men) moved beyond emerging adulthood and had families — again suggesting that the breadwinner role remains a priority for twenty-first-century married men (Porfeli & Mortimer, 2010).

Moreover, while money does not make for happiness, below a certain salary, family income has a dramatic impact on well-being. So, for the millions of people struggling to make it from paycheck to paycheck, salary is a prime job concern. Unfortunately, having the luxury of viewing a job as an intrinsically gratifying, flow-inducing experience depends on having our “security needs” satisfied or knowing we can economically survive.

As I described in Chapter 10, flow states require that our skills match the demands of a given task. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that one poisonous job-related stress is “role ambiguity,” or a lack of clear work demands (Gilboa and others, 2008). If you are unsure of what an employer expects, there is no chance of feeling “in flow.”

Good bosses (like good spouses) openly share information. There are no hidden agendas, such as a boss saying you get time off for family and then, as I will describe soon, unfortunately punishing you for taking that time (Byrne & Canato, 2017; Jiang & Men, 2017). A huge problem, as I've been implying, is **role overload** — having way too much on your plate to do an effective job — or **role conflict** — being torn between competing life demands (such as family and career).

This brings up the topic of **work–life balance** (Fernandez-Crehuet, Gimenez-Nadal, & Reyes Recio, 2016; Grawitch & Ballard, 2016; Jenkins, Bhanugopan, & Lockhart, 2016). Essential to adult happiness, organizational psychologists believe, is feeling happy at work and satisfied with one's nonwork life (Sirgy & Lee, 2017). Are you energized by your career and feel you have ample time to enjoy your hobbies, children, and spouse? Ideally, a fulfilling job should *increase* the pleasure we get from family life (Babic and others, 2017; Ilies and others, 2017; Zhou & Buehler, 2016).

intrinsic career rewards Work that provides inner fulfillment, allowing people to satisfy their needs for creativity, autonomy, and relatedness.

extrinsic career rewards Work that is performed for external reinforcers, such as pay.

role overload A job situation that places so many demands on workers that it becomes impossible to do a good job.

role conflict A situation in which a person is torn between two or more major responsibilities — for instance, parent and worker — and cannot do either job well.

work–life balance A situation in which people feel a perfect balance, energized and happy at work and fulfilled with other aspects of their lives.

How do people behave when faced with the pulls of family and career? For answers, let's focus on the group that bears the brunt of this challenge: women.



Trending in Developmental Science: Exploring the *Enduring* Difficulties Women Face at Work

With women now more likely than men to graduate from college in the United States and many affluent nations, we might expect females to overtake males in their careers. Still, the well-known gender differences in pay endure. In 2020, full-time working women in the United States made only 82 cents for every dollar earned by men (National Partnership for Women & Families, 2020). Why?

Women (especially when they are married) have more erratic, less continuous “careers” than men. One reason is that men are more apt to work continuously, while women move in and out of the workforce to provide family care (Bianchi & Milkie, 2010). The first exit may occur early in adulthood. As one U.S. longitudinal survey showed, a pregnant woman is three times more likely to leave work than is her counterpart who is not planning to have a child (Shafer, 2011). Another hiatus may happen in midlife, when a female employee takes time off to care for her elderly parents when they are physically frail. (See Chapter 12 for more information.) And of course, as you saw with the COVID child-care statistics cited earlier, during any caregiving crisis, it's mothers (*not fathers*) who tend to abandon their jobs (Heggeness & Fields, 2020).

Actually, as you might expect, mothers generally feel more distressed about their jobs taking precious time from their family life. And when you believe work is hampering your hands-on caregiving mission, you are more likely to want to reduce your hours or quit. As one woman concluded: “I feel distracted by work a lot of the time, which makes me feel guilty about spending less time with my kids. I feel like I can't win by working” (quoted in Borelli and others, 2017, p. 356).

Jobs are gender defined. Another issue is the well-known reality that male-dominated professions such as computer science or the aerospace industry pay better

Imagine what it feels like to leave your screaming baby every morning and go to a job, and you will understand why working full time can be painful, in particular for new mothers.



