"THAT RICH, RICH QUALITY OF EXISTENCE":
MOTHERS WITH PROFESSIONAL CAREERS TALK ABOUT THEIR
EXPERIENCES OF FLOURISHING

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ABSTRACT

This study uses data from the Changing Landscape of American Women study to explore whether and how mothers with professional careers experience a state of well-being known as flourishing. The Changing Landscape of American Women study is a USDA-approved multi-state research effort. Investigators are collecting data from Latina immigrants, farm and ranch women, and women with professional careers to explore how women's media may impact their ability to achieve work, family and personal satisfaction.

The present paper looks at data from thirty-three mothers with professional careers who live and work in the greater Twin Cities area of Minnesota. The women each participated in one of five focus groups sessions to discuss the challenges and satisfactions of their busy lives. Analytic induction was used to code their comments according to operational definitions of symptoms of flourishing; then narrative analysis techniques were applied to distill their conversation to an overall expression of flourishing.

The women reported in their own words that they do experience the state of flourishing. The results indicate that for the women who participated in the study, the biggest challenge to flourishing was living in a social context that was at odds with the realities of their lives as mothers with professional careers. Despite this challenge, the women explicitly expressed that they did experience the state of flourishing. For them, flourishing involved the internal characteristics of desiring to combine career and motherhood in their lives, and being realistic about what they could accomplish. Flourishing also involved having external resources that included a spouse they could rely on, a strong network of social support, and a good amount of flexibility in their lives.

Practice implications include recommendations that counselors and educators work to help women who want to combine career and family understand the symptoms of flourishing and how other women have experienced them. Implications for employers who want to maximize the talent of their employees who are mothers with professional careers include explicitly acknowledging that many highly educated women want to have both a challenging career and a healthy family. Allowing these women the flexibility to map out a unique pattern for successfully combining the two domains in their lives will be important.

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"I think that work is just a hugely cognitively stimulating thing, I mean you really engage your brain…My job is very social to do. I have a lot of interaction with very interdisciplinary academia so I talk about sciences and I talk about psychology and I talk about anthropology … it's very engaging. And then I think of the richness of being a parent. I mean my heart isn't big enough to hold all of the love I have for my child. And I think just that rich, rich quality of existence…you get both of those worlds. I mean your mind is fed and your soul is fed if you keep your work when you have children."

Mother of an 8-year old son;
Teaching Consultant and Writer

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Mothers with professional careers represent a powerful force in the United States economy. Economists concur that women's participation in the paid workforce has dramatically contributed to economic prosperity in the United States, and they also note that the majority of contemporary families require two incomes (Graff, 2007). Within this context of opportunity and necessity, women who are mothers are pursuing professional employment in increasing numbers. Recent studies indicate that women represent 51% of all United States workers in high-paying managerial and professional positions (*The Economist*, 2010; U.S. Department of Labor, 2007). Nearly 63% of mothers with bachelor's degrees or higher are in the workforce, and the trend is expected to continue as women are achieving college degrees at higher rates than men (Cohany & Sok, 2007).

Challenges with Prior Research Perspectives

The population of mothers with professional careers has become more visible and powerful, and researchers have investigated various aspects of their experiences. The findings of these studies are relevant to the mental health, business, and family services communities. However, the literature investigating the experiences and outcomes of employed mothers has been repeatedly critiqued across the past five decades. The criticisms include (a) inappropriate comparisons with non-working mothers that position working mothers as "deviant" (Sussman, 1961), (b) failure to simultaneously account for the emotional and structural circumstances of employed mothers (Zambrana, Hurst, & Hite, 1979), (c) psychological measures that focused on assessment of depression and anxiety rather than well-being (Elger & Chester, 2007),

and (d) hypotheses informed by traditional gender role expectations rather than hypotheses informed by envisioning a well-functioning society (Hirschman, 2005).

Taken together, much of the research on working women is designed from a perspective of disadvantages by highlighting the conflicts between market work and nurturing work (Gubrium, 2007). Despite the high numbers of mothers who have professional careers, few researchers have tried to discover whether and how these women are experiencing a state of well-being known as flourishing.

Research Questions

The current research study explores answers to two questions:

1. Do mothers with professional careers experience the state of flourishing?

2. How do mothers with professional careers express their experiencing a state of flourishing in their conversations?

The remainder of this chapter will discuss reasons for investigating whether and how mothers with professional careers are flourishing in our current society, and then provide definitions for key terms in this study.

Why Study Mothers with Professional Careers through the Lens of Flourishing?

This present research study is of significance to family scientists and the business community for at least three reasons: (a) mothers with professional careers have the potential to make significant contributions to their communities; (b) understanding their experiences of flourishing may help illuminate pathways for the next generation of women; and (c) their success strategies may impact the development of resources and policies that benefit lesser-privileged women.

Maximizing their contributions. Individuals who are flourishing tend to behave in pro-social ways that benefit the collective as well as themselves (Ryan, Huta & Deci, 2008). Examining the population of mothers who are combining professional careers

with motherhood through the lens of flourishing may help us understand how to capitalize on their talents, skills, and experiences for the benefit of their greater communities. These women offer a significant pool of human capital that will be wasted if the public and private sectors do not figure out how to maximize it.

For example, evidence suggests that organizations with higher percentages of women in management and investment roles have better financial performance than companies with lower percentages of women in these roles, yet women remain underrepresented in these high level professional positions (*he Economist,* 2006; Women's Foodservice Forum, 2010). Women are also underrepresented in leadership roles in academic medicine because not enough is understood about their needs and perspectives on the profession (D. Shrier & L. Shrier, 2005).

Illuminating pathways for success. Understanding how mothers with professional careers experience flourishing may illuminate pathways for women of future generations. Sussman noted in 1961 that little was known about the working mother's aspirations, reference groups, and role models. Today in 2010 little has changed. Mothers with professional careers are playing increasingly vital roles in their communities, yet they have no clearly defined pathways for success.

The media routinely propagates stereotypical and outdated portrayals of mothers with professional careers, and the idea of personal fulfillment is often presented as an unattainable goal (Zvoncovic, et al., 2004). Today's young women are repeatedly informed that they have choices and opportunities and are encouraged to take action. Yet "the socialization is incomplete or ambiguous and we are not provided the means to follow the roles prescribed during childhood" (Fitz-Gibbon, 1995, p. 118).

Benefits to lesser-privileged women. Understanding whether and how mothers with professional careers experience the state of flourishing may also lead to

the development of resources and policies that can benefit women in less privileged circumstances. Highly educated professional women, by virtue of their relative affluence, are in a position to create new forms of and approaches to combining paid work and motherhood (Vincent, Ball, & Pietikainen, 2004). Understanding the success strategies these women use may help society access the considerable talents that these women have to influence changes that could potentially make a critical difference in the lives of employed mothers in less privileged circumstances (Hirschman, 2006).

Definitions of Key Terms

The terms that are central to this study are (a) professional careers, (b) flourishing, and (c) changing landscape of American women. Definitions, and some historical context, for each of these terms are provided below.

Professional Careers

Scholars generally agree that a professional career is one that is composed of work that requires a greater degree of education and skills than other occupational choices. As such, it offers an individual greater potential for economic mobility and social status and, thus, is a desirable career course (Ben-David, 1963-64; Sarossy, 1996). Today in North American workplaces, the term "professional career" is often used interchangeably with the term white-collar work (Straussner & Phillips, 1999). There is a shared understanding that "White-collar workers perform tasks which are less 'laborious' yet often more highly paid than blue-collar workers, who do manual work" (SpecialInvestor.com, 2006).

Nearly all definitions of a professional career contain three basic elements in common: (a) work that is based on mastery of a specific and complex body of knowledge, (b) autonomy in one's work; and (c), a commitment to use one's work in service to society (S. Cruess, Johnston, & R. Cruess, 2004). VanZandt (1990)

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suggested that workers who are designated as professionals "should possess autonomy and have personal responsibility in conducting their professional duties" (p. 243).

The term professional has recently become more common in lay language and continues to imply rights and privileges that result from the perceived status of a job based on its educational and skill requirements. However, recent definitions focus more on the potential status and rewards of professional work, and less on the implied social contract (S. Cruess, et al., 2004).

Flourishing

The individual condition of having an overall positive life experience has been referred to by various terms, including happiness (Snow, 2008); life satisfaction (Hinchliffe, 2004); thriving, prospering, and living well (Dunn & Dougherty, 2008); meaningful living and well-being (Emmons, 2002); and vital living and being in flow (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). In the past decade, the field of positive psychology has advanced the term flourishing to describe the ultimate positive life experience (Keyes & Haidt, 2002).

Definition of flourishing. The present study uses the following definition for flourishing which includes both subjective and objective well-being: "A state in which an individual feels positive emotion towards life, and is functioning well psychologically and socially" (Keyes & Haidt, 2002, p. 294).   Flourishing is both the aim and the result of a worthwhile life according to religious (InterVarsity, 2008) and secular philosophers (Devettere, 2002; Keyes & Haidt, 2002). It differs from contemporary understandings of happiness or pleasure in that an individual who is experiencing emotional or physical difficulty can still be described as flourishing based on how he or she faces and overcomes these circumstances (Keyes, 2002).

Philosophers have suggested that the practice of flourishing involves (a) a conscious rejection of selfishness (InterVarsity, 2008); (b) a commitment that seeking one's own good is compatible with and even predicated on seeking the good of the community (Devettere, 2002); (c) a focus on attainment of achievement-oriented rather than avoidance-oriented goals (Emmons, 2002); and (d) the ability to reflect on one's actions and their implications, and to choose those that will lead to a well-functioning life overall, regardless of short-term inconvenience or pain (Hinchliffe, 2004). The opportunity to experience the state of flourishing presupposes that an individual has freedom or significant control over his or her life (Devettere, 2002), as well as a minimal threshold of physical security in terms of adequate food, shelter, and human connection (Snow, 2008).

Indicators of Flourishing. Keyes (2002) has distilled philosophical theories of flourishing into discrete symptoms of well-being that can be observed and measured. His model of "Operational Definitions of Symptoms of Mental Health" (Figure 1) explicates 14 symptoms of individual flourishing and organizes them according to subjective and objective symptoms of well-being. The subjective symptoms of well-being include three indicators of positive emotional feelings. The objective symptoms of well-being include six indicators of positive psychological functioning, and five indicators of positive social functioning.

Extensive research supporting this model indicates that in order to be diagnosed as flourishing in life, an individual would exhibit high levels of 1 of the 3 symptoms of emotional well-being, and high levels of 6 of the 11 symptoms of positive functioning. Individuals who have been categorized as flourishing, according to this rubric, "have excellent emotional health, miss fewer days of work, cut back on work on fewer days, and have fewer physical limitations on their daily lives" (Keyes, 2002, p. 294). Recent

studies of a nationally representative sample of over 3,000 adults indicated that only

21.6% of adults fit the criteria for flourishing in life (Keyes, 2002).

Figure 1: Operational Definitions of Symptoms of Mental Health

Subjective Well-being	Objective Well-being	
Positive Feelings: Emotional Well-being	**Positive Functioning: Psychological Well-being**	**Positive Functioning: Social Well-being.**
Positive affect: Regularly cheerful, in good spirits, happy, calm and peaceful, satisfied, and full of life. *Happiness:* Feels happiness toward past of about present life overall or in domains of life. *Life satisfaction:* Sense of contentment or satisfaction with past or present life overall or in life domains.	*Self-acceptance:* Positive attitude toward oneself and past life, and concedes and accepts varied aspects of self. *Personal growth:* Insight into one's potential, sense of development, and open to challenging new experiences. *Purpose in life:* Has goals, beliefs that affirm sense of direction in life, and feels life has purpose and meaning. *Environmental mastery:* Has capability to manage complex environment and can choose or create suitable environs. *Autonomy:* Comfortable with self-direction, has internal standard, resists unsavory social pressures. *Positive relations with others:* Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships, and is capable of empathy and intimacy.	*Social acceptance:* Positive attitude toward others while acknowledging and accepting people's complexity. *Social actualization:* Cares and believe that, collectively, people have potential and society can evolve positively. *Social contribution:* Feels that one's life is useful to society and that one's contributions are valued by others. *Social coherence:* has interest in society, feels it's intelligible, somewhat logical, predictable, and meaningful. *Social integration:* Feels part of, and a sense of belonging to, a community, derives comfort and support from community.

(Keyes, 2002, p. 299)

It is important to note that Keyes' comprehensive approach to mental health is bi-modal. He recommended that individuals be measured on both symptoms of mental health and symptoms of mental illness, and then classified according to the categories outlined in the "Complete Mental Health Model and Diagnostic Categories" model provided below:

Figure 2: The Complete Mental Health Model and Diagnostic Categories

Mental Health Symptoms			
High	(4) Pure Episode of Major Depression	(1) Flourishing	
		(2) Moderate Mental Health	
Low	(5) Languishing and Depressed	(3) Languishing	
	High	Mental Illness Symptoms	Low

(Keyes, 2002, p. 302)

According to this model, an individual with a high degree of mental health symptoms could have some mental illness symptoms and still be assessed as flourishing. Likewise, an individual could have a low degree of mental illness symptoms and yet not possess a high degree of mental health symptoms, and thus not be assessed as flourishing. Therefore, this model emphasizes an objective approach to assessing the state of flourishing. This is consistent with other writings on the topic of flourishing:

> Human flourishing is primarily an objective state that in principle could be ascertained from a third-person perspective. Indeed, there is room for the paradox of the flourishing person who is feeling unhappy. (Gómez-Lobo, 2008, p. 895)

Languishing. Based on the models presented above, the opposite of flourishing is not necessarily depression. Not all individuals who are not experiencing a state of flourishing are necessarily experiencing mental illness. This state of having an absence of mental health without the presence of a mental illness is known as "languishing" and is evidenced by (a) experiencing feelings or functioning that is in opposition to the symptoms of flourishing (Keyes & Haidt, 2002), (b) experiencing alienation and estrangement rather than connection and belonging (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), and (c) feeling either overwhelmed or bored by the activities of life rather than

confident and challenged by them (Harter, Schmidt, & Keyes 2002). According to

Keyes' rubric, low levels on two of the symptoms of emotional well-being and low levels

on six of the eleven symptoms of positive functioning would indicate that an individual

was languishing (Keyes, 2002).

Describing Flourishing. Scholars and philosophers have written extensively about

what flourishing is and have connected it to the notion of a deep and enduring

happiness. However, it is difficult to describe with precision exactly what flourishing

looks like for humankind in general, much less for a sub-population such as mothers with

professional careers:

> There are many ways for a life to go well, and each person's happiness depends
> to some extent on the idiosyncratic features of the individual's personality and of
> the situations in which the agent exists. Happiness has to be somewhat of a
> vague notion because it has to cover many different kinds of life for many
> different kinds of people living in many different kinds of situations. To describe *a
> priori* the boundaries of happiness in a strict definition is to close off prematurely
> **the many unknown ways human beings can live truly good lives.** No one
> can give an exact definition of happiness because each person is unique and
> lives in a unique set of circumstances. Happiness is living a truly fulfilling and
> meaningful life, and there are many ways to do this…**No rich description of
> happiness can be given in advance because it would not cover all the
> various good ways the human life of each unique individual can unfold.**
> (Devettere, 2002, pp. 52-53) [emphasis added]

Changing Landscape for American Women

The present study uses data from a multi-state study called "The Changing

Landscape of Women in America: Understanding Work, Family, and Personal Issues"

(Zvoncovic, Mannon, Bryant, & Bailey, 2004). The "Changing Landscape" is a broad

concept that captures the evolving, interdependent complexities of the present society

that mothers with professional careers must navigate as they seek to lead flourishing

lives. Scientists across disciplines have acknowledged the impact of the changing

landscape on modern women:

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Changes in women's labor force participation, family life, and the workplace have shaped work experiences for recent cohorts of men and women that are vastly different from those of previous generations. The proportion of women who are employed has increased, changing the composition of the labor force. The content of work done by women has also changed. Women have increased access to professional, managerial, and other high-skilled jobs, and increasing numbers of women are working in jobs offering better pay, better benefits, and higher levels of work control.   At the same time, pressures on workers and their families have also increased, particularly the time spent at work, reliance on nonstandard schedules, and demands for productivity. (Pavalko, Gong & Long, 2007, p. 352)

Three features comprise the changing landscape for the purpose of this study: (a) a shifting global economy; (b) increasing choices for women in the domains of education, employment, and reproduction; and (c) the rise of the intensive mothering ideology.

A shifting global economy. The United States and other global economies are significant factors in the changing landscape. Economists attributed the prolonged recovery after the USA recession of 2001 to a slowing national economy, slowing economies of the USA's international trading partners, and increased technological advancements that reduced the requirements for skilled workers. The resulting job losses, declining home values, and declining home sales contributed to economic pressures on the middle class (Brown, 2009).

A recent national survey reported that middle class Americans were feeling a sense of economic stagnation in the past five years. The same study reported that middle-class Americans have experienced higher levels of living than their parents had. Census data backed up both assertions. Since 1969, median household income has risen by 41%. However, the past decade represents the longest period in modern U.S. economic history where median household income has not exceeded the prior peak which was in 1999 (Taylor, 2009). In the meantime, the costs of typically middle class expenditures such as education and housing have risen more rapidly than inflation

(Morin & Taylor, 2009). These economic shifts have challenged families organized around a traditional breadwinner-homemaker model. The shift to dual incomes has been the most popular coping strategy for families (Dillaway & Paré, 2008; Tucker, 2007).

   Increasing choices in education, employment, and reproduction. In the past two decades, women have experienced unprecedented access to educational and employment opportunities, including increased access to high-level professional jobs that provide greater variety, opportunity, and income (Pavalko, Gong, & Long, 2007). Advancements in reproductive technology have also given women in this present age more choices regarding "whether, when and in what context they might produce a child" (Gillespie, 2001, p. 139).

   Some researchers have used the increased availability of choices to reframe key developmental tasks for highly educated, ambitious women:

> The task of finding a life role concerns a woman's realization that she cannot build a life simply on her relationship to others as a mother and wife: She must make some decisions about where she herself wants to go and take initiatives to get there. (Gersick & Kram, 2002, p. 121)

Others have suggested that the language of individual choice surrounding modern women's opportunities is problematic as it obscures the need for focus on policy support for working families (O'Brien Hallstein, 2008). It has also been suggested that the language of individual choice surrounding women's workforce participation has shifted attention away from corporate downsizing activities. Many highly educated women who want or need to work may actually have been displaced from the workforce through no choice of their own (Boushey, 2005).

   Rise of the intensive mothering ideology. Popular books and articles about "working mothers" have proliferated in the past two decades. Over time, this has led to a

"professionalization" in the discourse surrounding family life as couples have talked

about partnerships and opportunities for challenge and fulfillment for all members of the

family (Becker & Moen, 1999). This shift in the language of family life created

contradictions for mothers. On one hand, the social discourse has acknowledged that

many mothers need and want to have a career outside the home. On the other hand,

applying the language of the workplace to motherhood has created increased pressures

and stress for mothers with professional careers.

The application of professional vocabulary and standards to motherhood has

been called the intensive mothering ideology (IMI). IMI has become a dominant cultural

message which asserts that (a) children need and require constant nurturing and

attention; (b) mothers are best suited to manage a child's care and development needs,

and are ultimately responsible for the outcomes; and (c) mothering requires specialized

knowledge across several disciplines, and, therefore, mothers must rely on experts to

guide them (Dillaway & Paré, 2008; O'Brien Hallstein, 2008)

The IMI is particularly important to understand in the context of studying mothers

with professional careers because it is an approach to mothering that "requires not only

large quantities of money but also professional level skills and copious amounts of

physical, moral, mental, and emotional energy on the part of the mother" (O'Brien

Hallstein, 2008, p. 143). The inherent bias in IMI is that the at-home mother becomes

the model against which all other forms of childcare, especially the father, are compared

(Perala-Littunen, 2007). Thus a landscape characterized by the IMI becomes a social

context that is both created by and yet challenging for mothers with professional careers.

