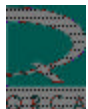




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# Parenting for Qualitative Researchers

**2002 QRCA Annual Conference  
October 24, 2002**



# Presentation Highlights

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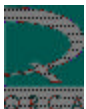
*Opening Thoughts*

*Enjoying Being a QRC Parent*

*Special Situations*

*Resources*

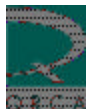
*Final Comments*



# Research Goals

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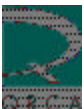
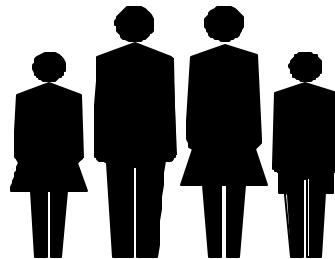
- **What are the unique challenges that people who are qualitative researchers encounter in managing their business and personal lives? Does this career choice make it easier or more difficult to feel fulfilled as a parent?**
- **Are there some words of advice and recommendations that can be shared to make the challenges easier?**
- **What additional resources exist that qualitative research parents can refer to?**



# Methodology

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- **Resources**
  - Delphi Forum
  - One-on-one interviews by C. Kann
  - Books, magazine articles
- **Web sites and articles available via web search**
- **Scenarios extracted for “Worst Case Scenario Game” (Loretta Hudelot)**



## Opening Thoughts

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- There are wonderful things in your personal life and great things going on in your professional life. It is when the needs of both of those lives conflict that you experience stress. Eliminating all stress is not possible or desirable.
- There is not one answer to achieving happiness and fulfillment from all aspects of your life. Achieving the best mix of work and family time will mean different things to different people. Review your aspirations and expectations.
- It is good to feel fulfilled from a vibrant professional life and having some personal interests aside from your family. There may be no way to avoid feeling guilty occasionally, but you will be a better mother and partner if you get regular periods of time to renew and recharge your commitment to yourself and your family.

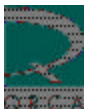


# Enjoying Being a QRC Parent

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## 1. The Basics in Time Management

- Cook on the weekends for the week
- Pack lunches the night before and involve the kids
- Put out clothes the night before, ironed with no holes
- Have all paperwork for school signed and in backpacks
- Have a bulletin board with all relevant calendars visible
- One location for keys, sunglasses, wallet
- Toothbrushes in upstairs and downstairs bathrooms
- Purchase cards and gifts ahead of time
- Keep a separate briefcase for your different lives
- Keep travel essentials packed
- Use the internet and catalogs for shopping



## Enjoying Being a QRC Parent (cont.)

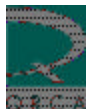
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### 2. “Network” All Aspects of Your Life

- Think about how you network for your business. The same rules apply for finding support with child care, carpooling, organizing a birthday party, finding a tailor, etc. Have multiple resources in case of emergencies.
- Before you make decisions about taking your business in a new direction, talk to others who have been in similar situations to insure you are prepared for the changes it may bring.

### 3. Respect Your Business/Respect Your Life

- Make sure you have some time each day or week to work exclusively on your business. Unless you minimize the time you parent and work at the same time, you will feel you are not doing either well.



## *Enjoying Being a QRC Parent (cont.)*

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### **3. Respect Your Business/Respect Your Life (cont.)**

- **Consider making some conscious decisions that may help you integrate your family into your business life. Examples: geographically desirable clients, do more on-line or quantitative research, quit work early certain days of the week.**
- **Be selective in the information that you share about your personal life while doing business. You are not obligated to inform a client, for example, that you can't be at the meeting until 2:00 pm because you are having lunch with your child.**
- **Allow yourself "commute time" even if you work from home. Change clothes and allow yourself to shift gears.**

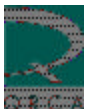


## Enjoying Being a QRC Parent (Cont.)

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### 4. Master Communications

- Take advantage of the technology available to confirm plans with your support network. You will be able to focus on your business when you are sure that your personal life is in order, the client's project is proceeding on schedule, and that you are reachable in case of an emergency.
- Use your schedule to plan specific times for family, work, and other activities. Read mail while at piano lessons...clean up the kitchen with a family member to spend time together.