Blend Images-Stretch Photography/Brand X Pictures/Getty Images

than traditionally female jobs, such as secretary or housekeeper. **Occupational segregation**, the fact that men and women gravitate to different kinds of jobs, ensures that gender pay gaps endure. Interestingly, however, the same salary gaps exist *within* comparable careers. So, as a U.S. female engineer, expect to earn considerably more than someone who majored in the arts; but you still will make, on average, a whopping \$14,000 a year less than the typical male in that same field (Society of Women Engineers, 2018)!

occupational segregation The separation of men and women into different kinds of jobs.

Work is still just for working (not family). Actually, one revealing survey suggests that, even if some companies pay lip service to their workers having balanced lives, employers don't look kindly on people—whether male or female—for taking “family time” (see Byrne & Canato, 2017).

As one (female) human resources director chillingly explained: “We . . . monitor absences so I can track and look for anything suspicious . . . letting employees know that we will be accommodating them . . . [but] also making sure that they are aware of their responsibilities to work and trying not to take advantage of anything” (quoted in Hari, 2017, p. 107).

In another study exploring supervisor perceptions, if a boss felt a given employee—whether male or female—was conflicted between career and family, that manager was apt to give the person poor job performance ratings, even when a given worker didn't report any family/work stress (Li, Bagger, & Cropanzano, 2017)!

So, as I mentioned in Chapter 2, women are correct to worry that telling their bosses they are pregnant may lead to being demoted or fired. And, the standard gender roles even kick in when *men* lose their jobs. When husbands are laid off, wives continue to do the lion's share of work at home (van der Lippe, Treas, & Norbutas, 2018)! ■

What happens emotionally when people lose their jobs? Let's end this chapter by exploring that, unfortunately, all too-timely topic.

Final Thoughts: Reflections on a Timely Concern—Unemployment

How exactly does being laid off affect well-being? As you might imagine, this trauma has clear negative effects on mental health. What do people miss most? In one comprehensive study, researchers found people missed the social contact their job provided. They yearned for the sense of competence they felt at work; and, of course, they missed the pay. The most critical force was a less concrete, more ineffable loss. Unemployment deprives us of feeling purpose in life (Zechmann & Paul, 2019).

What strategies help newly laid-off people recoup this sense of meaning? In the same way that successful employees actively craft their jobs (see the previous section), people feel more upbeat when they shape their new job-searching “career” in creative ways—making video applications, getting feedback on a resume from friends. These activities are especially helpful on days when people feel less social support. They offer a sense of control when we are down (Hulshof, Demerouti, & Le Blanc, 2020).

Now, suppose the situation lasts for an extended time. Do the strategies that provide emotional comfort differ depending on how long a person is unemployed?

In studying almost a thousand workers over three years, researchers answered yes (Thill, Houssemand, & Pignault, 2019). During the first year, it's best to view this loss as an opportunity ("This bump in the road gives me a chance to find a new, fulfilling career. Now I can focus on my family and health"). At year two, it's best to take a longer-term perspective: "Everyone has bouts of unemployment. This is a normal part of all adult careers." But after three years, it's difficult to find *any* comforting thoughts. And it doesn't matter if a person blames society ("It's the poor economy") or oneself ("It's my fault"). Nothing buffers the debilitating sense of frustration, anger, and low self-worth.

The good news is that happiness levels quickly rebound once a laid-off employee finds new work. This rise in well-being is complete and enduring, even when the person takes a less favorable job (Zhou and others, 2019). So let's hope that the wrenching U.S. job-loss statistics produced by the COVID-19 pandemic will become a distant memory as science (again) comes to the rescue in the form of vaccine distribution.

How can we best cope with *any* disappointment of adult life? What are the real keys to happiness as we travel through the adult years? Chapter 12 tackles these vital questions (and others) as we move on to midlife.

Tying It All Together

1. Michael, age 30, has just begun his career. Compared to his father, who entered his career in the 1990s, what *two* predictions can you make for Michael?
 - a. Michael will be more likely than his dad to work from home.
 - b. Michael will work fewer hours per week than his dad.
 - c. Michael is more likely to be an independent contractor, selling his skills to different employers.
2. In a sentence or two, spell out one advantage and one serious disadvantage of being self-employed.
3. Nozomi, a bubbly, outgoing 30-year-old, has what her friends see as a perfect job: She's a researcher in a one-person office, with flexible hours; she has a large, quiet workspace; a boss who is often away; job security; and great pay. Yet Nozomi is unhappy with the job. According to Holland's theory, what is the problem?
4. Malia and her husband work full time. Statistically speaking, you can make *two* of the following predictions:
 - a. Malia will take more time off from work for family caregiving.
 - b. Malia will earn less than her spouse.
 - c. Malia will be less educated than her spouse.
5. According to this chapter, with regard to family and work, traditional gender roles *still exist/no longer exist*.
6. Being laid off causes a permanent loss of self-esteem (*true/false*).