In the context of the IMI, women with professional careers are either

characterized as deviant, or else reduced to the caricature of a supermom who switches

seamlessly between her separate roles as a high-powered career woman and an

attentive mother and homemaker without sacrificing excellence in either role (Dillaway &

Paré, 2008). This artificially narrow view of mothers with professional careers

conveniently ignores very real social challenges that highly educated women face.

"When mothers are forced into inaccurate categories, the ability to strategize creative

solutions is gravely compromised" (Zimmerman, Aberle, Krafchick, & Harvey, 2008, p.

216)

Mothers with Professional Careers in a Changing Landscape

"The employed mother is a permanent and significant addition to the familial and

economic structure of American society," declared Sussman in 1961 (p. 369). Nearly

five decades later *The Economist* (2006) reported that the increased employment of

women in developed countries has contributed more to global economic growth than has

the entire country of China. The same article reported that in America, 140 women

enroll in higher education each year for every 100 men. Demographic studies indicate

that in the United States, both the overall number of employed mothers and also the

percentage of mothers with young children who are in the workforce have increased

over the past three decades (Zvoncovic, et al., 2004).

Despite these trends, social customs and institutions remain organized around a

breadwinner-homemaker model. This forces working mothers to expend extraordinary

efforts to navigate their roles in public and private spheres. Their efforts are largely

invisible to social institutions such as churches, schools, and workplaces, and within

social policy. This "separate spheres" approach to life masks the complexities and

nuances of the daily decisions and actions that go into creating a satisfying life that

includes both work and family (Moen & Roehling, 2004; Becker & Moen, 1999; Pitt-

Catsouphes, Kossek, & Sweet, 2006).

Interest in human flourishing has burgeoned across academic disciplines (Keyes & Haidt, 2002). However, there has not yet been a comprehensive study of the experiences of mothers with professional careers that examines whether and how they are flourishing as they navigate their challenging lives.

CHAPTER TWO: BACKGROUND LITERATURE

Deliminations

There are several recent comprehensive reviews of the published literature related to maternal employment that report on the behaviors, personal characteristics, and family and personal outcomes of women who are combining career and motherhood (K. Saginak & M. Saginak, 2005; Medina & Magnuson, 2009; Fooks, 2001; Barnett; 2004). The review provided in this paper will attend only to those studies that report on the experiences of mothers with professional careers in their own words.

A comprehensive literature search examined prior studies of mothers with professional careers. Key search terms included the words mother, working, employed, professional, white-collar, management, flourishing, and well-being. Databases searched included Academic Search Premier, Business Search Premier, and PsychInfo. Most of the articles were published in the current decade.

Review of Literature

Literature on mothers with professional careers represents a narrow subset of the robust body of literature on maternal employment. These studies have contributed to our understanding of the context, behaviors, and personal characteristics of this population. However, studies have typically examined highly educated working mothers through problematic lenses such as role conflicts and tensions, maternal guilt, and maternal depression (Rubin & Wooten, 2008). Few studies have examined the experiences of mothers with professional careers, and fewer still have considered whether these women are doing well in their busy lives. Examining problems associated with being a mother who has a professional career can draw attention to critical social

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issues that need to be addressed. Yet, the problematic approach may also implicitly minimize the positive aspects of these women's lives.

The research findings in this narrow collection of studies have helped illuminate (a) why some women desire to combine motherhood and a professional career in their lives; (b) how mothers with professional careers perceive and interact with their social and workplace environments; (c) how women create an identity as a working mother; (d) how they navigate their childcare choices; (e) how women plan for and manage a life that includes a professional career and motherhood; and (f) how mothers with professional careers rely on and value spousal support.

Desiring Work and Family

Many professional women have expressed a desire to continue a career after the birth of children as a means of personal growth and fulfillment, and also to broaden their scope of influence and impact in the world (Cheung & Halpern, 2008; Bailey, 2000). Other women have expressed their desire to combine career and motherhood as a dual calling in their lives (Sellers, Thomas, Bates, & Ostman, 2005).

Some mothers with professional careers have described their work as something that is liberating from the routine of motherhood (Vincent, Ball, & Pietikainan, 2004). Others have suggested that each domain of life can serve as a relief from the potential monotony and stresses of the other domain (Lupton & Schmeid, 2002; Bailey, 2000). Women with high pre-maternity career commitment and higher socioeconomic status were more likely to be committed to combining work and family after the birth of a child (Harrison & Ungerer, 2002). Other women who may not have initially wanted to continue working after the birth of a child have expressed surprise at the enjoyment and confidence they felt at being able to have both domains in their lives once they experienced it (Jackson & Scharmen, 2002).

In contrast, highly educated mothers who made the choice to stay home with children have reported feeling a loss of self-esteem, and increased vulnerability, guilt, and internal conflict as a result of giving up their professions (Rubin & Wooten, 2007). Although many mothers who left professional careers to stay home with children have indicated satisfaction with their choice, others have stated that in our current society it is difficult to admit anything but satisfaction with that choice (Johnston & Swanson, 2006). The desire to have both work and family is so strong that it is becoming common for women who choose to stay home after the birth of a child to use the professional language of work to describe their household and caregiving duties. This allows them to constitute their mothering as work that is a valuable means of contributing to the world (Bailey, 2000).

Social and Workplace Environments

Numerous family and feminist researchers have critiqued social and workplace environments for their rigid structures, policies, and expectations that are incompatible with the typical female reproductive trajectory and therefore contradictory to the needs and desires of women who want to combine motherhood and a professional career (O'Brien Hallstein, 2008; Moen & Roehling, 2004). These critiques have been reified through the voices of mothers with professional careers as reported in the research findings of the literature on this population.

Social environment. The USA has offered sparse policy support for working families compared to other industrialized nations. This gap has been most salient in the lack of any form of guaranteed paid family leave (Kelly, 2006). Mothering has been ascribed holy status in modern society, yet the work of mothering has not been considered real work. Therefore, women who were combining a high-powered career

with motherhood have described themselves as living a contradiction within an unsupportive system (Vincent, et al., 2004).

There have been changes over time in how women experience their opportunities to combine career and motherhood. Younger professional women have reported feeling that they had more opportunities professionally as compared to women from prior generations. However, younger women have also reported experiencing more stress, and still not enough maternity leave time (D. Shrier & L. Shrier, 2005; Loder, 2005).   It is possible that the increased perception of stress was due to the younger women being in a generation where they were more aware of, and possibly overwhelmed by, the volume of available choices and opportunities (D. Shrier & L. Shrier, 2005).

Workplace environment. The lack of national policy support for working mothers has led many workplaces to develop a package of family-friendly benefits such as extended leave, on-site childcare, and flex-time policies. These programs are often positioned as fringe benefits or organizational innovations designed to attract, retain, and motivate female talent in the workforce (Kelly, 2006). Reactions to such policies have been mixed.

Women in high-level executive positions have expressed concern that if they take advantage of family-friendly benefits they will be seen as less committed and more likely to be passed over for promotions (Cheung & Halpern, 2008). Other women have expressed that family-friendly policies have created a double bind. For example, flexible work arrangements have made it possible for mothers to attend to both planned and unplanned mothering tasks during the work day. However, they may have also created negative family impacts because a mother may be expected to work in the evening to make up the time (Estes, 2005).

Part-time work options have been touted as a solution to incessant work-family struggles. However, part-time career options are not without challenges. Mothers have reported feeling that part-time positions came with a career cost in that opportunities were often limited to lesser-quality jobs that lacked advancement potential (Lupton & Schmeid, 2002; Tomlinson, 2006). Having less authority and influence at work has been shown to be correlated with workplace stress for married professional women with small children (Reifman, Biernat, & Lang, 1991).

In addition, women who spent less time at work have reported more depressive symptomatologies compared to women who worked longer hours. It is not clear whether the reason is because the positions that allow for fewer hours are ones that are less enriching with less decision-making power and less skill discretion, or because spending less time at work may cause a woman to feel she is not performing to the best of her ability (Hughes & Galinksy, 1994).

Some women in typically male-oriented professions have stated that they felt their mothering work–including the physical strains of pregnancy and post-partum recovery, and the emotional and care work of childrearing–was invisible in their workplace. This disconnection was exacerbated if the job required a high degree of travel away from the family (Bartleet, 2006; Ranson, 2005).

The ethos as well as the structure of a workplace may also impact professional women's work-family experiences differently. Workplaces that emphasize pay-for-performance and are organized around individual efforts and personal benefits rather than social value have been shown to be connected to women's decisions to live further away from the work place and have fewer friends there, thus impacting their work-family experiences (Edwards & Callendar, 2005).

Creating an Identity as a Working Mother

When they have children, professional women have to work to reconcile their newly acquired identity as a mother with their prior identity as a worker. Because caring and market work are disconnected in our society, women must create those connections for themselves and others (Vincent, et al., 2004). Some educated women who were building professional careers have experienced motherhood as a threat to their career identity (Bailey, 2000). Older mothers who expressed high career commitment have been seen as more successful at establishing an identity as a working mother and better able to clearly articulate the benefits of their work for both their families and themselves (Harrison & Ungerer, 2002).

Women who were reconciling whether and how they would combine work and family in their lives have suggested three broad mothering identities they may create for themselves: (a) the accessibility of the mother to the child is paramount, therefore market work is eliminated and the child becomes the mother's primary "project"; (b) a happy mother makes for a happy child, and therefore maternal employment–whether for economic or psychological fulfillment purposes - is legitimized and boundaries between the two worlds are blurred as needed; and (c) separation of work and home whereby motherhood is practiced side-by-side with employment and the two worlds are sheltered from intrusion by the other (Elvin-Nowak & Thomsson, 2001). It is interesting to note that in all three mothering identities, the father's identity, role, and schedule were typically seen as less negotiable, and less influenced by personal choice compared to the mother's identity, role, and schedule.

It has been suggested that within the identity that mothers with professional careers have created for themselves, an overall life pattern for combining work and family emerges. Researchers have described three broad patterns in relatively similar

terms: (a) a single track approach of foregoing parenthood in favor of career advancement; (b) a sequencing approach of modifying work during family formation years and returning to a stronger career focus at a later date; and (c) a multi-track approach of embracing motherhood and career simultaneously and delegating care giving and household tasks as necessary (Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers, & Wentworth, 2007; Gersick & Kram, 2002; Ranson, 2005). There appear to be generational differences in how women have determined an overall life pattern. Older women were more likely to have reported that they engaged in an sequencing approach to combining career and family, and younger women were more likely to have reported that they were attempting both simultaneously (Loder, 2005).

Childcare Choices

Early research on maternal employment focused on child outcomes and the impact of daycare on child development. More recent research has considered how mothers construct their decisions regarding childcare. Mothers with professional careers have not hesitated to pay for high quality child care (Vincent, et al., 2004). However, this does not mean that they were oblivious to the impact of using care on themselves and the child. Mothers' views on childcare have been shown to be dynamic and changing over time as their circumstances changed.

Mothers have often imbued their childcare choices with deeper meaning than location or specific services may have indicated (Uttal, 1996). The process of ascribing meaning to childcare choices may have led some mothers and childcare providers to develop unexpressed but expected rituals that secured the mother's position of psychological preeminence in the child's life despite the childcare provider's lengthier physical presence (Macdonald, 1998).

Recent studies have suggested that the more confident a mother was regarding her choices, and the more secure she was in her own work commitment, the less anxious she would be about making childcare decisions. Mother-child attachment has appeared strongest when mothers were older, more committed to combining work and family, and well supported in their social and marital relationships. This outcome may have reflected that women who were more committed to combining work and family were less focused on their own stress over their choices and therefore could be more sensitive to their child's needs (Harrison & Ungerer, 2002).

Planning and Managing to Combine Motherhood with a Professional Career

Navigating a successful career as a parent has been identified as a developmentally complicated process that is a new life task for the modern generation of career women (Whitmarsh, et al., 2007). Yet women who have expressed contentment with their outcomes have suggested they did not have a precedent to follow, but rather engaged in a form of creative pioneering whereby they identified the possibilities for the life pattern they wanted and then forged their unique pathway towards it (Jackson & Scharmen, 2002).

Planning. Leaders in the work-family field have suggested that young women today must engage in some form of proactive planning if they want to have a life that combines motherhood and a professional career (Hewlett, 2002). They have also suggested that career skills typically must be acquired prior to maternity leave, or the process of figuring out how to combine motherhood and career will be much harder (Tomlinson, 2006).

Despite the available evidence and advice regarding the need for proactive planning, some college-aged women who were gaining an education for a professional career and who were planning to have children were unable to express how they

anticipated combining the two domains (Arthur & Lee, 2008). Still, some women who have been successful at combining motherhood with professional careers have stated that their preparation was ambiguous at best, and it was their tolerance for ambiguity that contributed to their ability to navigate the difficult process (Jackson & Scharmen, 2002).

Managing. Managing a life that includes motherhood and a professional career is a challenging task. Women have often reported that they relied on their own resources and creativity to determine solutions rather than relying on policy or precedents they have seen (Becker & Moen, 1999; Gordon & Whelen, 1998). Women have reported using formal strategies that included placing limits, having a one-job/one-career marriage, and trading off (Becker & Moen, 1999); making cognitive shifts such as reframing how they think about their career, paying for household support, and changing their job environment if necessary (Gordon & Whelen, 1998); and positive reappraisal, planful problem solving, self-controlling, and seeking social support (Brink, 2001). There does not appear to be a coherent pattern to which management strategy the women used; rather, they selected and acted as their unique circumstances dictated.

Making tradeoffs is often noted as a coping or management strategy. Evidence has suggested that women in gender-neutral careers were more likely to make tradeoffs by adjusting their personal expectations, while women in female-dominated careers were more likely to adjust their career expectations (Whitmarsh, et al., 2007). Some women have reported feeling stressed that each tradeoff was temporary and fragile, and was quickly followed by the need to make another tradeoff (Vincent, et al., 2004). Other mothers who were satisfied with their unique combination of motherhood and professional career acknowledged that they made significant tradeoffs (i.e., chances for promotions) but had come to peace about it. Their semantic reframing of the situation

appeared to be related to the degree of peace and satisfaction they felt (Jackson & Scharmen, 2002).

Spousal Support

Qualitative studies have repeatedly concluded that married mothers with professional careers rely on and value support from their spouses. In a study of mothers who said they felt "called" to their particular careers, many participants stated that their "husbands and partners figured significantly in [their] sense that [they] could live out their commitments in both domains" (Sellers, et al., 2005).

Women have reported that they experienced support in the forms of joint decision-making or partner career flexibility (Jackson & Scharman, 2002; Cheung & Halpern, 2008); allowing psychological freedom to "let me be me" (Gersick & Kram, 2002); and partnering with their spouse to intentionally trade off whose career would take precedence at a given time (Gordon & Whelen Berry, 2005). Executive women have reported that they valued emotional support more than household help, and they valued spousal support that reiterated their autonomy over patriarchal support such as financial assistance (Ezedeen & Ritchey, 2008).

Qualitative and anecdotal evidence has clearly suggested that spousal support has the potential to be a significant success factor for a woman who is combining motherhood and a professional career. The theme has been so strong that work-family experts have not been shy about advising young women to take pains to marry well (Cheung & Halpern, 2008; Hewlett, 2002).

Gap in the Current Research

The current study addresses an important gap in the literature by examining the experiences of mothers with professional careers from a perspective of flourishing. The existing collection of literature on mothers with professional careers gives us a glimpse

inside the experiences of these women, yet it tells us little about their abilities to achieve

happiness and well-being (Zvoncovic, et al., 2004).

  Mothers with professional careers are critically important to the economic health

of the Unites States (Boushey, 2005), and they are increasing in numbers and

importance (Buckingham, 2009). Given the economic force these women represent, it is

important to continue to consider the many ways these women are experiencing their full

lives.

CHAPTER THREE: METHOD

Data Source

The data for this exploratory, qualitative research study are a subset from a study called The Changing Landscape of American Women: Understanding Work, Family, and Personal Issues. The Changing Landscape of American Women study is a multi-state research effort approved by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). This project is designed to examine whether and how social media may impact three groups of women in their quest to manage motherhood and paid employment: Latina immigrants; farm and ranch women; and women with professional careers (Zvoncovic, et al., 2004).

The data for this present study were contributed by 33 mothers with professional careers who live and work in the greater Twin Cities area of Minnesota. Each of the women participated in one of five focus group sessions to talk about their experiences, satisfactions, and challenges in their busy lives.

Suitability of the Data for the Present Study

These data are suitable for exploring the questions "Do mothers with professional careers experience the state of flourishing?" and "How do mothers with professional careers express their experiences of the state of flourishing?" There are two reasons the data fit the research questions. First, qualitative methodologies are useful when subjects will be asked to articulate paradoxical human experiences and are therefore ideal for exploring how women are combining family and careers (Jackson & Scharman, 2002).

Second, focus groups may also provide an ideal setting for mothers to discuss whether and how they are flourishing. By definition, the state of flourishing is not a

present state of experiencing feelings of pleasure or happiness, but rather is identified

through objective reflection (Devettere, 2002). Therefore, articulating whether and how

one is flourishing may potentially occur in the conversation with peers that a focus group

is designed to generate.

Exploration of the second research question is predicated on an affirmative

answer to the first research question. Several participants stated during the focus group

conversations that they did feel they were flourishing. Identifying and following this initial

broad theme is acceptable as many researchers recommend beginning the process of

analyzing data and identifying themes during the actual focus group sessions (Carey,

1995; Krueger & Casey, 2000; Grudens-Schuck, et al., 2004).

Participants

Focus groups are typically comprised of homogeneous participants. This allows

researchers to focus the conversation and achieve insight into a particular experience or

group of people as opposed to gathering a range of opinions (Grudens-Schuck, Allen &

Larson, 2004; Webb, 2002). Participants for the present study were required to meet the

screening criteria of (a) being a mother with at least one dependent child still living at

home, (b) working in paid employment, (c) working in a professional position, (d) working

for at least 30 hours a week, and (e) having at least a bachelor's degree.

Participants were initially recruited through the acquaintance networks of the

research team, flyers at local childcare centers, and through an announcement in the

monthly e-newsletter of a Minneapolis-St. Paul area social and recreational association

for mothers. Snowball sampling techniques were also used as women who initially

signed up for the focus group sessions were asked to share information about the study

with their friends and co-workers who may fit the participant criteria.

Recruiting participants via acquaintance networks may lead to groups where the participants' prior knowledge of each others' attitudes and opinions can shape the conversation. However, using existing acquaintance networks can also be justified because they provide one of the social contexts within which ideas are formed and decisions made (Kitzinger, 1994). All participants received a consent form (Appendix A) that contained detailed information about the study, and a demographic information form (Appendix B) to hand in prior to the time of the focus group conversation.

The final sample for the present study was comprised of 33 women who each participated in one of five focus group sessions. All of the women lived and worked in the Mineapolis-St. Paul area. The mothers ranged in age from 26 to 54 years with a mean age of 39.03 years. They had between one and six children, with an average of 2.03 children, and their children ranged in age from infants to 25 years.   Two of the women were divorced, one was living with a heterosexual partner, and the others were married at the time of the focus group. See Appendix C for more detailed information on the participants.

The fact that almost every participant was married became a prominent feature of this study that may have impacted the results. Therefore, it was tempting to title this study as "married mothers with professional careers talk about their experiences of flourishing." However, I did not do so for two reasons. First, we did not ask the women specifically about their relationship with their husbands, rather this was a theme that emerged in their own words. Second, we did not indicate in our participant recruiting materials that being married was a criterion for participating in this study. Further discussion of this issue will be provided in Chapter Five.

