

DO GOOD TO LEAD WELL

WITH CRAIG DOWDEN, PHD



Corinne Low



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Episode: Achieving “Having It All” as a Working Mom: Evidence-Based Insights from Corinne Low

What You’ll Learn

- ✓ Understanding the Concept of 'Having It All'
- ✓ The Impact of Parenting on Women's Time
- ✓ The Role of Data in Household Responsibilities
- ✓ Engaging in Constructive Conversations
- ✓ The Role of Organizations in Supporting Women

Understanding the Concept of 'Having It All' (05:55)

Many women feel pressure to excel both at work and at home, striving for career success alongside the idealized Instagram-ready family life. Corinne explains that this often leads to feeling "squeezed" because the expectations at both work and home have grown immensely, making it structurally impossible to excel by previous standards. Social narratives have changed: while gender roles at work have shifted towards equality, roles at home often remain largely unchanged. Women today spend significantly more time parenting than previous generations, which adds to the load. Ultimately, redefining what "having it all" means for you, based on your values and realities, is crucial for happiness and self-leadership.

Actionable Steps:

- Define your personal success in both work and home contexts. Do not default to social/media standards.
- Review your weekly schedule to identify where expectations conflict or overload you.
- Set boundaries by consciously dropping or adjusting roles/tasks that aren't serving your definition of "having it all."



The Impact of Parenting on Women's Time (08:52)

Since the 1990s, women's time spent parenting has exploded, partly due to higher expectations for nurturing and developing children. New standards around breastfeeding, involved activities, and intense homework help can be enriching but are extremely time-consuming.

Corinne urges parents to distinguish between high-impact parenting and guilt/security-driven activities. Prioritizing connection over quantity leads to better outcomes for both parents and children. More “arms race” parenting (trying to excel at everything) often results from societal pressures and comparison rather than personal values.



Actionable Steps:

- Identify which parenting activities truly strengthen the parent-child bond and which stem from guilt or social pressure.
- Schedule quality time for meaningful connection rather than trying to do every possible activity.
- Let go of perfectionism; focus on being present and fulfilled rather than chasing extracurricular quantity or flawless events.



The Role of Data in Household Responsibilities (11:51)

Many couples believe household chores are equally shared, but data shows women handle the majority of 'invisible labor', the planning, organizing, and mental load required for family upkeep. Corinne recommends couples track their time and household tasks to get evidence-based insight into the division of labor. This transparency creates a reference point for discussion and allows fair allocation of responsibilities. Surfacing the invisible workload helps partners collaborate constructively and align on what truly matters.

Actionable Steps:

- Track household and parenting tasks for one week; include both visible and invisible labor (planning, organizing, prepping).
- Review and discuss the data together to reveal gaps and ensure shared understanding.
- Realign responsibilities based on evidence, not assumptions, move towards balanced and fair contribution.
- **Promote “co-CEO” status:** Agree with your partner that both will have full ownership of key household tasks, rather than one person just delegating small pieces. Make responsibility holistic (planning, executing, troubleshooting) for tasks like school lunches or laundry.
- Align on values and success: Before splitting up duties, discuss and agree together on what truly matters for your household, such as healthy meals versus convenience, or time with kids versus structured activities. This reduces “weaponized indifference” and ensures everyone takes ownership of important tasks.

Engaging in Constructive Conversations (20:57)

Being the "CEO" of your own life means having adult, honest conversations about needs, leisure, and household roles. Corinne highlights the importance of initiating open discussions: value both partners' time and avoid falling into zero-sum or competitive thinking. Constructive conversations should focus on clarity, empathy, and the principle that your own well-being is as important as everyone's. Bringing data to the table reduces defensiveness and normalizes struggles, encouraging joint problem-solving rather than blame. Creating space for regular check-ins allows both partners to share how they're feeling and what adjustments might be needed. This approach not only prevents resentment but builds a stronger sense of connection and teamwork within the household.

Actionable Steps:

- Regularly set aside time to discuss household dynamics, roles, and individual needs.
- Use concrete data from tracking, rather than vague impressions, to guide conversations.
- Establish rules for leisure and rest that are fair to both partners, explicitly valuing domestic work as worthy of downtime.
- Rotate responsibility for leading the household check-in meetings, so both partners take turns facilitating, this keeps things balanced and ensures everyone's perspective is included.
- Practice stating your own needs and preferences first before jumping to problem-solving; this models vulnerability and signals that self-care is a shared priority.
- Brainstorm and experiment with new solutions together (e.g., swapping tasks for a week or trialing new leisure routines), then assess and adjust based on lived experience to keep progress dynamic and responsive.



The Role of Organizations in Supporting Women (30:00)

Firms and organizations play a vital role in promoting gender equality, but their support should be evidence-based and structural, not token. Corinne advises businesses to provide clear boundaries (such as defined end-of-work hours) and predictable routines, rather than just flexibility or remote work. This helps women, and all employees, balance work and family demands more easily. Companies benefit from retaining talented women by adjusting practices to fit real needs, ensuring sustainability and loyalty in the workforce.

Actionable Steps:

- Advocate for workplace policies with clear, predictable boundaries (e.g., ending meetings/workdays at a set time).
- Request data-driven support from your organization, explaining specific challenges faced by caregivers and women.
- Use pilot programs or feedback mechanisms to demonstrate the value of retention-focused policies, encouraging companies to sustain effective practices.

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Ready to Have it All?

Connect with Corinne Low:

- Website: <https://www.corinnelow.com/>
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For a deeper dive, listen to the full-length episode of the Do Good to Lead Well podcast featuring Corinne Low on:

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- visit <https://www.craigdowden.com/executive-mastermind>