Answers to the Tying It All Together questions can be found at the end of this chapter.



SOMETHING TO CONSIDER: Relationships and Roles: Applying Research on Personality and Career  Achieve

SUMMARY

Marriage

Marriages used to be practical unions arranged by families. In the early twentieth century, as life expectancy increased dramatically, we developed the idea that couples should be lovers for life. During the late twentieth century, with the women's movement, divorce, rising **serial cohabitation** rates, and the dramatic increase in unwed motherhood, marriage became **deinstitutionalized**—less of a standard path in the Western world.

Ideas about cohabitation, single parenthood, and marriage differ around the globe. In the United States, marriage is typically a middle-class achievement, and low-income adults often cohabit with several partners without ever being wed. Choosing a marital partner (with a parent's blessing) is common in India, a nation where arranged marriages had, until recently, been the unquestioned norm. In the Middle East, marriage is male-dominated, although women are acquiring more rights. Still, in places such as Saudi Arabia, divorced women are still subject to societal scorn.

Statistically speaking, married couples are happier and live longer than single adults. While cohabiting relationships are more fragile, when we compare people who have the resources to get married but decide to live together, the advantages to having a wedding ring disappear. Being unhappily married is worse than being single or divorced.

Especially during the first four years of marriage, couples experience a decline in happiness; but there may be a **U-shaped curve of marital satisfaction**, with happiness rising at the empty-nest stage. Ironically, expecting one's relationship to be perfect may predict becoming especially disenchanted after the honeymoon phase.

According to Robert Sternberg's **triangular theory of love**, married couples start out with **consummate love**, but passion and intimacy can decline as partners construct separate lives. To preserve passion and intimacy, share exciting experiences with your mate, be committed to the marriage, feel devoted to a partner's well-being, and take joy in sacrificing for a mate. When communicating, happy couples make a high ratio of positive to negative comments, don't get personally hurtful, hold off from offering "too much" advice, and listen nondefensively to criticisms.

Divorce consists of an ambivalent decision-making phase followed by many stressful changes. Still, this common life event can result in higher well-being, especially if couples were very distressed (versus simply feeling "a bit" unfulfilled) with their mates. Although many people do remarry after divorcing, these unions are not likely to be more fulfilling, and can even be rockier, because it's hard for stepchildren to get attached to a "new" mom or dad. Stepchildren, however, give both men and women unparalleled joy.

Parenthood

Although many more people can become parents in our twenty-first-century society, declining **fertility rates** are the common pattern worldwide. Despite our negative stereo-

types, childless adults are not more self-centered or unhappy than parents.

The transition to parenthood tends to lessen romance and happiness. Among heterosexual couples, gender roles become more traditional. Conflicts that center on **marital equity** can arise. Still, some couples grow closer after the baby is born. Coping constructively with conflicts before becoming parents predicts how a relationship will fare. Competent, caring dads make post-baby relationships thrive.

The emotional quality of motherhood is affected by a variety of forces, and this experience, although meaningful, is tailor-made to destroy women's images of how they thought they would behave. Society conveys a sanitized view of motherhood. We tend to blame mothers for their children's "deficiencies," and sometimes view Western working women as abandoning the hands-on motherhood role. In contrast to these stereotypes, however, twenty-first-century women spend much more time with their children than in the past. Contemporary mothers (and fathers) are giving their children unparalleled attention and love—even while they hold down jobs.

Today, we expect men to be **breadwinners** and **nurturer fathers**, as well as good gender-role models and, sometimes, disciplinarians. In recent decades, dads do far more hands-on caregiving, but, statistically speaking, women typically still do much more. Fathers play with their children in traditionally male, active ways, and vary in their hands-on involvement, depending on various forces. Despite the rise in househusbands, traditional family gender role attitudes endure.