Data Collection

Eight focus group sessions were conducted over a period of 17 months between June, 2006 and October, 2007. Because this was an exploratory study, the questions were purposefully broad to allow participants leeway to interpret meanings and re-direct the discussion in order to create their group responses (Grudens-Schuck, et al., 2004).

The questions included: (a) What does the term "changing landscape" mean to you as a mother with a professional career? (b) How would you describe your experience having both children and professional employment in your life? (c) Are there challenges to being both a mother and a professional? (d) Are there rewards to being both a mother and a professional? (e) What is important in enabling you to meet your family and professional goals? (f) If you felt like you were flourishing, what would that look like? (g) Where do you get information on work-family issues? (h) If a miracle occurred and your whole life was improved overnight, what would be different?

At the start of the session, participants were given a handout reminding them of the purpose of the study and listing the above questions (Appendix D). The first question, regarding the meaning and impact of the changing landscape, was posted on a white board where it was visible throughout the session as the focus of the study. Facilitators asked follow-up questions and allowed participants to pursue different directions as the conversation developed. Participants were also encouraged to respond to each other and to ask questions throughout the sessions.

The Principal Investigator (PI) and I were supported by two research assistants for each focus group session. The research team rotated facilitation and note-taking duties. The sessions were recorded on three separate tape recorders to ensure that a full recording would be available after the session. In addition, the note-takers included commentary on the order of speakers and key ideas in order to support the process of

transcribing the data and identifying the speakers for each comment. (Krueger & Casey,

2000). The research team met after each session to debrief the process and determine

if procedural improvements could be made for subsequent sessions.

Data Preparation

Data Transcription

I transcribed the data from the focus group sessions verbatim. The comprehensive field notes made it possible to identify the speakers for over 95% of the comments. Expressions such as laughter and surprise were also noted in the transcripts. The data were transcribed into MicroSoft Word initially, and then converted into Excel documents with columns for the comment number, the participant Identification Number, the text of the comment, and the codes that would be assigned to the comment.

Comments were identified as follows: First, each participant was assigned an Identification number. Participants at the first session were assigned identification numbers that started with "1," participations at the second session were assigned identification numbers that started with "2," and so forth. Then each comment in a session was numbered in order of the conversation. In situations where a comment contained multiple, discrete ideas related to flourishing that we wanted to code separately, we divided it at the appropriate junctures and indicated those with lower case letters. Assigning a separate session number was unnecessary as the participant identification number already provided that information. So, for example, the comment identifier of (8002, 65b) refers to the 2nd part of the 65th comment in the 8th focus group session, and it was made by Participant 8002. In situations where I was unable to identify the speaker for a comment, I put XXX after their group number. Therefore the comment identifier (5XXX, 31) refers to the 31st comment in Session five, and indicates that we were unable to identify the speaker.

Using this method of assigning identifying information in Excel allowed us to examine individual comments within the context that surrounded them. It also made it

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possible for us to use the sort feature in Excel to examine the flow of a single participant's comments over the course of a session and note if she appeared to change any key beliefs throughout the conversation.

Data Exclusion

Upon review of the transcripts it was determined to exclude three of the sessions from the data set for the present study as follows. Session One was excluded because it was a pilot session. Session Three and Session Six were excluded because each contained participants who had become "empty nesters" in the course of time between being recruited for the study and the focus group session they participated in. Upon review of the transcripts, the PI and I decided that the women's new life phase had substantively impacted the nature of their comments about their experiences as a mother with a professional career. It also appeared to impact the manner in which they interacted with the other mothers in the focus group who still had dependent children living at home.

Analysis

Analysis Plan

The task of analyzing the data for this project presented two challenges. The first challenge was in conducting secondary analysis on a pre-existing data set in order to address the research questions. The second challenge was interpreting focus group data to identify representative themes about flourishing for the specific population of mothers with professional careers. This section reviews these two challenges and the proactive solutions that I employed. It will be followed by a section outlining the specific steps of the analysis process.

Analyzing Secondary Data. Secondary data analysis is challenging as the design of the study typically begins after the data are collected for another purpose. My

goal was to deconstruct the focus group conversations about the challenges and

satisfactions of being a mother with a professional career in the changing landscape,

and re-construct them as a conversation about the experience of flourishing. A

combined approach of modified forms of analytic induction and narrative analysis

techniques provided a means of achieving this goal.

Induction is the process of inferring general conclusions based on observing

discrete facts (Smith & Manning, 1982). According to Rettig, Tam and Magistad (1996):

> Analytic induction seeks to develop universal statements containing the
> essential features of a phenomenon, or those things that are always found to be
> associated with the existence of a social occurrence. (p. 208)

A classic approach to analytic induction requires that the researcher first define a

phenomenon and offer a tentative hypothesis, and then examine a single instance of the

phenomenon in depth in order to confirm the hypothesis, revise the phenomenon, or

revise the hypothesis (Znaniecki, 1934; Robinson, 1951). Although both seek to explain

the essential elements of a phenomenon, analytic induction differs significantly from

narrative analysis in that it relies on rigorous examination of data against a pre-

conceived hypothesis in order to fracture and code the data for the later purpose of

using it to test and refine a theory. In contrast, narrative analysis relies on using

connecting strategies to "look for relationships that connect statements and events within

a context into a coherent whole" (Maxwell, 2005. p. 98).

In order to achieve my stated analysis goal I committed *a priori* to code the data

for evidence of flourishing based on Keyes' (2002) "Operational Definitions of Symptoms

of Mental Health." Once the data were categorized and sorted in this manner I planned

to shift to a modified form of narrative analysis whereby I would reduce the data into

"clusters of meaning" which would lead to the development of key themes (Cresswell,

2007, p. 61). This approach is consistent with Maxwell's (2005, p. 43) suggestion that

theory can serve as a spotlight to illuminate phenomena that might otherwise go "unnoticed or misunderstood."

Keyes has not yet formalized theories about how his symptoms of mental health interact with one another, i.e., whether lack of one symptom of mental health leads to an increase in other symptoms or vice versa. This project represents a first attempt at using his model to describe the state of flourishing for a specific population. The coding scheme and coding process will be described in more detail later in this chapter.

Analyzing Focus Group Data. The process of analyzing focus group data is the least agreed upon aspect of this methodology (Powell & Single, 1996). Published studies of focus groups results have often been critiqued for inadequate descriptions of the analysis process (Carey, 1995).

The literature does suggest that researchers agree on at least three best practices in analyzing focus group data. First, many researchers familiar with focus group processes suggest that analysis should focus on key words and themes that emerge in the data (Krueger & Casey, 2000; Grudens-Schuck, et al., 2004; Meyer & Avery, 2008). Second, researchers generally agree that the work of coding themes and tracking changes in group and individual opinions throughout large volumes of text can be cumbersome and is a process that can be greatly aided with computer software programs (Stockdale, 2002; Catterall & Maclaren, 1997; Meyer & Avery, 2008; Beekhuyzen, 2007). Third, researchers urge that analysts consider how group processes and interactions may have shaped the development of the conversation (Reed & Peyton, 1997; Grudens-Schuck, et al., 2004; Shindler, 1992). I responded to each of the recommended practices as follows.

First, I focused my analysis around key words related to the concept of flourishing as represented by Keyes' model. Second, I used Excel software to manage

and sort the large volumes of coded comments that were generated in the five focus

group sessions. Software can sort data and track codes; however it cannot replace the

role of the researcher in developing the coding schema and in interpreting the themes

and insights from the data. As such, programs designed specifically for qualitative

analysis may not be necessary to properly analyze focus group data. A program as

simple and accessible as Microsoft Excel can prove invaluable in the analysis process

(Meyer & Avery, 2008; Beekhuyzen, 2007).

Using the hide rows and sort features of Excel, analysts can examine all the text

units related to a particular code. It is possible to organize the data in multiple ways that

may assist in further interpretation without generating an overemphasis on coding that

leads to treating group narratives as quantitative data (Cattarall & Maclaren, 1997).

Finally, I recorded the comment number as well as a participant identification

number for each comment in addition to assigning a code based on the coding scheme.

This way, I could deconstruct the data by individual codes while still preserving the

opportunity to reconstruct transcripts chronologically in order to examine the context and

interactions around any one particular comment. Further detail about these practices is

described in the following section.

Analytic Procedures

The objective of the analysis process was to deconstruct a conversation about

the challenges and satisfactions of life into meaning units that could be coded for

evidence of the state of flourishing, and then re-construct those meaning units into an

expression of the experience of flourishing. This section outlines the seven steps

followed in this process.

Step One–Gaining a Sense of the Whole. First I read and re-read the

transcripts for each focus group to gain a sense of the entire conversation. As a result of

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this process, I identified several tentative themes that seemed apparent to me. During

this step I met with the Principal Investigator (PI) on several occasions to discuss my

initial reactions to the data. During these conversations we each attempted to sketch out

visual representations of the flow of the conversations and sought linkages with prior

models that have been applied to work-family interactions, such as Brofenbrenner's

Ecological Theory (Papalia & Olds, 1998) and Family Resource Management Theory

(Melson, 1980; Goldsmith, 2005).

I also engaged in the process of "bracketing" (VanManen, 2006) in order to help

me identify and set aside my own preconceived notions about whether and how mothers

with professional careers might experience flourishing. To do this, I wrote extensive and

detailed answers to each of the focus group questions based on my own experiences as

a mother with a professional career. These actions helped me to become intimately

familiar with the transcripts of each session, and also made me more aware of biases I

brought to the analysis process so that I could challenge myself to have a more neutral

perspective towards the data.

Step Two–Testing and Refining the Coding Scheme. Keyes' (2002)

"Operational Definitions of Symptoms of Mental Health" is divided into three categories:

(a) Positive Feelings: Emotional Well-being, (b) Positive Functioning: Psychological

Well-being, and (c) Positive Functioning: Social Well-being. Each of these categories is

further sub-divided into symptoms of well-being for which operational definitions are

provided. The PI and I tested the coding scheme by each coding a transcript

independently and then meeting to review our results. We found that we were in near

perfect agreement in how we assigned codes to the individual comments in the

transcripts. However, we also agreed on an obvious challenge.

In the category of "Positive Feelings: Emotional Well-being," Keyes' (2002, p.299) original model lists three symptoms of well-being: (a) "Positive Affect: Regularly cheerful, in good spirits, happy, calm and peaceful, satisfied, and full of life"; (b) "Happiness: Feels happiness toward past or about present life overall or in domains of life"; and (c) "Life Satisfaction: Sense of contentment or satisfaction with past or present life overall or in life domains." We quickly realized that because we saw the women only once for a 90-minute focus group session, we could not ascertain whether they exhibited positive emotions on a regular basis. Therefore we determined not to code any of the statements as Positive Affect.

Next we noticed that it was often difficult to confidently distinguish between whether the women were expressing happiness or life satisfaction when they expressed positive feelings about their lives. Keyes (2009) stated that while the symptoms of Happiness and Life Satisfaction had some modest correlation, independent testing indicated that the terms were discrete concepts. However, other writings by Keyes (2007) represent Emotional Well-being with one combined symptom: "Avowed Quality of Life: Mostly or highly satisfied with life overall or in domains of life" (p. 98). We determined to use the combined code because we felt it would aid us in answering our central research questions about whether and how the participants expressed experiencing flourishing.

We developed a simple key for the coding scheme in order to make it easier for us to track and manage the data in Excel. We numbered the categories of Emotional Well-being, Psychological Well-being, and Social Well-being 1, 2, and 3 respectively. Then we labeled each symptom within categories by its category number and initials. For example, the factor "Avowed Flourishing" under Category 1 of Emotional Well-being became "1-A." The factor of Personal Growth under Category 2 of Psychological Well-

being became "2-PG."   The factor of "Social Acceptance" under Category 3 of Social

Well-being became "3-SACP" and so forth. The final coding scheme is attached in

Appendix E. With this labeling system for our coding scheme, we were able to track and

sort data based on both category and symptom.

     Step Three–Coding the Data. The PI and I worked together in three different

ways to code the data between August and November of 2009. Initially we sat together

to code sections of data and discussed each comment and how to code it in detail. As

we became more comfortable with the coding scheme, we each coded sections of data

on our own and met to review our codes and discuss any discrepancies. In the latter

stages of coding the final transcripts, I did most of the coding on my own and then met

with the PI to review and confirm my work.

     We originally planned to keep track of the number of times we coded comments

differently so that we could analyze the discrepancies.   However, this task soon became

moot as we saw how quickly we came to consensus through discussion. Throughout

the coding process we each read every line of data multiple times. We are confident

that the final codes represented near full agreement between the two us.

     To assign a code to each comment we went through the following process. First

we began by looking at the specific comments where the women explicitly stated that

they were flourishing. These comments often touched on multiple factors from the

coding scheme. For example:

> I kind of feel like I am flourishing. I have the job that I, right at this moment I have
> the job that I always wanted. I wish I had it when I was 25 and didn't have kids
> so that I could give 100%. But most of the time I feel like I am flourishing in what
> I am doing right now. I have great daycare, I'm really proud of what my kids are
> doing in the computer classes and things like that. But every once in awhile I get
> kind of thrown off my pedestal that I put myself…there was that study they
> released about daycare kids being brats when they're growing up. Now I don't
> really buy into whatever the study of the day is, because it just depends on
> whatever group of professors you gather together what opinion you're going to

> get (laughter, comments)… but 90% of the time I feel great and it's just every once in awhile where I get kind of knocked on my can. (5001, 126a,b; 128)

We coded this comment "1-A" for "Avowed Flourishing" because the participant explicitly stated that she felt she was flourishing. She also touches on the following symptoms of psychological and social wellbeing: 1-A – Autonomy because she resists pressure to feel badly that she is not focusing on her job enough as a result of being a mother or that her children are in daycare; 2-SA – Self Acceptance because she acknowledged multiple aspects of her life in reference to her job and children; 3-SI – Social Integration because she feels supported by her daycare provider.

The exercise of examining and coding the explicit statements of flourishing first helped us to become more comfortable with our coding scheme. More importantly, it also confirmed for us that Keyes' model can be applied to narratives. This reinforced our decision to continue using it.

After we coded the explicit expressions of flourishing, we began coding the rest of the comments. For each comment, we first asked if it represented an idea about the participant's own emotional, psychological, or social well-being. If not, we did not code it. As a result, we did not code comments by the facilitator, or participant comments referencing an example they read in an article, or something they had heard from a neighbor. For example, the following comment was not coded because the participant is sharing her demographic information, but she is not talking about her own emotional, psychological, or social well-being.

> My name is 7003 I am a financial services consultant at [company], for about 3 ½ years now. Before I had our daughter I worked about 50 hours a week. When I came back after having her, she's 16 months, I'm working now between 32 and 42 hours. So it's my daughter and my husband and the dog also in our house, and I just found out I'm expecting (murmurs, congratulations). (7003, 6)

Once we ascertained that a comment referenced the participant's own well-being, we determined if the comment represented something supportive of the participant's well-being, in which case the code would go in the column for "Flourishing" (FL), or something contrary to the participant's wellbeing, in which case the code would go in the column labeled "Not Flourishing" (NF).

We wanted to keep track of comments related to not flourishing for at least two reasons. First, flourishing, by definition, involves resisting and overcoming challenges. Therefore it is unlikely the women could discuss examples of overcoming life challenges without sharing some of the pain associated with those circumstances. Second, one way to define a concept is by negation (Freeley & Steinberg, 2009); that is, to consider what it is not.

Once we ascertained whether the comment was about either Flourishing or Not Flourishing, we matched the comment to the operational definitions of the symptoms of wellbeing in the coding scheme to find the best fitting code. To do this we examined each comment individually and also within context to see the flow of conversation around it. During this part of the process we allowed the participants' words to guide our coding decisions. We made explicit connections between participant language and the language of the definitions in the coding scheme whenever possible. If the participant comment was an expression related to emotional, psychological, or social well-being and did not contain explicit language from one of the operational definitions, then we drew implicit connections to assign a code.

For example, the comment below was coded as "2-PG" because the participant used the exact words "personal growth." In addition, she indicated that she has insight into her potential and she is taking on the challenging new opportunity of graduate school:

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> For me personally, the rewards have been that I have grown personally, and that has been huge. I mean, I have 4 girls and 1 boy and I think about my kids, I was just having a conversation with kids about working, what they want to do. And I said you know you can do anything you want to do. And I said you know what I never had anybody tell me that. It wasn't until my age in the last few years that I realize that I can do anything I want to do if I really want to do it, it is just putting my mind to it. I have the opportunity to do that and I have choices available and I never felt that. You know, for me, I remember going back to college, I mean I thought I could never even get my degree and now I am going to start a masters program here in the fall and that is really exciting me [murmurs of agreement] And so for me going back to work was really personal growth. (4007, 31a)

This next comment was also coded as "2-PG" for personal growth. In this example the participant does not use the words "personal growth" in her comment, but she implicitly expresses insight into her potential and her desire for challenges:

> The professional part is very important. It's very rewarding. I loved maternity leave. I was home six months, I loved it, I wouldn't have done anything differently. But it was with utter relief (loud laughter) and I mean that in the best way, I mean I loved being a mom absolutely. But I really like doing something else for a while during the day. I like being surrounded by adults, I like thinking about law again, I like using my mind in a different way. (8003, 89)

When possible we assigned only one code per comment based on the core essence of the comment. If a comment was a longer one and two distinct ideas were expressed, we divided the comment into parts and assigned a code to each meaning unit.

Step Four–Sorting and Counting. After the coding process was completed, I combined all five transcripts into one Excel document and then used features in Excel to count the number of comments for each code, and for FL and NF. I conducted this exercise to gain a broad overview of the data. This was not an attempt to do an empirical analysis of qualitative data, nor was it an attempt to make predictions or draw correlations. This was also not an exact quantitative analysis because there were times when a comment such as "Yeah" was assigned the same code as the comment prior to and just after it, in order to preserve the flow of the conversation, which is a crucial

feature of focus group research (Reed & Payton, 1997; Kitzinger, 1994). The results of this quasi-quantitative analysis are contained in Appendix F.

It is apparent that the number of comments related to FL and NF were relatively equal, confirming that flourishing often goes hand in hand with suffering. It is also apparent that one of the biggest challenges the women face is related to 3-SCOH - Social Coherence; and that their sense of well-being is in some way connected to 2-EM – Environmental Mastery, 2-PR – Positive Relationships, and 3-SI – Social Integration. These were general ideas we kept in mind when initiating the next step of analysis.

Step Five–Reduction. Up to this point in the analysis process, I used analytic induction to code participant comments according to Keyes' definitions of symptoms of well-being. Per the research plan, I now shifted to a narrative analysis approach of connecting comments to allow themes to emerge. To do this, I created a reduced data set that included only coded comments. I spent considerable time immersing myself in the reduced data set using Excel features to sort the comments by FL, NF, and by codes. With each iteration I read and re-read the participant comments to gain a sense of the whole (van Manen, 2006).

It is common for qualitative datasets to feel bulky and unwieldy. The daunting task for the researcher is to continue to refine and reduce the data until the essence of the focus of inquiry becomes evident (Cresswell, 2007). With these thoughts in mind, I determined to reduce the data further by identifying the key quotes that were coded as FL and NF for each symptom of well-being in the coding scheme. I identified key quotes based on frequency and intensity of participant comments (Krueger & Casey, 2000), and based on those comments that seemed to "fly up like sparks" from the conversation (Barrit, Beekman, Bleeker, & Mulderij, 1978, p. 6).