## ***Enjoying Being a QRC Parent (Cont.)***

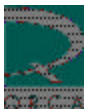
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### **5. Change Your Perception and Enjoy**

- **Many QRCs emphasized how quickly time with their children had gone. It is important to enjoy while they are home...it is fleeting... they are off to college in no time.**
- **Recognize that work-family stress will occur. Be prepared and decide to see stressful situations in a different way. Identify the advantages of your current situation and find the positives where possible.**

### **6. Odds and Ends**

- **Seek support from your employer. What options are available in terms of flexible scheduling?**
- **Build a support system by connecting with other working moms who are a positive influence and upbeat.**



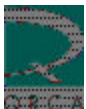
# Special Situations

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## 1. Single Parents

Single parents do not have the in-house resource of a spouse to help with day-to-day parenting logistics so it means additional thinking about how you design a business around your life. Here were some of the key tips:

- Must be more deliberate is setting business goals (geography of clients, services offered, employees, financial targets).
- Child care arrangements must be more formal and scheduled. Use of before- and after- school programs and other family members in town helps.
- You must be more organized than most other people.
- Hire help where you need it: cleaning your house, doing your yardwork, painting the den.

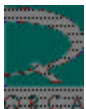


## *Special Situations (cont.)*

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### **2. Special Needs Children**

- **Quality child care sensitive to the needs of the child is especially important. Find someone who is able to address the specific modifications in the child's schedule or diet that need to be addressed.**
- **Help your child feel comfortable letting others know about any special requests that they may have. When they are old enough to understand, help them learn to communicate their special needs.**



# Resources

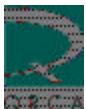
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## Books

- **The Magic Years** by Dr. Selma Fraiberg (rec. by Barb Rosenthal)
- **Life's Work** by Lisa Belkin (rec. by Chris Kann)
- **How to Talk So Kids Will Listen & Listen So Kids Will Talk** by Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish (rec. by Marty Johnson)
- **High Wire Mom: Balancing Your Family and a Business @ Home** by Kendra Smiley

## Web

- **BlueSuitMom.com**
- **Advancingwomen.com**
- **ivillage.com**
- **Babyparenting.about.com**
- **www.ext.nodak.edu/extpubs/yf/famsci/fs513w.htm**
- **www.montana.edu/wwwpb/pubs/mt9506.html**



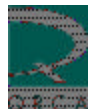
## QRC Parents Speak

***“...the flexibility of working at home and moderating at night allows you to be there when your kids really need you. That has paid off in wondrous ways for me now that my daughters are grown.” Barb Rosenthal***

***“Some QRCA-ers have decided that motherhood is the primary focus and fit moderating into it. This means they limit their business in terms of days/nights worked, type, amount and where work is conducted. Others have continued with their business a priority which is far more challenging. Being somewhere in the middle is filled with the most agonizing conflicts as your direction is not clear and support systems too shakey.” Lynn Greenberg***

***“...cherish it (time when children are young). My boys are now 11 and 14 and from the time my first came along, I decided to take things more into my own control and branched out on my own. I wanted a more flexible working option than I would have otherwise and I have never regretted it.” Kris Hodges***

***“For me, moderating and mothering have been a great combination. Being a mother has always come first. The type of work we do has made it possible for me.” Ellen Schaefer***



## Final Comments

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### So ...is qualitative consulting a good career for parenting?

- **YES...**  
Most agree that it is a stimulating career that provides professional fulfillment as well as some opportunity for schedule flexibility that can lend itself to being able to address personal and family needs.
- **BUT...**  
Some conscious decisions sometimes must be made to keep business demands in check, such as limiting the number of out-of-town clients and/or working from an in-home or out-of home office. In addition, you must be well-networked to assure coverage during emergencies.
- **AND...**  
You will have to work to keep your sense of humor when your personal and professional lives inevitably clash.