Work

We used to have **traditional stable careers**; today, we often have **boundaryless careers**. The Internet revolution, while it offers flexibility with regard to physically being at an office, can provoke more work intensity because workers are now on-call at any time. The newest change in work, the rise of the gig economy, does offer more freedom, but makes for less job security. It's difficult for many gig workers to earn stable, reasonable wages.

Among college graduates, high core self-evaluations, measured in high school, predict midlife career happiness and career success. People who have high self-efficacy and optimistic attitudes search out challenging work and proactively shape their jobs. The ideal is to see our career as a calling, expressing our life mission.

Career happiness involves working hard at a job and, especially, finding an ideal personality-work fit. People want jobs that offer **intrinsic career rewards**, although **extrinsic career rewards** such as pay become salient when people need to support a family. **Role overload** (too much work to do) and **role conflict** (being pulled between family and career) are major twenty-first-century stresses. The ideal is **work-life balance**—feeling energized by a career and having ample time to enjoy one's nonwork life.

Women still, on average, earn less than men even when they work full time. The reason is that women periodically leave

the workforce to provide family care and, due to **occupational segregation**, work in lower-paying jobs (although a pay gap also exists within male-dominated industries). Even when companies give lip service to work-life balance, many corporations don't look favorably on employees who take time off for child care.

Unemployment can be devastating for mental health. To mitigate the loss of purpose that being jobless provokes, people need to proactively craft their job search. Coping strategies change (and, finally, become ineffective) depending on the length of time adults are out of work. The good news is that these negative emotional effects evaporate when a person finds a new job.

KEY TERMS

boundaryless career, p. 328	extrinsic career rewards, p. 331	occupational segregation, p. 333	triangular theory of love, p. 316
breadwinner role, p. 325	fertility rate, p. 322	role conflict, p. 331	U-shaped curve of marital satisfaction, p. 315
consummate love, p. 316	intrinsic career rewards, p. 331	role overload, p. 331	work-life balance, p. 331
deinstitutionalization of marriage, p. 312	marital equity, p. 322	serial cohabitation, p. 312	
	nurturer father, p. 325	traditional stable career, p. 328	

ANSWERS TO Tying It All Together QUIZZES

Marriage

1. (a) and (c)
2. true
3. (c)
4. According to Sternberg, by looking at three dimensions—passion, intimacy, and commitment—and exploring their combinations, we can get a portrait of all the partner love relationships that exist in life. By exploring how these facets change over time, we can also understand why marital happiness might naturally decline over the years. (a) This couple is extremely emotionally involved (has intimacy and passion) but has not decided to get married or enter a fully committed relationship. (b) This couple has it all: intimacy, passion, and commitment. Most likely, they are

newlyweds. (c) This couple is best friends (intimate) and married (committed) but no longer passionate. Couples who have been married for decades are most likely to have companionate marriages.

5. Sharing mutually exciting activities cements passion. Commitment grows out of (and is embodied by) feeling devoted to a partner's well-being.
6. You might predict that this friend will be just as disenchanted with her new partner after a few years.

Parenthood

1. Statistically speaking, you would expect this couple's marital satisfaction to decline. This couple is most apt to cope well if Dulce and Kamel communicated well before the baby's arrival and if Kamel is an involved, caring dad.



2. (a) and (c)
3. Tell Grandma that's not true! Parents are spending more time with their children than in the past. Moms do far more hands-on caregiving today than their mothers and grandmothers used to do. And of course, fathers are also much more involved. Not only are dads spending more time playing, particularly with their sons, but depending on the person, they are also doing more routine care.
4. Possible questions: (1) Are you an easy-going person, able to regulate your emotions? (2) What was your relationship like with your own father? (3) Do you feel competent (and happy) about providing hands-on child care? (4) Did you really want this child? (5) Very important: How committed are you to working long hours at your job?

Work

1. (a) and (c)
2. Theoretical advantage of the gig economy: being able to direct when and where you work; clear disadvantage: more job and economic insecurity.
3. Nozomi's isolated work environment doesn't fit her sociable personality. She needs ample chances to interact with people during the day.
4. (a) and (b)
5. still exist
6. false

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