For some symptoms there were very few key quotes, and for some symptoms there were several key quotes based on the criteria described in the preceding paragraph. For each of the key quotes that I identified, I noted the justification for the code that was applied, as well as other ideas that I wanted to capture for the analysis process. This reduced data set of key quotes is included as Appendix G.

Step Six–Identification of Initial Themes. To reduce the final data set into themes, I examined the cluster of representative quotes under each code and determined which codes represented substantive insight into the participants' overall experiences of flourishing, and whether the cluster of quotes represented a potential theme or could be further sub-divided into clusters that represented themes. I also paid attention to the source of the quotes to determine if a cluster of quotes represented an idea that was presented both within and across groups.

During this part of the analysis process, I engaged in regular dialogue with the PI regarding the themes we were each perceiving in the data, and the processes we were using. At this juncture, we made two important, connected decisions. First, we determined that we would represent the final themes in the language of the participants rather than the language of the coding scheme.   It is common in analytic induction to use an *a priori* code to examine individual cases, and then to use the results to refine the driving theory behind the project (Rettig, et al., 1996). However, because our research question focused on how the women experience flourishing, rather than how the women's conversation could be used to refine Keyes' model, we felt it was important to represent the themes in the women's own language. Of course we hope that our work will also be beneficial to Keyes.

Second, we decided to keep our primary focus on the experience of flourishing despite evidence in the data that the women also explicitly expressed that they were not

flourishing at times. To do this, we organized the initial themes around broad headings of the symptoms of flourishing according to our code and created subheadings for themes related to statements of FL and NF under those headings. This allowed us to use the comments about NF as a tool to help clarify the comments about FL through the exercise of comparing and contrasting meanings (Freeley & Steinberg, 2009, p. 66). The working document of our initial lists of themes is included as Appendix H.

     Step Seven–Identification of Final Themes. To reduce the initial themes into final themes, I listed the initial themes related to flourishing without attaching the names of the symptom. This was in a direct effort to get away from the language of Keyes' model and to forge the themes in the participants' language. I then re-ordered the themes to cluster them according to the participants' language. I repeated this action with the initial themes related to not flourishing.

     From these sub-themes I crafted an initial statement of flourishing based on the sub-themes related to flourishing, and a separate initial statement of not flourishing based on the sub-themes related to not flourishing. These statements of experience were driven by the words of the participants. When I struggled with how to phrase a particular aspect of the experience, I would re-examine the cluster of quotes related to the sub-themes in order to draw out meaning.   In qualitative research, the researcher serves as a primary instrument of analysis (Maxwell, 2005). I felt this kind of impact most keenly during these latter phases of analysis.

     For example, my initial lists of themes included three statements about the spouse relationship: "My husband and I are a team"; "My husband is different than me and that's a good thing"; and "I feel lucky to have a partner." In trying to summarize these, I contemplated statements such as "My husband is important to my success," and "I appreciate my husband." None of these attempts at summarizing the participants'

words felt right. After reading and re-reading all the participant quotes about husbands (those coded as 2-PR for both F and NF), and conferring with the PI, we determined that "I can rely on my husband" was an accurate summary of how the participants expressed flourishing with regard to their relationships with their husbands.

The word "rely" was selected because it seemed most fitting to represent the sense of teamwork, dependability, and trust conveyed in the words of the participants. Later examination of the roots of the word confirmed this selection. The verb "rely" is defined as "to depend confidently; put trust in" and has its origins in the Latin word *religāre* which means "to bind fast, hold firmly" (Dictionary.com, 2010).

We deliberately chose this specific phrasing over other options. "My husband is reliable" was briefly considered and rejected because it is a statement that represents a characteristic of the husband, rather than the experience of the participant. "I rely on my husband" was rejected because it represents a specific action rather than a belief that informs experience. Our specific use of the phrase "I can" implies that the women have an ongoing sense of trust in their husband. This phrasing we felt best exemplified the words of our participants.

This ongoing process of reducing a conversation about challenges and satisfactions into themes about the experience of flourishing was informed by Cresswell's (2007) recommendations for analysis and interpretation of qualitative data. He noted that "data analysis is not off-the shelf; rather it is custom-built, revised, and choreographed" (p. 150). The working document showing the progression to achieve these initial statements in included as Appendix I.

In comparing the initial statements of flourishing and not flourishing, it was interesting to note that the statement of flourishing referenced challenges, but the statement of not flourishing did not represent any satisfaction. Therefore, the overall

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expression of flourishing contains features of the initial statement of not flourishing. In the final steps of theme identification, I conferred with the PI on the sub-themes multiple times over the course of several weeks to confirm the final statement. The final statement representing the essence of the experience of flourishing expressed by the focus group participants is included as Appendix J.

Validity

I am confident that the themes provided in Appendices I and J represent an accurate summary of the participants' experiences with flourishing. The concept of validity is a key issue in qualitative research. Validity in qualitative research includes supporting research conclusions and ruling out potential threats to the interpretations and explanations (Maxwell, 2005).

Supporting the research conclusions. Maxwell (2005) proposed eight strategies researchers may use to support their interpretations and explanations: (a) intensive long-term involvement, (b) rich data, (c) quasi-statistics, (d) respondent validation, (e) intervention, (f) searching for discrepant evidence and negative cases, (g) triangulation, and (h) comparison. I employed five of these suggested strategies as follows:

I engaged in intensive, long-term involvement by observing participants in eight focus group sessions that were conducted over the course of more than a year. Throughout this time I worked closely with the PI to continually review and adjust our focus group procedures, and in continuing to review background literature. This helped us to avoid "spurious associations and premature theories" (Cresswell, 2005, p. 110).

I ensured rich data by taking detailed descriptive notes during the focus group sessions. The final transcripts identify the speaker for most comments and included

notations for participant interaction and emotional expressions. I analyzed quasi-statistics as part of the quantitative overview produced in Step 4 of the analysis process.

I have also received respondent validation for the results. As I worked on the theme reduction portion of the process, I shared initial results with two participants. Both concurred that the description of flourishing "felt" real and exemplified the words they heard in the focus group session each participated in. I also shared the results with one of the research assistants who is no longer at my university and she also agreed.

I searched for discrepant evidence and negative validation by tracking the participant comments associated with not flourishing, and using them to compare and contrast to the statements of flourishing. This helped clarify a picture of how flourishing would appear.

Finally, I employed comparison strategies. Our research design did not call for us to compare our participants to a control group. However, we did have the opportunity to make comparisons of our participants in the same setting at different times (Maxwell, 2005). We did this by comparing the women's comments to one another within focus groups sessions, and assessing general themes that were emerging across focus group sessions.

This study meets most of Maxwell's criteria for establishing validity for the results that are proposed. In addition, although this study was not conducted from a social justice perspective, I believe that the results also meet the tests of credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness (Charmaz, 2005).

Addressing Threats to Validity

Maxwell (2005) recommended ruling out potential threats to qualitative findings by paying close attention to researcher bias and reactivity. It is impossible to eliminate a researcher's perceptual lens from a study. However, it is possible to reduce the impact

of the bias, and also to avoid unintended negative consequences of bias by explicating how the researcher's values and expectations influenced the outcomes of the study.

As a mother of two children who is also pursuing a highly challenging professional career, I have attempted to minimize researcher bias as follows. First, by committing *a priori* to a coding scheme, and by partnering in the coding process with the PI, I ensured that the meaning I was ascribing to participant comments was as accurate as possible. Second, I bracketed my own opinions and assumptions about mothers with professional careers and whether and how they might experience the state of flourishing. And finally, I conferred regularly with the PI and shared my concerns when I felt that my own bias might be impacting my interpretations of data.

Reactivity refers to the influence a researcher may have on research participants (Maxwell, 2005). We attempted to control reactivity in this study by providing participants with a list of the focus group questions at the beginning of the session; by encouraging them to direct the conversation as much as they wanted to by asking each other questions, offering differing opinions, and bringing up new topics to discuss; and by minimizing facilitator commentary during the sessions. A review of the facilitator comments throughout the sessions suggested that we were successful in this effort.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The research questions proposed at the beginning of this study were:

1) Do mothers with professional careers experience the state of flourishing?

2) How do mothers with professional careers express their experiencing a state of flourishing in their conversations?

The results of this study indicate that mothers with professional careers can and do experience the state of flourishing. Several participants explicitly stated they were flourishing in their lives. These statements encouraged me to continue the analysis process to discover how the women expressed experiencing a state of flourishing.

Overall Expression of Flourishing

I used a modified form of analytic induction to code the data for symptoms of well-being.   After I coded and sorted the comments, I used narrative analysis techniques to isolate a statement that represents the essence of the experience of flourishing for the mothers with professional careers who participated in this study:

> I live in a social structure that is at odds with my daily realities as a
> mother with a professional career. I am able to flourish in this context
> because I want to have both work and family in my life, and I am realistic
> about what I can accomplish; and also because I have a husband I can
> rely on, a strong network of social support, and a lot of flexibility in my life.
> I think society is changing for the better for women, and I am confident
> that I am able to make positive changes in my own life, and in the world.

This expression will be discussed element by element below. First I will review how the women described the challenges of combining a professional career and motherhood in their current social context. Then I will present the explicit and implicit ways that the participants expressed that they were flourishing despite the challenges. Next I will highlight the internal and external factors that the women indicated enabled them to

flourish. Finally, I will present the women's positive view of the future and their confidence that they can create positive changes in their own lives and in the world.

A Challenging Social Context for Mothers with Professional Careers

According to the data, the biggest challenge to flourishing the participants faced was living in a social structure that is at odds with their daily realities as a mother with a professional career. Across the focus group sessions, participants referenced at least five ways in which society is at odds with their lives: (a) socialized traditional gender roles, (b) family leave policies and practices in the USA; (c) culture of the professional workplace; (d) media representations of working mothers, and (e) lack of role models.

Socialized Traditional Gender Roles

The participants discussed how socialized gendered role expectations have not evolved as women's roles have shifted dramatically in recent decades. Their conversations implied that they experienced a disconnection between their increased contributions in the marketplace and the expectations and rewards they faced at home.

Two women discussed how traditional gendered role expectations impacted how they shared household duties with their husbands.

> I think that women are taking on more professional roles, and taking a more predominant role across America, but I see it very differently at home. And I see it very differently with our families and friends. The men have careers too, but they are not assuming more responsibility at the house, The women take on more and more and more, and put more hours in every day, and the man comes home and expects dinner to be ready. That's more my experience. (8XXX, 16)

> One thing I notice and talk to my friends about is that it still seems like it's on the mom to do things like doctor's appointments, interviewing for a new day care, the options for that, the extracurricular activities, where are you going to be at, organizing carpools, … getting a babysitter, all those things. It's the woman covering it even though we work as long…And my husband is great with the cooking and the laundry, but I do all that stuff on top of work and he doesn't ever. (8xxx, 17)

Another pair of women suggested that socialized gender roles have led to differences in how men and women expect to be recognized for their household contributions:

> My husband picks up our daughter, normally feeds her dinner and I am coming home at about that time. And I see that he expects much more gratitude and thanks for accomplishing that task then I would ever even think of…it's just not something I would do. (7004, 26)

> It's funny you say that…[my husband] works hard with [our daughters] but nobody expects it. So men expect a lot of atta boys for stuff that, and like you say nobody would really think twice to say to me, "Good job making it to work today." (7001, 27)

Family Leave Policies and Practices in the USA

The idea of society being at odds with their daily lives was implied when the women discussed how the physical impact of pregnancy, delivery, and post-partum family adjustments are not reflected in USA social policies and practices:

> I do think we need a longer family leave physically …It is a live person's body going through delivery. I mean we talk like it's no problem when you're pregnant, you go to work and people expect things of you. And we want them to believe that, but I thought my body was working very hard and a longer family leave is something I envy in other countries. (4009, 57)

Some women contrasted their personal experiences and existing policies with recommendations from the medical and world health community:

> The miracle that I would like to see is a longer maternity leave. Just look at all the recommendations on breastfeeding now and how pediatricians want you to breastfeed for a year. World Health Organization says 2 years. And maternity leave is 12 weeks. And those two things are competing. So there are many reasons, but that one is so blatant. I mean 12 weeks and a year. And pumping is just, you know, (another participant says "hard"). Yes. That would be my miracle. (5006, 192)

Culture of the Professional Workplace

The participants also expressed a lack of coherence between their lives and the culture of the professional workplace. One participant suggested that workplace practices treated the needs of families as an exception rather than the rule in these women's lives:

[My company has] been written up in a working women's magazine about being one of the top companies for women [because] they have offered flextime…and I used to do that a while back - work two days and have a day off, work two days have two days off. It was great. But now the company is starting to cut back on people getting flextime …They used to offer a lot more and then they started cutting back on it, and then they started limiting the number of people who are allowed to do it in the department. …You can take vacation time to go see your kid's [school] program… they're fine with that. But if you want to flex that schedule on a regular basis and put in 10-hour days just so you can leave for half a day, you know leave at noon on Friday on a regular basis…If it's something special every once in awhile, okay. It has to be an exception. It cannot be a way of life for them. (4006, 73a,b)

Another participant pointed out that the general expectation for visible hours at work did not necessarily align with employee productivity:

I really just don't think that most workplaces have adapted in the way that it should be by now. I just think it's ridiculous that we are expected to have so many hours behind the desk and there is this assumption that if you are not sitting at your desk you are not working. Because there are a lot of times when I am up late at night, or on weekends when you know maybe some other people who don't have kids aren't (murmurs of agreement). They're out doing those other things that we wish we were doing (loud laughter). So I think employers should be concerned about people who are working 12 hours a day because how can you be efficient and be happy when you are working that much? And so to me I think that companies should discourage that but I don't think that's happening. (8xxx, 63)

Media Representations of Working Mothers

Many participants stated that they did not see representations of their own lives in the media directed at women. This interchange between participants in Session 7 highlighted the disconnection the women felt between their lives and the portrayals of mothers in traditional women's media:

I get Parents [magazine]…and I reviewed it and I can't stand it….[It] is so stay-at-home mom friendly that it seems like it just doesn't recognize any of the issues [I'm having]. It's like Martha Stewart crafty things…like you need a professional to assist you to come up with a birthday cake that looks perfect. (7xxx, 145)

It does seem like there's nothing in between. (7xxx, 146)

And I think…it's certainly new ground and there's not a ton of people that have the same situation and there is not any answer. (7xxx, 147)

I feel like a lot of the magazines that I've seen are like what to do if you work from eight to five, you know? I'm like what about if you have to work nights (as a general practice doctor) for two weeks and then what to do when you are back on days? Well I can't find it anywhere, so I've often felt that my situation is just so wacky that it doesn't fit anywhere. (7004, 148)

Lack of Role Models

Another source of social challenge the women discussed was that there did not seem to be any role models for them to follow as mothers with professional careers. This appeared to be a source of stress for them. One participant expressed concern about how her daughter would perceive role models for women as a result of her social experiences in daycare:

My daycare, it bothers me that it's all women. My daughter is growing up thinking she is going to be a childcare provider. And not that there is anything wrong with that, but there are no guys there. And that's the model that she's seeing is that women are childcare providers and men go to work, and that's a completely different model than I want to set for her. (5005, 58)

Another participant described how she didn't have any role models for her own life within her immediate social circle:

As far as the changing landscape I don't know what is normal anymore…I have one sister who works halftime as a nurse, and a sister who worked for a little bit here and there and now she's taking classes working towards a Ph.D. And she has a husband who is home and who helps, so that's a different world than I am into. So just figuring out what's normal, what I should expect myself to be doing and what I can actually do. Am I normal? Am I overachieving? Am I underachieving? I don't know. (5002, 5c)

The Experience of Flourishing

Many participants stated that they were able to experience the state of flourishing despite the inherent conflicts in their social context. Their descriptions of flourishing were explicit and implicit. The participants' explicit statements of flourishing almost always acknowledged the challenges they faced and how they dealt with them. These descriptions of "flourishing despite the challenges" were in stark contrast to what it sounded like when they described their experiences with not flourishing. The

participants' implicit statements of flourishing reflected that they were able to draw on internal characteristics and external resources to create a satisfying life.

Flourishing Despite the Challenges

Many participants explicitly stated that they were flourishing even as they described various challenges they were facing. For example, one participant described the challenge of having time for the relationships that were important to her:

> I do feel that it's flourishing. It's all good. The only thing is I don't feel like I have time for myself and I really, really want time with my friends …but I still feel like I'm in a good point in my career, and then you know the kids, and the husband, it's good. And I mean it has its up and down days, believe me, but it's all good. (2003, 230)

Many times as the participants described the challenges in their life, they also identified how they were overcoming or reframing the challenges. For example, one participant placed her current hectic life within the context of her entire lifespan and embraced her current challenges as a point-in-time condition:

> I feel like I am flourishing, and I think I am looking at it from a certain perspective of what my situation is now, and 10 years from now I would expect it to look differently. I would expect to have more time to go check out new restaurants, and go to shows, and do this and that, and travel more. But I think considering the ages of my children now, I feel like I am. I have a good relationship with my husband. I am doing well with my job. I'm getting to spend time with my kids. So I mean is it absolutely perfect? No, there are things that could be better. But I do feel like I'm flourishing from the way I see it. (8001, 103)

Other participants expressed the same sentiment, albeit more informally:

> I try to just really embrace every single piece of it, and even though sometimes I'm really just (slaps table) yeah I'm just crabby and overwhelmed and whatever. It's usually pretty short lived in the grand scheme of things. (4006, 23f)

> Being a working mom it's very, it's kind of like sainthood. You really reach the depths of your patience and you also see the opportunity of how great it is. It's really like this amazing opportunity, but it's really challenging at the same time. (2004, 83)

The expressions of "flourishing despite the challenges" were in stark contrast to what the women expressed they felt when they were not flourishing:

You just feel inadequate, I'm not the best mother, daughter, sister, mother, friend certainly the house, oh, everything I longed to be. And so you basically go from being this scrambler, and getting up to this achievement level, and then you kind of go like, "Oh I'm kind of inadequate in every realm in my life"… A lot of my peers say the same thing, it's like, "Oh this doesn't feel good to me." And I want to be like (smacks her hand on the table) I want to do a lot of things in my life, but it is just not humanly possible. (7004, 64)

Internal Characteristics

The participants' in our study expressed two internal characteristics that were implicit in their statements of flourishing: (a) I want to have both work and a family in my life, and (b) I am realistic about what I can accomplish.

I want to have both work and family in my life. It appeared that part of the reason the women were able to flourish is because they had an internal motivation to combine work and family in their lives. One participant expressed gratitude for the opportunity to have both work and children in her life:

I feel grateful that I am able to have both. I couldn't imagine not having my children and I think any sacrifice I've made has certainly been worth it but I also know that as a person I could not be a stay-at-home mom. Certainly the money helps with having the work, but even if that wasn't the case I would still want to do something. After being on maternity leave, I enjoyed spending time with my kids, but I knew I couldn't do it full time. I mean, that's just not me. I'm not wired for that. And so I feel like being able to be a professional has given me personal growth, and keeping my mind challenged and doing things that I really enjoy doing for myself, and giving me that separate part just for me aside from my family. (8001, 88)

Another participant reflected on the benefits work provided for her personally as well as for her family as part of her motivation to continue working despite the challenges:

It's really hard to balance… but in the grand scheme of things I'm the kind of person I think I'm better if I work...I make a damn good income and I'm making all the benefits for the family (laughter) and I'm not walking away from that. (4006, 23a)

I am realistic about what I can accomplish. The second internal characteristic connected to the participants' experiences of flourishing was their sensibility about what they could realistically accomplish in their lives. They expressed this concept in three

ways. They stated that (a) they were putting forth their best efforts, (b) they had learned to let go of things; and (c) they had consciously lowered their expectations.

"Doing the best job I can" was a phrase that appeared multiple times in the transcripts across focus group sessions:

> I can either feel like… I'm going to be a bad worker, I'm going to be a bad mother, or I can say, look I am doing the best job I can in the moment right now … But I know that the reality is there will always be that tension. And it's a good healthy tension. I just, it's all about mind set and saying okay I have to concentrate on the positive and living a good life. (5004, 125)

Other women expressed their sense of what was realistically possible in life through their willingness to "let go."

> To be a working mother …you have to let go. You have to realize that you are going to be outsourcing things… you have to be able to let go. (5006, 180)

A third phrase that the women used to express their sense of what they could realistically accomplish in life was "lowering expectations." One participant discussed lowering her expectations with regard to how she mothered her children:

> You don't have the luxury of setting up your expectations and having your expectations met every day. I've lowered my expectations where they're fed, they're clothed, they're in bed reasonably on time, you know. The whole rest of it, I have to let go or otherwise I'm going to be beating myself up. (5002, 177)

Another participant expressed that she has lowered her expectations with regard to her career:

> I've just decided to just kind of live in that grey zone I guess, because I feel like at work there are not options that are realistic that would make me feel good about my job and how I'm performing and how I'm working that are less than what I work today. So I'm in a catch, I feel like I'm kind of in a Catch 22, and I guess after 3-1/2 years I'm okay with it. (5006, 64a)

External Resources

The focus group participants commented extensively on three distinct external resources that contributed to their well-being: (a) their husbands; (b) their networks of social support, and (c) the flexibility they had built into their lives.

I can rely on my husband. The majority of women who participated in the focus groups were married. Their confidence that they could rely on their husbands was an important element in their experiences of flourishing. They described relying on a husband in terms of working together as a team, appreciating the differences between the two of them, and feeling lucky to have a partner.

One of the participants described how she and her husband worked as a team over the course of their life together as their careers and family developed:

> When I took the position as Dean, my husband actually decided that he would step out of the work force for about 3 years…He was home doing consulting out of the house. He was there all the time when the kids had to get to the orthodontist, and all that. I didn't have to worry about it. Well now we live up in [city] and he works down in [city] so it's me that has to rearrange everything and that so it's kind of my turn to do this … So we've kind of juggled it back and forth now. (2002, 31,67a)

Another participant shared how she and her husband worked as a team on a day-to-day basis as situations arose:

> I do have a husband who helps out quite a bit. He hardly ever travels for work. His schedule is very flexible. He will stay home with the kids when they're sick at least half the time. And we communicate constantly so we are always going to compromise on responsibilities. And my husband usually does drop off and I do pick up. And ever since the 35W bridge collapse it's added 25 minutes to the way home with pick up and everything every day. And, I mean I'm not complaining, it could have been much worse. We could've been on the bridge. But…traffic has been much worse. And I said to him, "You know I can't take this every day, I just can't." And so now he picks up the kids a couple of days a week and we kind of work that out. (8001, 45a)

The women in the study also talked about how they valued the differences between themselves and their spouses. One participant talked about accepting that her husband parented differently than she did:

> It's a different style and I learned really early on that I wasn't going to tell [my husband] or criticize him because then I would be taking care of children all the time…For the most part he just does things very differently, and the boys love it. They love spending time with me, they love spending time with him so it's all

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good. So you have to assume that they are not going to do it the same way. (2003, 98, 100)

Another participant made a more general statement about how she appreciated the different perspective that her husband brought to her life:

> To me it's always been very nice that I can have somebody else very different than I am to kind of compensate, maybe even make me see the world a little bit different way or I would always be looking on my own thinking. So I'm, I actually like that help in my life. (4009, 25b)

In addition to describing the value of partnering with their spouse, and their appreciation for the different perspective that their spouse brought to their life, several participants also expressed how they felt lucky to have a spouse. One participant explained how her work and family decisions were possible because she had a spouse who provided the financial support for her choices:

> And I loved being there as [my children] were growing up. And I loved being able to see all the stages…I feel very fortunate because I did get a break. I mean my husband's been working ever since he graduated from college. He's never had a break. (4004, 20a, 64c)

The participants' expressions of flourishing were rich with explicit references to how much they appreciated their spouses. In addition many of the women implied appreciation for their spouses by referencing their desire to focus more on the romantic or intimate aspect of their relationships:

> So I feel like we're not flourishing in our relationship. It's not bad. There's nothing bad…but it's not like it used to be…I don't want to go back to how it used to be, but I do want to find a better way to balance, and you know, that beauty and passion and time for our husband and wife relationship. That's…what I really miss. (5007, 132c)

I have a strong network of social support. The second external resource the participants discussed was their network of social support. The women described how they found support primarily through their extended family and their daycare. Their conversation also suggested that the women would access support wherever they could find it. Several women discussed the value of having family close by:

I am lucky enough that when my parents are in town they do help …So for me it's helpful to have family. It's that whole 'it takes a village.' And so I really need the help, and we're fortunate. (8xxx, 42a)

Some women who had a supportive extended family in the area emphasized the importance of this resource in their lives by expressing compassion for the women who did not have the same resource available to them:

My parents live in the area and my brother lives with his spouse. So we've actually never had a babysitter for our kids…So it surprises me that nobody else [in this session] has that. That's really impressive that you guys can pull that off. (2003, 29)

Some of the participants stated that having daycare they could trust was a source of support. Two participants in Session 5 discussed how supportive their daycare arrangements were:

What has been most important for me is without a doubt, I mean there is the husband part, but also great daycare… and I can't believe actually how much easier it's been. Maybe it's just the second kid thing, but yeah I just take it for granted now because I have great daycare. So I don't even think about that." (5006, 116)

I see what my kids do at daycare, and I love it...The fact that there are fulltime people caring for my kids, that's their only job, they've got somebody else making the food, it's awesome. (5002, 117)

In addition to extended family and trusted daycare, the women reached out to a variety of other venues for the support that enables them to flourish. One participant commented on the importance of friends:

I think that the most comforting thing for me is having a circle of friends in the same situation. (7005, 152)

Another woman described how important her neighbors were to her:

Since we don't have any family up here [we rely on] our neighborhood. …if I'm going to be way late or my husband's going to be way late we just call Clarissa or Vicki and say, "Can they come to your house for a little bit after school till I get there?" And it's no problem. If I didn't have that, I don't know how I would do it. (2002, 140)

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Having a support network is so central to the experience of flourishing that some women who felt they were lacking support indicated that it compromised their ability to flourish:

> What it would really look like if I felt like I was flourishing …my friends…I don't feel like I give them enough. I never, I never, I hardly ever go out with friends. I hardly ever have a girls' night out. And if I do it's like a big oh my gosh, you're doing that or you have to make all the logistics happen so you can do it, right? (loud laughter) … So that's the part of what good would look like, flourishing. If I really felt like I had that balance of, I'd still have that network of friends, you know really close. (5007, 132b)

> ***I have a lot of flexibility in my life.*** The third external resource the women reported using to manage in their busy lives was flexibility. The women talked about (a) moving in order to increase the amount of flexibility in their lives; (b) appreciating the flexibility they did have; and (c) feeling frustrated when they could not achieve the flexibility they desired.

Several women stated that they had moved in order to find or to increase flexibility in their lives. One participant described moving in terms of changing housing locations in order to increase her access to extended family and also her school choices:

> I relocated to be near my mother and it made a huge difference…but I did have to move across the country for it…I made sure the commute was doable. And then I kept [my son] in places and centers that were close to my work so that I have the option [to volunteer at his school]. But again, it involves a sacrifice. It involves negotiating everything in your life. (8002, 44, 81)

Another participant described moving in terms of changing jobs:

> One of the main reasons that I went to that position is because … now I can actually be a little more flexible.   (2002, 32)

Several participants expressed gratitude for the flexibility they had at work. One woman stated her appreciation for her company's flex-time program:

> One of the great things about [my company's] flex-time program is that I really want to stay firm and work from home on Wednesdays. I will have daycare there, I will be in my sweats, I will not have make-up on, and I will, you know, go and nurse the twins. And so it's that flexibility that is hugely positive. (5006, 103c)

In addition to their appreciation for policies and programs that supported flexibility,

several women expressed appreciation for individual bosses who exhibited an attitude of

flexibility:

> I remember changing bosses in short order when my second was a baby and just the relief that came with the new boss who is so flexible and a family man and had kids of his own that were approaching their teenage years. (2001, 198)

In contrast, one participant described the stress that she felt when she reported to a

boss who was not supportive of flexible work arrangements:

> I was given the 4-day week by my former boss. Then the new boss came in who is remarkably not flexible and so I hear these comments…So I have the internal pressure on myself to do and exceed what I have committed to do and then the frustrating part is when I have someone hinting or jabbing, I can't even shoot back it's so subtle, but hinting that I am somehow inconveniencing them by having that one day off. (2003, 44)

Hope for the Future

For the women in this study, the experience of flourishing included a sense of

hope for the future. The women optimistically described themselves as agents of

change within the context of their changing landscape.

Society is Changing for the Better for Women

The women in this study were able to clearly articulate numerous ways that the

structure of current society is difficult for them as mothers with professional careers, yet

they were also quick to acknowledge the positive direction society is going for women.

One participant discussed the evolution of opportunities for women in the professional

workplace:

> At work it's an engineering place, a scientific place, it's still a man's world. So I still am in meetings with maybe sometimes the only woman or only two women. So it's just the world. It's changing, it's really changing. The other day there were four of us, only women at the table and I was like am I seeing correctly? [general laughter] We were the decision makers so this was fun. (4009, 27c)

Another participant expressed optimism by noting changes in the availability of

opportunities for women from prior generations to the present:

> Wow do we have a lot of opportunities as women today going back to the standard of 20, 30 years ago whenever your parents were raising you. My mother didn't have the same opportunities you know …we do actually have more choices and more opportunities. (5007, 70b)

A third participant expressed that the positive direction of society was reflected in

adjustments in gender role expectations:

> Where the landscape is really, really changing I think is that in equal numbers the men who are leaving to pick up kids in daycare earlier, and the men who are having to take care of sick kids, and men who take paternity leave. I think that's a change. (8xxx, 35)

Agents of Change

The participants in this study described themselves as agents of change within

the social context that was changing around them. Their conversation indicated that

they saw themselves as responsible for making positive change happen in their own

lives, and that they were part of the history of the evolution of opportunities for women.

Making changes in my own life. Many women reported examples of how they

took responsibility for making positive changes in their work environments and in their

homes. One participant shared how she created a change in her work situation in

preparation for becoming a mother:

> Before we decided to have kids I went on a little bit reduced schedule, I talked to my boss and I said I only want to work four days a week. I took a reduction in pay and started working four days a week, and started setting an expectation for post baby. (8004, 7)

Two participants discussed how they created changes at home in order to

improve their quality of life:

> It was kind of a conscious effort to say [to my husband] you know what, we're going to split this up, you have to take some of those…I think you really have to make an effort to not take it all on. (7001, 29)

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In our house that was definitely an evolution. My husband's been staying home for about five years…But in his mind his role was to take care of the kids. And it really took us a very long time to get to the point of my realizing that in my mind your role is to take care of the house, and to cook for dinner and to make sure we have food, and you know all of those things. In his mind it was like, well you know I'm going to take care of the kids and then you'll come home and you'll sort of take over. And it took me years of saying that's not going to happen. I'm going to come home at six and if the kids haven't eaten it's…going to be a disaster. And it took years before he realized, yeah I guess I should cook dinner. *(laughter)* But it's really been very slow because in his mind it was just all about I'm staying home with the kids and that's what I do. (7004, 30a)

Making changes in the world. Finally several women stated that they saw themselves as agents of change in society and that their efforts were making the world a better place for future generations. One participant expressed that she felt a sense of responsibility to continue the work of women from prior generations:

There are women who went before us who made the strides that they did and basically made it possible for us to have the jobs that we have now. And I do kind of still feel that sense of duty as being able to show the next generation that it is possible to struggle but to still try to make something work where you are doing what you want to be doing… if I stepped out of the work world it would be harder for those who come behind me. (7XXX, 100)

Another participant concluded that it was rewarding to have the opportunity to show what was possible for mothers with professional careers in a changing society:

There are so many different opportunities…I think of my mom having to stay at home and her thinking her options were limited, where I get to go to [my company] and different places. It's like a totally different world than what I experienced growing up and watching her. And so that's what I think of is the reward is to show that it can be different than what society has been in the past. (4003, 21b)

The results of this study indicate that mothers with professional careers do experience the state of flourishing in their busy lives. We have asserted that the women are flourishing because they stated it was so in their own words, and because we found evidence of symptoms of flourishing by coding their comments according to a validated model. This statement is not intended to suggest that mothers with professional careers flourish all the time, or that they experience a state of flourishing more often than they

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experience a state of not flourishing. It is simply intended to express what it sounds like

if and when the women are experiencing the state of flourishing so that we might

consider how to recognize and foster that state more often.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The questions that guided the examination of the focus group data were: Do women with professional careers experience the state of flourishing, and if so, how do they express their experiences of flourishing? An empirical assessment tool could tell us whether the women in this study are flourishing according to the Operational Definitions of Symptoms of Mental Health (Keyes, 2009). However, an empirical assessment would not be able to tell us what a state of flourishing looks, sounds, and feels like for this specific population. For that answer we have turned to the words of the women (van Manen, 2002).

This chapter is organized as follows: first I will provide some reflections on what the reduced statement of flourishing tells us, and what it does not tell us, and compare and contrast these results with existing literature. Then I will review the strengths, limitations, and unique contributions of this study. Finally, I will discuss some suggestions for continuing and extending this work, as well as some practical applications for these results.

What does the overall expression of flourishing tell us?

The reduced statement of flourishing seems rather obvious on the face of it. There is nothing earth shattering about suggesting that mothers with professional careers experience their social context a challenge, but that they have been able to create flourishing lives anyway. However, there is much to learn from the essence of the conversation of the women in our study. The reduced statement of flourishing suggests four insights into the lives of mothers with professional careers: (a) many women expect and desire to combine work and family in their lives; (b) by and large, combining motherhood with a professional career is a do-it-yourself project; (c) smart employers

who want to access the available talent of professionally trained women who are mothers will work to make flexibility available them; and (d) as society evolves, mothers with professional careers will be at the forefront of creating new ways to combine work and family.

Expecting and Desiring Work and Family

The notion that women engage in paid employment as a matter of personal choice is fully outdated and must be replaced with a model that assumes women will bear children and will engage in market work in their lifetimes. Economic indicators suggest that mothers will continue to engage in the workforce in increasing numbers, but the reasons for women engaging in work and motherhood extend beyond basic financial concerns.

Both sacred and secular philosophers have suggested that the desire to live a life that includes work and family is at the heart of what it means to develop fully as a human being. This sentiment was expressed in ancient spiritual writings when the authors of the Bible declared that God created humans "in His likeness" (Genesis, 1:26); that is, as creative beings. The first recorded command God gave mankind was to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). These words are not redundant. They represent two separate instructions, that humans were to be productive in their work, and also to bear children.

Developmental psychologists have also concurred that the desires for meaningful work and for family are equally central human drives. Brofenbrenner (1988) suggested that work and family are the two primary domains through which humans experienced growth. More recently, the American Psychological Association Task Force on Work and Family asserted that humans have a psychological need to have both work and family in their lives. They suggested that labeling work as a personal choice for women

ignored human psychological needs as well as practical financial considerations (Halpern, 2005).

The conversation of the focus group participants reflected their expectations and desires for a life that included both work and family. When the women talked about miracles that might improve their whole lives, several indicated that they might like more sleep, more money, and more time for friends and hobbies. However they did not suggest that they did not want to continue to combine career and motherhood.

It is clear that there exists a class of powerful, educated, contributing women who desire to be mothers and nurture their children, but for whom the tasks of raising children do not fulfill their drive to work and contribute in the world. It appears they see their children as a blessing and a desirable component of their lives, rather than as their sole or primary contribution of work in the world (Barnhill, 2004). This apparent willingness to embrace the contradictions of motherhood and professional employment resonated with prior suggestions that modern mothers actively construct identities that reflect a dual commitment to mothering and employment (Garey,1995).

The struggle to integrate the domains of work and family can foster psychological growth that leads to confidence and increased life satisfaction (Friedman, 2008). For example, in the coding scheme autonomy (2-A) is described as "comfortable with self-direction, has internal standards, resists unsavory social pressures" (Keyes, 2002, p. 299). By definition, a woman cannot achieve this symptom of flourishing unless she is facing unsavory social pressures in her life. Some philosophers have gone so far as to suggest that the state of flourishing cannot occur apart from hardship and challenges.

> Particular heights of the human experience, what some call thriving, are known *only* by those who have run the gauntlet. (Ryff & Singer, 2002, p. 16)

From this perspective, it appears that the inherent challenges of combining work and family may provide the crucible which forges the women's abilities to flourish.

A Do-it-Yourself Project

The women in our study were able to clearly articulate numerous ways the domains of work and family are in conflict in our current society. It was notable that their language mirrored classic treatises on the topic in many ways (Moen & Roehling, 2004; Hewlett, 2002; Hirshman, 2006). Their conversations reflected a prevailing theme among researchers that women's struggles to combine work and family in our present social context are not due solely to personal limitations and failings (Zimmerman, et al. 2008).

Given their challenging context, figuring out how to manage work and family becomes a necessary, ongoing survival strategy for women who are attempting to embrace both spheres. Many of the participants expressed pride that they had been able to figure out individual solutions to their challenges. This perspective was similar to prior studies with women who had self-identified as creating family-friendly careers. They described themselves as "creative pioneers" because they had to "develop the possibility" for family-friendly careers as "there was no precedent or existing structure" (Jackson & Scharman, 2002, p. 80).

The conversation of the participants in the present study suggested that being a mother with a professional career is, by and large, a do-it-yourself project. The overall expression of flourishing implies three personal belief systems that enable women to develop individual solutions to managing work and family: (a) they have a sense of optimism; (b) they are clear about their goals and boundaries; and (c) they believe that marrying well matters.

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Sense of optimism. It is obvious that the desire to have both children and a career may present some internal struggles for women in a changing landscape. Several participants in this study discussed the challenges of combining work and family in a positive manner, yet framed the conversation optimistically by discussing their lives of "opportunities", and "fullness." This is consistent with findings by Johnston and Swanson (2006) who suggested that while there are multiple apparent contradictions in desiring both career and family, "a mother might reframe her construction of motherhood and/or career expectations in such a way that tension no longer exists" (p. 511).

One of the most striking aspects of the findings was how vigorously the women expressed their sense of flourishing even as they described the challenges they were facing. This is consistent with investigations into narrative identify formation that suggest that "people at high levels of …well-being tend to emphasize personal growth in their life stories…[they] also tend to frame difficult life experiences as transformative experiences" (Bauer, McAdams & Pals, 2006, p. 81).

Although the women in this study could succinctly describe the problematic manner in which society is structured, and they articulated solutions they would like to see, there was an obvious absence of blaming and whining. Rather, the women's overall conversation expressed a pragmatic sensibility about making their lives work despite their context. The participants' enthusiasm for the life they were building was evident. Functioning well, by definition, requires that one develop one's potentials and capacities (Snow, 2008). The desire, decision, and commitment to continue a professional career and have a family likely motivated them to find methods for coping with the challenges of that arrangement. Brink (2001) identified similar contextual challenges and individual responses in her study of professional women in South Africa.

Clear goals and boundaries. Working mothers have traditionally been advised to learn how to multitask if they want to successfully combine work and family (Cheung & Halpern, 2008). This advice continues despite the fact that recent research indicates that multitasking actually reduces productivity and increases stress levels (Buckingham, 2009). For the women in this study, flourishing involved having a very strong sense of realism about their own capabilities. They stated that they proactively constrained their schedules to manageable levels even if they experienced the desire to pursue more and larger goals in their lives.

This is consistent with research that has shown that high achieving women in leadership roles tend to be adept at setting realistic goals for themselves, working in advance to remove potential obstacles to goal achievement, and adjusting their goals when necessary (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002). In contrast, retaining a logistically impossible combination of internal standards of career and mothering performance has been shown to be detrimental to the sense of well being for women (Gersick & Kram, 2002).

Marrying well matters. Despite acknowledging that they live in a context where there are gender-based inequalities in the distribution of home labor, or perhaps because of it, the participants in this study suggested that their ability to flourish was dependent in part on their husband. The women expressed appreciation for many aspects of their husbands: first that they had one and they were not alone in attempting to combine work and family; and second for the things their husbands did that added value to their lives.

It sounds old fashioned, but in a sense what our participants appeared to be saying was "marry well." The definition of "marrying well" was unique to each woman. For some of the women in the study, marrying well meant having a husband who was

able and willing to be a stay-home parent while they pursued a career. For other women in the study, it meant having a husband who provided the financial means for them to either step out of the workforce briefly, or work-part time, during their childbearing and early child-rearing years.

The women in our study stated that they wanted to partner with their husbands. Some mothers with professional careers have clarified that they relied on sharing parenting duties with their husbands as opposed to asking their husbands to help with parenting duties (Ruderman & Ohlott, 2002). Other women have indicated they were willing to take on the planning role in order to help their husbands become more engaged in the doing role (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2005). In contrast, it has been suggested that a very likely reason some women opt out of their careers when they become mothers is because although their husbands may offer verbal support, they do not fundamentally flex their own career commitments and as a result the women feel they have no choice (Stone, 2007).

As researchers we wondered if one reason the majority of mothers in our study were married, even though that was not a criterion for the study, was in part due to the presence of a spouse to help with childcare in the evenings and on weekends when the focus group sessions were conducted. Regardless, it is not surprising that the type of relationship a woman has with her husband will impact her sense of flourishing. Recent studies have suggested that the one factor that has consistently predicted subjective well-being is having close relationships in their lives (Reis & Gable, 2002).

The Importance of Flexibility

Flexibility was a key theme in this study. Some participants stated that they valued flexibility so much that they would move across the country or change employers in order to increase their perceptions of flexibility. The drive for flexibility may be a

reason why some women aspire to higher level jobs. Managerial and professional

careers have been shown to be higher in control and therefore less stressful than some

traditionally female careers (Beatty, 1996).

It was notable that one of the sub-themes was that the women were grateful for

any flexibility they had. They seemed to treat it as something they had earned, but were

not guaranteed. They suggested that their levels of flexibility could change from boss to

boss as easily as it could change from organization to organization. The women also

discussed that despite having flexibility in terms of work structure and hours, there was

often little flexibility in the results they were expected to deliver. They stated it was up to

them to be very conscious of the results they agreed on and that they did not get into a

situation where they were overcommitted.

Their awareness of, gratitude for, and desire to achieve increasing flexibility

suggested that employers who want to access the talent potential of this pool of highly

educated women would be wise to consider whether and how they are providing these

women with access to the flexibility they crave.

Creating New Ways to Combine Work and Family

In this study we looked at the women's conversations for explicit and implicit

statements that they were flourishing. A key theme that emerged was that the women

felt good that they had the ability to impact their micro and macro environments. The

women expressed confidence that they were able to make the changes they need to

make in their personal lives. And upon reflection, their conversation also indicated that

they feel good about being able to make changes in the workplace and in the world for

other women. Many other studies have indicated that women enjoy working, and they

benefit from the chance to have multiple roles. However there has not yet been a study

of mothers with professional careers that explored whether the women see themselves as change agents and how they feel about this role.

The world is changing and opportunities will continue to increase for women as the transition from a labor economy to a knowledge economy continues. It's not new that the landscape is changing, but we have not talked about it a lot, not taught women how to thrive when this rapid pace of change is occurring. Social arrangements have not kept pace with economic changes. "Many women…feel that they are caught in an ever-tightening tangle of commitments.   If the empowerment of women was one of the great changes of the past 50 years, dealing with its social consequences will be one of the great challenges of the next 50" (*The Economist*, 2010, p. 49).

Women such as the participants in our study are in an ideal position to define and develop the individual, workplace, and social changes that are needed to advance the integration of work and family within the changing landscape. It is natural for individuals who feel they are flourishing to desire to use their pursuits to serve mankind (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). Therefore it is not a stretch to suggest that as individual women change their personal lives to create conditions that allow for their own flourishing, they will likely also bring about positive changes that will help society grow and flourish.

> Human life is by nature an interpersonal and political life. Thus 'my' good is also an interpersonal and political good – the good of others and the good of the community. Although the good I desire is always my good, it will often be good for me to seek the good of others and the good of the community. (Devettere, 2002, 25).

What the Reduced Statement of Flourishing Does Not Tell Us

We are not able to use the reduced statement of flourishing to compare the mothers with professional careers and how they experience flourishing to the experiences of other particular populations. The reduced statement of flourishing also

does not tell us how the symptoms of flourishing interact with one another. Nor does it tell us whether attending to one area that is perceived as problematic can increase a mother's level of flourishing, or perhaps will only serve to allow another area requiring attention to emerge.

It is also important to note that while the reduced expression of flourishing may direct us to ways in which women can build up their reserves for flourishing, it does not tell us that if women achieve a state of flourishing the objective results of their efforts as mothers and workers will be acceptable and deemed praiseworthy by their families, co-workers, and members of their surrounding communities.

Strengths and Limitations of this Study

The PI and I both have in-depth knowledge and understanding of the theories and literature related to work- family issues from multiple perspectives. We are also both intimately familiar with the data for the present study which has several strengths and some limitations.

Strengths of the Study

This study has several strengths for readers and future researchers to consider. I will briefly discuss three of them in this section: (a) use of a robust data set; (b) a strong theoretical foundation; and (c) explicit qualitative analysis procedures.

Robust data set. The women in this study were educated professional women in high status positions. They gathered to speak about a topic that was important to them. Most of the participants appeared to have strong opinions on the topic and to possess excellent verbal communication skills.. As a result, each focus group session was characterized by a robust conversation with a high degree of involvement across participants.

The transcriptions of the focus group sessions were word-for-word reflections of the conversations. Almost all of the speakers for each comment were identified which allowed for more effective coding and analysis of the conversation. This feature of the study also allows for future analytic processes in the subsequent studies.

The present study includes data from 33 mothers with professional careers who each participated in one of five focus group sessions. The volume of data we reviewed assured us that we had achieved thematic saturation. Although transcripts for three of the original eight focus group sessions were excluded from this present study because some of the women did not meet the full intentions of the participant criteria, repeated reviews of those transcripts suggest that they would support our findings.

Strong theoretical foundation. An explicit application of theory is what separates rigorous qualitative studies from exploratory endeavors that are akin to fishing expeditions or journalistic-style reporting. The use of clearly defined codes allows researchers to categorize and sort data in such a manner as to test and advance theories.

In this study we applied strong theoretical foundation with clear operational definitions for the codes to an existing data set. This allowed us to take advantage of the robust data set we had available, as described above. We were able to categorize and sort the data in a manner that used the words of the participants to give voice to a pre-determined theoretical stance. The use of Keyes' (2002) work on flourishing was a novel theoretical stance for research on mothers with professional careers. It also helped explicate the perspective that we as researchers brought to this study.

Explicit analysis procedures. Analysis is the least agreed upon component of focus group methodology. Articles reporting on focus group studies often provide little in the way of detailed, replicable steps that were used to reduce the narrative data into key

themes. We aggressively sought to reduce these potential criticisms in the present

study by applying an explicit, methodical approach to our analysis.

Our combined approach of applying Keyes' operational definitions for symptoms

of flourishing as a coding scheme, and using Excel to manage, sort, and track the data

allowed us to achieve a rigorous analytic process. We anticipate that the extensive detail

about our 7-step analysis process that is provided in this document will help increase the

validity and trustworthiness of our findings by ensuring that our results are replicable. We

also hope that the detail provided can be of assistance in furthering focus group

methodology in future research efforts.

Limitations

There are at least two limitations to our study that will be discussed briefly below:

(a) unintended homogeneity of marital status of our participants; and (b) heterogeneity of

mothering stage of participants.

Homogeneity of marital status. It is common for focus groups to be composed

of a relatively homogenous group of participants in order to collect in-depth perspectives

on the topic of inquiry. When we advertised for participants, our criteria included

expectations regarding work and mothering status. We did not explicate criteria

regarding marital status. By default we ended up with a group that was almost

completely comprised of married mothers with professional careers.

This feature of the study had significant bearing on the results. When the women

discussed the resources that enabled them to cope and manage their busy lives, and the

features of their lives that were challenging, they most often mentioned their husbands.

The quantitative overview provided as Appendix F makes it clear that 2-PR – Positive

Relations with others, is an area that has great potential to impact either a women's

sense of flourishing, or not flourishing.

It is not clear to us whether the presence of a husband contributed significantly to a woman's sense of flourishing or not. Our results simply indicated that for the women in our study who were married, and who could rely on their husband, this reliance did add to their sense of flourishing.

It is possible that one reason we ended up with a group of women who were mostly married is because they had a resource they could call upon to pick up or care for their children so that they could participate in the focus group session. It has been noted by other researchers that studies of the experiences of working mothers are often biased in favor of those who have the internal mechanisms and resources that enable them to cope more effectively (Brink, 2001).

Heterogeneity of mothering stage. While unintended homogeneity of marital status created a challenge in our study, it was unmanaged heterogeneity of mothering stage that created the second, albeit minor, limitation of this study. Our participants had between one and six children. Their children ranged from ages from infancy to 25 years old. While all participants had at least one dependent child living at home in order to participate in the study, some of them also had adult children at college or living nearby, and at least one participant was already a grandmother.

The women's issues and stresses were as varied as their specific mothering situations. There are obviously significant differences in the daily life challenges faced by mothers of infants, as compared to mothers of teenagers, or mothers of dependent children who are also grandmothers. The present study is unable to explore the differences in how mothers with professional careers experience flourishing as their children age and their careers change over time.

Unique Contributions of this Study

This study contributes to the extensive collection of work-family literature by examining whether and how mothers with professional careers experience the complex state of flourishing in their lives. This is a unique and growing population for which there is minimal research knowledge. Within this collection, this study stands out as a theoretically grounded, purposeful study. The use of focus group methodology allowed the women to converse about their lives in their own words. The perspective of flourishing provided a unique lens through which to peer into the full lives of mothers who are engaged in professional careers. Specific contributions of this study include: (a) it contributes to the narrow body of literature on mothers with professional careers by looking at them through the lens of flourishing; (b) it advances focus group methodology; (c) it supports the use of Keyes' (2002) model as a coding scheme that can be used to give a voice to the experience of flourishing; and (d) it reports the results in the words of the women who participated.

The Lens of Flourishing

Prior studies on working mother have typically looked at the women through problematic lenses using role strain theories and applying metaphors of juggling and balancing. These approaches do not advance understanding of these highly educated, powerful women as social resources.

When we looked at the mothers with professional careers through the lens of flourishing, we came to several of the same broad conclusions as prior studies have reported. The life task of combining work and family is a massive challenge under the best of circumstances. It is easy to understand why researchers have been interested in uncovering and giving words to the invisible structural barriers women have faced in our culture. However, critiques can only go so far in transforming a society.   Indeed the very

essence of flourishing demands that we advance our conversation beyond critiques and begin to discern the opportunity and potential inherent in our present circumstances so that we can continually be building a positive future.

Therefore, our hope is to use the positive, productive tone of our findings to advance conversations about how helping women to manage the domains of work and family in their lives will benefit women and society as a whole. We recognize however, that we are navigating a fine line between educating women on how and why they can conceive of themselves as flourishing, and "blaming the victim" for not being competent enough to flourish despite her context.

Advancing Focus Group Methodology

This study provides at least two methodological contributions. First, we successfully used Excel to manage the focus group data and provide the platform for our phenomenological reduction tactics. This demonstrated that a relatively inexpensive software tool that is readily accessible to most researchers can be useful in managing the volumes of data created by qualitative methodologies.

Second, we believe we have furthered focus group methodology with our rigorous approach. We demonstrated that effectiveness of combining analytic induction and narrative analysis techniques to identify the essence of narrative data. We used analytic induction techniques to code the data according to a model that was determined *a priori.* This created a replicable process and established a strong theoretical foundation for our results. Then we used connecting strategies identify the essence of the women's conversation. Through this process we were able to distill approximately 250 pages of transcribed data into a succinct expression that represented the collective conversation of the 33 women who each participated in one of five focus group sessions.

Giving Voice to the Experience of Flourishing

We used Keyes' (2002) model as a coding scheme and have provided extensive examples of how to apply it to qualitative data. Keyes' empirical studies are beginning to shed light on who flourishes and how often. However, there has not yet been a study that gives voice to individuals who are experiencing flourishing in order to help us understand how flourishing looks and sounds (Keyes, 2009a). The current study represents the first attempt.

The Words of the Women

This study allowed the women to reflect on how they experienced their social context, to state what they felt were the critical components and conditions of their lives, and to use their own words to state what flourishing meant to them. Few studies have reported on whether and how women feel they are experiencing quality of life and well-being as they attempt to combine career and motherhood. This project adds to the collection of literature by reporting about the experience of flourishing in the voices of the women who participated.

Future Studies

Studies in the immediate future can build on the current study four ways. First, future studies can include the Mental Health Continuum Short-Form assessment (Keyes, 2009b). This tool was not available when our study was initiated, but is available now. This indicator can add a quantitative component to help increase understanding. This leads to the second recommendation that future studies can build on the current study to explicitly examine the interactions among the various symptoms in Keyes' (2002) model.

Third, this study can be replicated with other populations such as fathers with professional careers, or mothers who have labor class careers, to compare and contrast the mechanisms for flourishing and increase understanding among various populations

in the workplace and society. Finally, future studies can examine women in the context of their families and workplaces to address the need for more social supports for the growing population of working mothers. Explicitly examining whether and how family members are experiencing the state of flourishing, and whether and how entire workplaces might be experiencing flourishing can illuminate vital social contexts that can lead to solutions to increase well-being for all individual in society.

Practice Implications

The present study validates recommendations from prior studies and also suggests at least four additional insights for career counselors and educators who serve mothers who have professional careers, and for the companies that employ them. First, counselors and educators who work with mothers in professional careers may want to develop approaches and exercises to help their clients objectively assess how the apparent contradictions of their lives are fitting together to create a larger contribution to society, and whether and how they are experiencing flourishing. Flourishing, by definition, is identified through objective reflection. Therefore it may be encouraging to mothers with professional careers to learn about the concept of flourishing, how to objectively reflect on their own lives to assess whether and how they are flourishing, and how to use the elements in Keyes' (2002) model and assessment tool to make decisions to increase their own sense of flourishing.

Second, the data from this study suggest that mothers with professional careers may benefit meeting with women they respect and consider friends to talk informally about their career and family experiences. The life of a mother with a professional career is fraught with contradictions. It is important that they learn to have "frank and factual discussions about the embedded challenges in balancing home and work demands" (Whitmarsh, et al, 2007, p. 235). Most of the focus group sessions concluded with the

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women making comments such as "This was really helpful for me to hear what others have to say on these topics," and "It is so good to get together and talk about these things." Service providers who work with this population may want create resources and situations to help women connect with women within their work, family and neighborhood communities to talk about the contradictions and challenges in their lives.

On a personal note, it was a privilege for me, as one of the focus group facilitators for this study, to sit with the participants and listen as they described their lives and their thought processes around planning, managing and enjoying their work and roles. I found it astounding that these women have taken a very difficult context and out of it created the opportunities and rewards that make their lives meaningful. I had this reaction over and over again as I read and coded the transcripts for elements of flourishing.

Third, employers can proactively and explicitly acknowledge that in the available talent pool of highly educated women, there are many who want to be mothers and also have challenging, fulfilling, responsible careers. Smart employers will recognize this not as a barrier to work performance but as a key aspect to who these women are and what they can be in the workplace, and include these women in planning discussions about how to frame business goals, structures, and practices. For example, employers can let women help define what "stay" policies look like, rather than agonizing over the terms and regulations of leave policies (Stone, 2007).

Finally, as a society, we can insist on framing discussions of the challenges of combining work and family from a positive theoretical standpoint. Much has been written about the challenges of being a mom with a professional career, and the unfair structures and policies that hinder them from succeeding. Yet by definition the state of flourishing cannot be achieved apart from facing and overcoming challenges. The

women in our study clearly felt they were successful and flourishing and would likely be insulted to be characterized as otherwise.

Flourishing individuals create flourishing societies. When we focus solely on illuminating the challenges faced by disadvantaged populations, we are in danger of reducing their status and worth as human beings, and implicitly minimize their opportunity to be whole contributing members of society. By educating people on what flourishing is, and allowing them to define in their own terms what flourishing would look like, we create a more inclusive conversation that opens the door to discovering exciting new possibilities for all members of society to thrive.

Conclusion

The findings of the present study resonate with Fagen (2001) who theorized that individuals make decisions about how they will combine work and family based on their evolving experiences in education and the work force, their domestic circumstances, and their perception of availability of options based on their economic, social, and political context. Therefore, she encouraged researchers to consider dynamic theoretical positions that allow for orientations, preferences, and attitudes to emerge in a gradual, but continual adaptive process. Using a model of flourishing offered one such dynamic theoretical position to integrate these elements in a continual process because it suggests that individuals and the broader human community exist and grow in concert with one another; that is, as humans struggle to flourish, so society will flourish also (Devettere, 2002).

Mothers with professional careers represent a powerful economic force in the United States today. They also represent a privileged group of citizens with the education and material resources to impact social discourse and policy. The women who participated in this study described the complexities and nuances of managing relationships, schedules, expectations, and responsibilities as a mother with a professional career. Flourishing offered a unique lens through which to examine how they are experiencing their busy lives. Many of the women declared that they were flourishing, and the data indicated that their ability to acknowledge the challenges of their lives, and take responsibility for making the changes they wanted in their family and their work, are increasing their capacity to be a powerful force in society.

One of the women in our study succinctly expressed this dual drive for work and family in her life. Her words suggested that the opportunity to have a

professional career that provided status, intellectual stimulation, and autonomy

combined with the opportunity to be a mother, is a situation that could foster

flourishing and women. Her comment also resonates with the optimism and

potential inherent in this population of highly educated, dynamic women:

> *I think that work is just a hugely cognitively stimulating thing, I mean you really engage your brain…My job is very social to do. I have a lot of interaction with very interdisciplinary academia so I talk about sciences and I talk about psychology and I talk about anthropology … it's very engaging. And then I think of the richness of being a parent. I mean my heart isn't big enough to hold all of the love I have for my child. And I think just that rich, rich quality of existence…you get both of those worlds. I mean your mind is fed and your soul is fed if you keep your work when you have children. (8002, 90)*

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The Changing Landscape of Women in America:
Understanding Work, Family, and Personal Issues

You have been invited to be in a research study on the challenges, concerns, satisfactions, and needs of professional women that are related to work, family, and personal flourishing or fulfillment. You were selected as a possible participant in a focus group discussion because you have at least a bachelor's degree, are employed in a professional position, have been in a paid position for at least two continuous years, and work 30 or more hours per week. You were also selected because you are the mother of at least one child. We ask that you read this form and ask the questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Professor Kathryn Rettig, Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota with the assistance of doctoral students Jenet Jacob and Peggy Andrews.

Background Information:
There are several populations of women workers who are critically important to the economic health of the country, and they are increasing in numbers and importance, but have seldom been studied in regard to their ability flourish, or to achieve happiness, well-being, healthy relationships, and satisfying work lives. The purpose of this study is to (a) Determine the major challenges, concerns, satisfactions, and needs of *professional women* that are related to work, family, and personal flourishing or fulfillment; (b) Identify the media and information sources used by *professional women*, and their perspectives on these sources, to resolve and/or confront these challenges; and (c) assess the extent to which these messages facilitate or inhibit the struggles to achieve healthy work, family, and personal lives.

Risks and Benefits for Participation:
The only potential risks for participation include the emotional response you may experience as you discuss and reveal your own needs, concerns, and satisfactions. There are no direct benefits for participating in the study.

Compensation:
There is no monetary remuneration for participation in the focus group.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only the researchers will have access to the records.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to come to the University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus, to Room 398 McNeal Hall at the scheduled date and time [below]. The focus group discussion will include up to ten professional women and will be limited to 90 minutes. We will encourage you to introduce yourself to the other women in the group before starting to audio record the discussion. When introductions

are completed, we would ask some general questions such as "Tell us about the work you do?" and "How do you manage the other parts of your life?" We would want these answers recorded. At the end of the meeting we will ask if you would be willing to participate in a personal interview or focus group in the future, or to be contacted in the future if we need to clarify particular meanings. Your future participation is completely voluntary.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Participation in this focus group study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time from the study without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
The researchers conducting this study are: Kathryn Rettig, Jenet Jacob, and Peggy Andrews. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Rettig at 290 McNeal Hall
1985 Buford Avenue,St. Paul, MN 55108; 612-625-7745, krettig@umn.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator:_____Date: _____

Date, Time, and Place of the Focus Group Discussion:

_____

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION FORM

Understanding Work, Family and Personal Issues

Directions: Answer each question below (fill in blanks or circle as appropriate. Do not put your name on this sheet. Thanks.

1. Today's Date: _____

2. Your date of Birth: Month _____   Day _____   Year _____

3. What is your <u>current</u> marital status?
   - a. Married, living with husband or wife
   - b. Married, but not living with your spouse
   - c. Living with a partner in a committed relationship, but not married
   - d. Living with a partner, but not married or in a committed relationship
   - e. Separated and not living with a partner
   - f. Divorced and not living with a partner
   - g. Widowed, living alone
   - h. Never married

4. How many children do you have? _____

5. Do you have at least one child age 18 or younger living in the home with you?
   - a. Yes
   - b. No

6. How many (if any) of your children from a previous relationship? _____

7. What are the birth dates and genders of your children?

Child #1 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
Child #2 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
Child #3 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
Child #4 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
Child #5 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
Child #6 Month_____ Day _____ Year _____; Male ____ Female ____
(For additional children, answer on the back of this paper.)

8. How many hours per week (if any) do you care for elders in your family? _____

9. Do you work (circle one):
   - A Full time plus side job (more than 40 hours/week)
   - b Full time (35-40 hours/week)
   - c Part time (21-34 hours/week)
   - d Half time (less than 20 hours/week)
   - e Retired/Unemployed

   10. What kind of work do you do? (e.g. job title)

11. Where do you work? _____

12. How many years have you been at this place of work? _____

13. What is the average number of hours you work per week in your present position? _____

14. How long have you worked this number of hours? _____

15. What is your average number of hours of sleep each night? _____

16. With which ethnic culture do you **most strongly** identify?
    A Black, not of Hispanic origin
    B Hispanic
    C White, not of Hispanic origin
    D Other, describe: _____

17 Who lives in your household? (Circle all that apply)
    a. Spouse/intimate partner
    b. Children
    c. Other family members (specify who) _(e.g. My mother)
       _____
    d. Other non-family members (specify who) _____

18. What is the highest educational level you have achieved?
    A Finished elementary school (through grade 5)
    B Finished middle school (through grade 8)
    C Some high school but did not graduate
    D High school graduate
    E Some college but did not graduate
    F College graduate
    G Some graduate school course work
    H At least one graduate degree earned

Revised 10-31-06

APPENDIX C: FOCUS GROUP PARTCIPANTS

33 total participants / Average Age = 39.03 / Average of 2.03 children

ID#	Age	Hrs Work	Type of Work	Marital Status	# of Children (Ages)	Other
2001	43	40	Self-Employed Business Coach	Married	4 (17, 16, 15, 11)	2 are step-children
2002	54	50	Dean of Math, Science, Health at Community College	Married	2 (16,13)	
2003	38	35	Manager of Sales Administration for industrial service company	Married	2 (4, 2)	
2004	40	32	Director of Marketing at NFP	Married	3 (4, 2-year old twins)	
2005	40	50	Senior Communications Manager for retail co.	Married	1 (10)	
4001	26	40	Corporate Manager at Retail Company	Married	1 (6 months)	
4002	33	45	Director of Events at Theme Park	Married	1 (2)	Pregnant at time of session
4003	34	40	Training Consultant at Manufacturing Co.	Married	1 (13)	Pregnant at time of session, 13 year old was step-daughter
4004	50	30	Executive Director at NFP	Married	2 (15, 12)	
4005	38	45	Director of R&D at Retail Co.	Married	6 (16, 13, 11 year-old twins, 9, 2	3 are step-children)
4006	45	40	IT Manager	Married	3 (12, 10, 2)	
4007	46	50	Training Consultant at Financial Services co.	Divorced	5 (25, 24, 20, 18, 13)	

ID#	Age	Hrs Work	Type of Work	Marital Status	# of Children (Ages)	Other
4008	42	47.5	Operations Manager at Staffing Co.	Married	3 (12, 3, 1)	
4009	47	60	Manager at Manufacturing Company	Married	3 (12, 10, 7)	
5001	37	40	Product Manager for Insurance Company	Married	2 (5, 2)	
5002	32	32	Internal Consultant at Financial Service Company	Married	2 (5, 4)	
5003	34	40	Graphic Designer at Insurance Company	Married	1 (11)	
5004	34	50	Change Management Consultant	Married	1 (15 months)	
5005	43	50	Self-Employed Career Consultant	Married	1 (3)	
5006	37	40	Director of Business Planning and Operations at Retail Co.	Married	3 (3, 6-month old twins)	
5007	n/a	40	Director of Enterprise Transformation at Retail Co.	Married	2 (3, 18 months)	Pregnant at time of session
7001	36	50	Software sales	Married	2 (6, 3)	Pregnant at time of session
7002	39	40+	Executive Director of NFP	Married	3 (3, 5, 7)	
7003	33	32	Financial Services Consultant	Married	1 (16 months)	Pregnant at time of session
7004	37	50-80	Medical Resident	Married	2 (8, 2)	
7005	38	30	University Researcher	Married	2 (10, 9)	
7006	34	45+	Marketing Manager	Married	1 (2)	
7007	46	32	Data Analyst	Married	1 (5)	Exchange student living with them at time of session
8001	35	40	Tax Manager	Married	2 (5, 2)	
8002	42	40+	Teaching Consultant and Writer	Divorced	1 (8)	

ID#	Age	Hrs Work	Type of Work	Marital Status	# of Children (Ages)	Other
8003	35	50	Attorney with Public Defender's Office	Married	1 (18 months)	
8004	38	35	In-house Attorney for Telecommunications Company	Married	1 (4.5)	
8005	43	45	Executive Assistant at University	Living w/ partner	1 (7)	

APPENDIX D: Participant Questions

Changing Landscape of American Women

Welcome! Thank you for attending this focus group session for mothers with professional careers. We are looking forward to learning how you manage the work, family and personal aspects of your life. Below are the questions we have planned. As a group you may choose to focus on some of them more than others. If some of the questions don't appeal to you, please feel free to tell us why.

Introductions
Before starting the questions, we'll take time for each of you to give the group a 1-2 minutes introduction – please tell us about your current work (employer, position, hours/week, etc.) and your family situation (number/ages of children, spouse, etc.)

Questions
How would you describe your experience having both full-time employment and family in your life?

Are there challenges to being both a professional and a mother? What have the greatest challenges been?

Are there rewards from being both a professional and a mother? What have the greatest rewards been?

What would you describe as the ideal work situation for you as a mother throughout your career life? (i.e., early career stage with young children; middle career stage with adolescent children; late career stage.)

What has been most important in enabling you to meet your professional goals as well as your family goals?

If you felt like you were really flourishing, that you were living a good life, what would that look like?

Where do you get information on work-family issues? What media sources do you use and why? What media sources don't you use and why?

Conclusion
If you went to bed tonight and a miracle suddenly occurred and your whole life was improved, what would be different and how would other people know it was different?

What advice would you give to someone in a similar situation?

Being a working mom is a challenge. What competencies do you think are most important for anyone who wants to be effective in this role?

APPENDIX E: CODING SCHEME

1. Positive feelings: emotional well-being

Definition of Symptom	Code
Avowed Quality of Life: Mostly or highly satisfied with life overall or in domains of life.	1-A

2. Positive functioning: psychological well-being

Definition of Symptom	Code
Self-acceptance: Positive attitude toward oneself and past life, and concedes and accepts varied aspects of self.	2-SA
Personal growth: Insight into one's potential, sense of development, and open to challenging new experiences.	2-PG
Purpose in life: Has goals, beliefs that affirm sense of direction in life, and feels life has purpose and meaning.	2-PL
Environmental mastery: Has capability to manage complex environment and can choose or create suitable environs.	2-EM
Autonomy: Comfortable with self-direction, has internal standards, resists unsavory social pressures.	2-A
Positive relations with others: Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships, and is capable of empathy and intimacy.	2-PR

3. Positive functioning: social well-being

Definition of Symptom	Code
Social Acceptance: Positive attitude toward others while acknowledging and accepting people's complexity.	3-SACP
Social actualization: Cares and believe that, collectively, people have potential and society can evolve positively.	3-SACT
Social contribution: Feels that one's life is useful to society and that one's contributions are valued by others.	3-SCONT
Social coherence: Has interest in society, feels it's intelligible, somewhat logical, predictable, and meaningful.	3-SCOH
Social integration: Feels part of, and a sense of belonging to, a community, derives comfort and support from community.	3-SI

Adapted from:

"Operational Definitions of Symptoms of Mental Health" in Keyes, C. (2002). Complete mental health: An agenda for the 21st century. In Keyes, C., & Haidt, J. (Eds). *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived.* Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

"Dimensions Reflecting Mental Health as Flourishing" in Keyes, C. (2007). Promoting and protecting mental health as flourishing: A complementary strategy for improving national mental health. *American Psychologist, 62(2),* 95-108

APPENDIX F: QUASI-QUANTITATIVE EXPLORATION OF CODING RESULTS
(working document)

4-Jan-09

KEY:

FL = Flourishing

NF = Not Flourishing

Total Comments in 5 Sessions (including facilitators)	1044	100%
Comments not Coded	435	42% of total comments
Comments Coded	609	58% of total comments
Coded as FL or both	381	63% of coded comments
Coded as NF or both	337	55% of coded comments
Coded as Both	109	18% of coded comments

CODES	FL		NF		TOTAL		FL - NF
1-A (avowed flourishing)	23	2%	16	2%	39	4%	7
2-A (autonomy)	25	2%	5	0%	30	3%	20
2-EM (environmental mastery)	88	8%	68	7%	156	15%	20
2-PG (personal growth)	34	3%	9	1%	43	4%	25
2-PL (purpose in life)	15	1%	0	0%	15	1%	15
2-PR (positive relationships)	57	5%	57	5%	114	11%	0
2-SA (self-acceptance)	46	4%	13	1%	59	6%	33
3-SACP (social acceptance)	9	1%	9	1%	18	2%	0
3-SACT (social actualization)	22	2%	9	1%	31	3%	13
3-SCOH (social coherence)	2	0%	81	8%	83	8%	-79
3-SCONT (social contribution)	7	1%	10	1%	17	2%	-3
3-SI (social integration)	52	5%	60	6%	112	11%	-8

Initial theme ideas:
Despite the challenges, I AM flourishing (avowed)
They often seem to talk themselves out of NOT flourishing
I flex time, bend time, make time, stretch time - it is a do-it-yourself effort
They don't separate the good from the bad - accept it all
Relationships have the power to help or harm me (PR/SI)
Society is not set up for me to do this (SCOH)
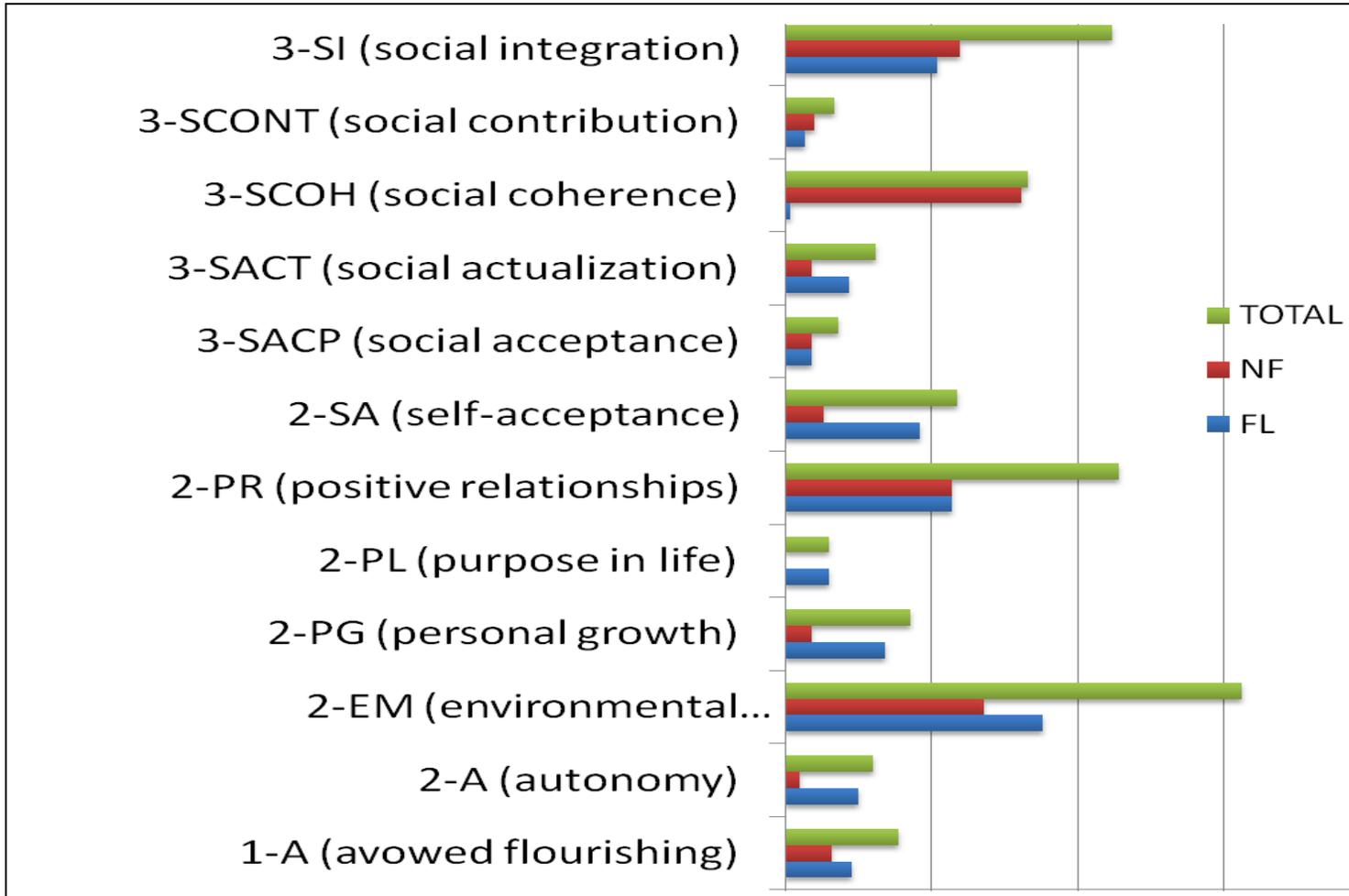
APPENDIX G: REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS WITH JUSTIFICATION

Each quote is followed by the participant identification number and the comment number. The group number is implicit in the participant identification number.

AVOWED FLOURISHING (1-A) - Feels happiness or satisfied with life overall, or domains of life.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
But when I think of the overall experience, I, you know, it's busy but it's all good. I really like that I have a job outside the home. I think my boys are getting good exposure because of it**. I just feel good about doing it.** (2003, 14b)	1-A		Expresses personal feelings of wellbeing.
Yeah **I feel grateful that I am able to have both**. I couldn't imagine not having my children and I think any sacrifice I've made has certainly been worth it but I also know that as a person I could not be a stay-at-home mom. Certainly the money helps with having the work, but even if that wasn't the case I would still want to do something, after being on maternity leave it enjoyed spending time with my kids I knew I couldn't do it full time and I mean that's just not my, I'm not wired for that, and so I feel like being able to be a professional has given me personal growth and keeping my mind challenged and doing things that I really enjoy doing for myself, and giving me that separate part just for me aside from my family (8001, 88(1))	1-A		Overall expression of well-being in multiple domains of life, includes indicators of multiple operational definitions from the coding scheme: (2-SA) Accepts desire to be mom and to work (2-PG) Work gives her "personal growth" (2-PR) Satisfaction in relationship with children
I think the work is just a hugely cognitively stimulating thing, I mean you really engage your brain and it's very, my job is very social to do, I have a lot of interaction with very interdisciplinary academia so I talk about sciences and I talk about psychology and I talk about anthropology and I have a these people that you, you know it's very engaging and then I think the richness of being a parent, I mean my heart isn't big enough to hold all of the love I have for my child, and I think **just that rich, rich quality of**	1-A		Overall expression of well-being in multiple domains of life, includes indicators of multiple operational definitions from the coding scheme: (2-PR) Expresses satisfaction in relationship with children (2-PG) Work is engaging

existence to me, and you get both of those worlds I mean your mind is fed and your soul is fed if you keep your work when you have children. (8002, 90(1))			
I feel like I really am now I feel like I'm doing exactly what I would like to be doing at this point in time. A lot of times when I was at home with my kids I wasn't feeling like I was doing what I wanted to do but I did it because I am of the belief that I wanted to be there with my kids but now I just and I mean part of the reason I can is because I have a very successful partner so I mean I don't have to bring home the benefits and I don't have to bring on the paycheck so I am able to do that because of a supportive husband. (4004, 64a)	1-A		Expresses satisfaction with life (2-PL) "At this point in time"- sense of direction (2-SA) Accepts past choice to be home with kids even though it wasn't as fulfilling (2-PR) Supportive spouse
Partnership with my spouse and knowing that he wants me to be happy and also I think that I hear it from all of you too is just the self-confidence to know that you know what I can do it, and I was raised by a working mother so I think that that helps. But **I don't doubt that I'm capable of doing what I'm doing so I don't live with that all the time of gosh you know what I'm never going to pull it off the times of self doubt that I think some people grow up with**, so but my spouse is critical even though we don't always agree on everything you know we make it work together as a family and I my daughter calls me daddy sometimes and calls him mommy sometimes because she doesn't see those as labels and I love that. (5005, 105)	1-A		Expresses satisfaction with life (2-PG) Open to challenge (2-PR) Supportive spouse (3-SCOH) Had a role model for being a working mother which gives her confidence
I think I have a different perspective on that, I feel like I am flourishing, and I think I am looking at it from a certain perspective of what my situation is now, and 10 years from now I would expect it to look differently I would expect to have more time to you know go check out new restaurants and go to shows and do this and that and travel more, but I think considering the ages of my children now, I feel like I am, I have a good relationship with my husband, I am doing well with my job, I'm getting to spend time with my kids, **so I mean is it absolutely perfect? No, there are things that could be better, but I do feel like I'm flourishing from the way I see it** (8001, 103(1))	1-A		Explicit Expression of Avowed Flourishing (2-SA) Acknowledges multiple aspects of self (2-PR) Good relationship with husband (2-EM) Doing well with job & spending time w/ kids (2-PG) Sense of development – that her life will grow over time
I guess my benefit of being a working mom is the fact that I've really realized that there is all of this great stuff out there and **I try**	1-A		Expresses satisfaction with life even though she acknowledges being overwhelmed at times

to just really embrace every single piece of it, and even though sometimes I'm really just (slaps table) yeah I'm just crabby and overwhelmed and whatever, it's usually pretty short lived in the grand scheme of things. It's like, you can't make time, you know, [unclear] laughter, there's 24 hours in a day, you have to take time [laughter]. It's like I do have to take time. It's like, I do this for myself, this creative stuff those are the pieces that I am getting something back from, maybe not enough, but if I woke up tomorrow and I had a million dollars, I won the lottery, would life be different? Oh hello! You know, but just trying to think about embracing all that and I don't think I'll learn that lesson if [unclear] fulltime. And I think I would probably you know when I look back and I was still in college and I had more free time, I think I would squander it more as I did and now I'm learning to make time [unclear]. (4006, 23f)			(2-SA) Acknowledges being crabby at times (2-PG) Sees/embraces opportunities to grow (2-EM) Chooses to take/make time (2-PL) "Grand scheme of things" – sense of purpose
I was just going to answer it's almost the same. It's kind of the same way in that I do feel that it's flourishing. It's all good. The only thing is I don't feel like I have time for myself and I really, really want time with my friends [general chorus of agreement]. But it's not just me, it's them too because they're just as busy so that's the only part that I have to work so hard to do and it just doesn't happen enough and friends are so important I mean that's just (2001 - I could never make it without them) It's just critical. I mean I have so many good friends and to lose them would be horrible, just terrible. So that's the one thing where I would like to see more of my friends. I know I'm kind of looking around [for a new job] but I still feel like I'm in a good point in my career, and then you know the kids, and the husband, it's good and I mean it has its up and down days, believe me, but it's all good. (2003, 230)	1-A	3-SI	Expresses satisfaction in multiple domains of her life (work, husband, and children) despite the challenges of not seeing enough of her friends and thinking about maybe finding a new job. Also coded as NF: (3-SI) because she is not able to derive the comfort and support she would like from her community of friends because both she and they are too busy, and she expresses concern over losing them.
Well I feel like I'm flourishing right now but I just have too much of it. So I really love, I actually really enjoy parenting. I have a job which I love, and I also teach fitness classes which is a way to keep working out. It's sort of my passion. And it's fine, and I feel like all of those things bring incredible joy into my life, but I just need a little bit less of all of them. I mean, you know, the fitness thing is more of a hobby but if I could just find a	1-A	2-EM	Expresses satisfaction in multiple domains of life (parenting, work, hobbies) despite feeling the stress of a schedule that is too full at times. (Flourishing does not mean that everything is perfect) Also coded as NF:

Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
nice balance so I didn't have to work so many hours and spend more time with my daughter and those things that I'm passionate about like teaching that would be perfect. (2005, 229)			(2-EM) Expresses challenge managing her schedule to be present with child and hobbies more.
I think for me right now I have the ideal situation. I work everyday from 8 until 3. I've got from 3:30 until 8 with the kids. We make dinner together, we do whatever we need to get done, it's not stressed, bedtime isn't rushed, it's very good. Right now I am challenged at work with they are encouraging me down the management path **and I don't have any role models who are managers who have what I would say is a good balanced lifestyle.** They all go home and work 7 till midnight. I don't want that. My husband does that. We can't both do that**. And so right now I think I'm right where I need to be.** Going forwards I don't know where my career is going to take me but I am going to work really hard to stay at the level where I need to be and not let them push me where I don't want to go. (5002, 78)	1-A	3-SCOH	Represents the complexity of coding – Expresses satisfaction with job, family. (2-EM) Is able to manage time to be at work and home when she wants (2-PL) Sense of direction in life, "right where I need to be" (2-A) Resisting pressure to become a manager, comfortable with internal standard of not working long hours Also coded as NF: (3-SCOH) No role models, don't know where career will go

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
I always feel like I want, well I certainly want to do the best I can do in both situations and yet 3/4 of the time probably I feel like I am not measuring up in either of the situations because it's like I put my efforts over here but then come back over here. **There is always something that's lacking.** (2001, 49)		1-A	Expresses lack of satisfaction in life (general example)
Especially for high achievers. I mean I, you know like school, I do well in school, I do know, I'm the best at this and this, and I'm good at this, and I'm like a little achiever in my life (laughter), and then I make this point now where I have to like, well enough of this I'm not as up to date on the subjects as I once to be, as I feel like I should be and could be if I would just put the time and energy into it, I'm not the most attentive and on it mom, and I'm not always available to them physically or emotionally, I'm not out like, **so you just feel inadequate, I'm not the best mother, daughter, sister, mother, friend certainly, the house, oh, everything I longed to be, and so you basically go from being**		1-A	Expresses lack of satisfaction I multiple areas (2-EM) Overwhelmed by the complexity and volume of her life (2-PG) Not achieving what she feels capable of (2-PR) Not being the wife/mother/friend she longs to be

this scrambler and getting up to this achievement level, and then you kind of go like oh I'm kind of inadequate in every realm in my life, and that was really, I mean, a lot of my peers same thing it's like **oh this doesn't feel good to me. And I want to be like (smacks her hand on the table) I want to do a lot of things in my life but it is just not humanly possible** and so you have issues and be okay with good enough and drop a few standards. (7004, 64)			
I kind of feel like **there isn't anybody who can give me advice to say this is why you do it, this is how you be perfect,** because even the question of what would your life look like if it was flourishing it mean to me it kind of feels like that's not, **it's not possible for my life to look exactly like I would want to look because of the nature of the way my life is set up, it's not possible,** because I want everything to be a certain way and it can't be a certain way (7005, 153)		1-A	Cannot answer question of how life could be flourishing. (2-EM) Cannot gain mastery over the complexity of the life she wants (3-SCOH) No logical predictable pattern for life
It's hard to ever feel like you're doing well (laughter) I just, there, there was like an article I read a little while ago of a Harvard business school professor talking to former students, and she was saying that as a woman you have three choices, you either choose to be, to have kids to stay at home with your kids and wonder if your brain is atrophying, or you career 100% and don't have kids and you wonder if you're missing out on one of the greatest things in your life, or you choose to do both and you never feel like you're doing well at either one of them, and that's it. Those are, that's kind of what you're faced with, **and I totally feel that way.** I feel like I couldn't do the job that I have prior to having my son because I don't have that in me anymore, my job took up so much of my free time at doing really well at it and so the job I have now is more manageable, because I have last, it's a different responsibility and yes I can step out and I can go to some things with the kids and not feel like my kid's going to go off track because of that, but still, **it's so hard** (7XXX, 63)		1-A	Implied lack of satisfaction in work and family domains. (2-EM) Was able to obtain job that is "manageable" yet finds it hard that she cannot perform at her former level.

AUTONOMY (2-A) - Comfortable with self-direction, has internal standards, resists unsavory social pressures.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
I changed jobs about two years ago and I'm working, in theory, 34 hours a week, a little bit more usually. I try not to do anything on Friday, that's kind of my day with my daughter to do some activities and some things like that. My husband travels a ton, he's usually gone two weeks out of the month. **So we have a great daycare situation. But my goal is that she's never there eight hours, but that's just my own personal thing, so for me I decided to take a step back, kind of limit my career for awhile and my financial earning, and stuff like that, and spend some more time with her because she is our only child. (8004, 8)**	2-A		Expresses internal standard regarding hours of day care.
And how you stand firm or choose a new, you can't always stand firm. I mean some things you give on and some things you don't. What I try, like **what I try to do is start educating back.** And say, okay fine, I have 3 women in my life who are very, very opinionated who all believe I need to stay at home. **So I kind of start to talk back and say look, this is how I feel about it.** And you're not, I mean I'm not out to change your mind, **you're never going to change my mind,** but I can share with you how I feel on a daily basis because what I would like from you is still your support. This is the choice I've made, I still need support from you. Let's find a way to be there instead of, I mean cause it's just like, it's the same thing as my neighbor who stays at home with the kids we can choose to tear each other apart, and there is a lot of that tension, certainly, or I can say okay, you know if you've got to run out for something I can watch your kids and we can still be there for each other. **So it's kind of choosing when to stand firm and when to bend and when to just say I don't really care what you think, sorry** (laughter) but (5004, 62)	2-A	3-SI	Expresses resisting pressures from others who might tell her how to live her life.

Also coded NF:
(3-SI) Expresses desire for support from extended family/neighbors |

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Sometimes I worry about the perception and I don't know that this is happening in my current job, I think it was when I was in public accounting, but when I look at the other leaders in our group, the other managers and senior leaders, they are there 10 or 12 hours a day and I'm not, you know I come in and I need to leave at 4:30 to pick up the kids, and I'm, you know I see other people there when I get there and they are there when I leave, and you know I worry that they are thinking oh she isn't working as much even though I might be checking my e-mail and I or doing things on the weekend and certainly try to be more organized while I am there so that I am getting everything done, and I know I'm getting everything done, and my boss says I'm getting everything done, **but I still worry about that perception from others in the office** (8001, 62)		2-A	Not comfortable with the self-direction she has established – difficulty resisting what she views as subtle pressure from others.
but I think one of the difficult things I struggle with is the program is I am one of the females on the team that has children where it usually the other ones have wives so when she has a doctors appointment **I kind of feel guilty** saying I have a work from home day or have to take her to the doctor because in the old days that would have never been possible but now I have the ability I don't want them to look at me and say you know she's not work anymore and she's not doing it when I work better at home I know I do than what I do at the office (murmurs of agreement) I can do way more from home than what I can do at the office (4001, 68b)	2-EM	2-A	Not comfortable with the self-direction she has established – difficulty resisting what she views as subtle pressure from others. Also coded as F: (2-EM) Has achieved the opportunity to have a flexible schedule and flexibility with work location

ENVIRONMENTAL MASTERY (2-EM) - Has capability to manage complex environment and can choose or create suitable environs.
[We interpreted this broadly as being able manage the complex environment of the "changing landscape" (macro environment) and being able to master their schedule so they could be **where** they wanted to be **when** they wanted to be there (Micro environment)]

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
One of the main reasons that I went to that position is because the college is open basically from 7 AM til 10 at night so now I can actually be a little more flexible. If I need to go in later in the morning because I have to get kids to school or go to their schools I can do that. I can come in at 6:30 in the morning and leave early in the afternoon, and I can take comp time if I work 12 hours one day then I don't have to be there that long the next day. So that's worked out real well. (2002, 32) Right, whereas faculty and when I worked in the lab, you were set hours and weekend and holidays, and had to constantly work through. So in that respect it's much better. And now I am on the same holidays as my kids' school which is a huge help. (2002, 34)	2-EM		Choosing a work situation based on potential for mastery
So I made the conscious decision to go into the non-profit sector at a dramatic a pay cut. I have a very fortunate situation where my children now come with me to work. There is a school on site and I literally look out over the playground where they play and it's really nice in that I am totally in touch with their care and I see them whenever I want. **It's a pretty flexible arrangement.** I work, I actually am going to a 3 day a week schedule starting next week. (2004, 20b)	2-EM		Choosing a work situation based on potential for mastery
For me I volunteer in my son's school one afternoon a week and I work in his class room. And I had ever since he's been in preschool, but I moved, **I made sure I moved close so I made sure the commute was doable, and then I kept him in places and centers that are close to my work so that I have the option to do that, but again it involves a sacrifice, it involves negotiating everything in your life** just to do, you know two hours in his classroom each week (8002, 81)	2-EM		Choosing a geographic location based on potential for mastery

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I relocated to be near my mother and it made a huge difference because of not having, I have siblings who are all in the same position (unclear) so having my mom nearby has made all the difference, in fact I feel a lot better off, and have felt a lot better off than some of my married friends because I always have had a babysitter or for the most part someone who could help out in that sort of thing but **I did have to move across the country for it** (laughter) (8002, 44(1))	2-EM		Choosing a geographic location based on potential for mastery
And obviously I talked about my kids first before I talked about my work. But I love my work too and I enjoy my work and I do think that **one reason I like working for [my company] is that I know my kids can call me at any time of day and that they can get hold me and that they allow me to respond to my kids if I need to.** And I think that a lot of times that happens to be my leader's philosophy [unclear] and my leader's have valued that. And I don't abuse it by any means and so I feel that if they were sick and I needed to tend to them I could do that as well. And I have the opportunity to work at home if I need to and sometimes I do that if I need to as well. **I don't abuse any of those opportunities they give me to be with my family but I know that I have that choice and I really like that.** I don't feel like you know that I can't do that and for sure there are times when things come up that you do have responsibilities and you can't do those things because you have certain things but for the long run if there is something that comes up I feel that I can do that. So that's it about me. (4007, 16b)	2-EM		Work environment allows for mastery
and **that's one of the great things about [my company's flex-time program]** is that I really want to stay firm and work from home on Wednesdays. I will have daycare there, I will be in my sweats I will not have makeup on and I will you know go and nurse the twins and so it's **that flexibility is hugely positive.** (5006, 103c)	2-EM		Work environment allows for mastery - system wide support

It's funny that [my company] is almost at least in the Midwest, it's all mobile, I mean none of us go to the office anymore unless you have an account downtown or whatever, which at first was really hard to get used to and I was like how are they going to know if you're working or how they, you know, and we don't have time cards, and we have vacation that we can officially take, but they've gone to this strategy which has taken probably 10 years to get there, but if you get your work done, if you get at them in two days a week or seven days a week they don't care, as long as you're getting it done, and so it becomes kind of a big management thing for each individual person, and that helps a lot with the kind of thing that you're talking about. (7001, 21a) Because it's like you know if I can get my work done on Monday and Tuesday, that I can do what I need to do, now of course realistically that's not real possible but you know that you can kind of make adjustments for just what you're talking about where it's like you know **I'm working as hard as the next person, but you know it might be at 10 o'clock at night or it might be on Saturday or it might be whatever fits for me, but I think at least in my particular group I think it's helped a lot with that kind of frustration because you can take a full-time job that you can work where you need to be** (7001, 21b)	2-EM		Work environment allows for mastery - system wide support
One thing I said in my introduction was that **if I asked I have always gotten what I have asked for. I just need to remember, 1) I need to remember to ask and 2) I need to be very aware of the consequences that can come with that.** So you are saying yes I know that I'm not going to be mommy tracked, but at the same time I'm not going to be mommy tracked because I still work 50+ hours a week **and it's a choice.** It's not so much a mommy tracked I mean my husband has the same thing going on. (5004, 67a)	2-EM		Mastering conversations/perceptions of others at work
Hi I'm 8004, I'm an in-house attorney for a telecommunications company that resells equipment as well as develops proprietary software. I've worked there a couple of years. Before we decided, my husband and I, have a husband, and we have one daughter she's 4 1/2. **Before we decided to have kids I went a little bit reduced schedule, I talked to my boss and I said I**	2-EM		Mastering conversations/perceptions of others at work - negotiating

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only want to work four days a week and took a reduction in pay and started working four days a week and started setting an expectation for post baby. So I had my daughter and I went back to work after about 14 weeks, and I worked there about 30 hours a week. (8004, 7)			
Well some of this stuff for us, like when he first decided you know like he was going to stay home, and I used to do all the bills and I used to do all the house stuff. And then I thought you know I can't do all of that and do the work stuff, whatever and you're going to have to start jumping in. And he would say, "Well where did all the money go?" Well guess what, he now does all the bills, it and he gets the laundry out but I still sort it because he sorts by outfit and not by color (laughter), but so when he hunts, and he does know how to cook wild game, and so his parents and my parents gave us cook books because I said if you bring it home you cook it, I'm not learning how to do this, and so he does. **But it was kind of a conscious effort to say you know what we're going to split this up, you have to take some of those. And it wasn't like I was mandating this, and he didn't resist, but I mean sometimes I think you really have to make an effort to not take it all on**. Because sometimes it's like little kids it's just easier to just do it than to make a point of making someone else do it but you just get overloaded. (7001, 29)	2-EM		Managing people/mastering conversations at home –negotiating?
In our house that was definitely an evolution. My husband's been staying home for about five years and that was very purposeful and he really wanted to and I really didn't want to do that at all. And so there was no you know tension to say who gets to stay home. I really liked my job and he didn't like his and so that all worked out but **in his mind his role was to take care of the kids, and it really took us a very long time to get to the point of my realizing that in my mind your role is to take care of the house, and to cook for dinner and to make sure we have food and you know all of those things. In his mind it was like well you know I'm going to take care of the kids and then you'll come home and you'll sort of takeover and it took me years of saying that's not going to happen.** I'm going to come home at six and at the kids haven't eaten it's going to, you	2-EM		Managing people/mastering conversations at home –negotiating?

know it's going to be a disaster. And it took years before he realized yeah I guess I should cook dinner. (laughter) but it's really been very slow because in his mind it was just all about I'm staying home with the kids and that's what I do. (7004, 30a)			

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Sacrifice. **I think that the invasion of e-mail and voice mail to home [general murmur of assent] impacts you.** Because I've found it's hard for me to not work at night because I'm there, and I know my daughter is there and I want some time with her and yet often I do have to work at night and yet I am here getting all stressed out at 10 doing e-mail and she's like mommy, mommy and I'm like oh can it wait just one more-mail. **It's so hard you want to go home and not think about work, but I think now in this new age of working you are never done**, and so for me I have to make a conscious effort to say what can I just leave til tomorrow and try not to get into that. Because I think in some ways it's addictive too, you get in your e-mail and you start to get into stuff and you're in work mode suddenly and you forget that you're at home and you forget that your child wants you and needs you **so I have to be really careful about setting my own limits.** (2005, 50)		2-EM	Work invading the home environment
My biggest challenge has been having enough time for everything and living up to my own expectations (murmurs of agreement) because I you know can do everything I can to you know get home from work on time, get my child from daycare on time, which is supposed to be 4:15 but it's been slowly pushing towards 5 all the time, and get home and make dinner and get him situated and play with him and get him to bed and then clean the house and do whatever I have to do and you know I am just too tired to do something for myself and that is the biggest thing. And then I get 6 hours of sleep if I'm lucky and then get up and do it all over again. (4002, 22a)		2-EM	Overwhelmed - It's too much to master

Is it enough, and am I making the right decisions (exactly!) 24/7 **you are always questioning are you making the right decisions** for your children or is it the right school, or should you move, you know, I think **it's that doubt and guilt** associated with that, and I think a flourishing would be not having to feel that so powerfully, to be questioning your decisions and your abilities, if you are a good parent (8XXX, 101)		2-EM	Overwhelmed by choices.
There is an opportunity cost to absolutely everything I do. So coming here tonight my husband is picking up my kids at day care, I'm missing out on the work that I need to be doing, and I'm not doing, and **there is always more than one thing that I am not doing because I'm doing something else**, and so whatever I'm doing it better be good (laughter), so when I looked at this and so I do market research in my work and one of the things I rarely do is participate in market research because it takes time right, but as I was looking at the description I thought I just I don't spend a lot of time talking to other women who are professional who have kids who are struggling with the same issues and this is an undercurrent in my life and it's never going to go away so it would be great to hear what other people have decided (7006, 41b)	2-PG	2-EM	understanding of potential but awareness of missed opportunities - what it could be
Well law firms absolutely, they really don't want people who come I mean I don't know how to say it except for people like me and all of my friends who have left because **it's not an environment where we can be the kind of well rounded person with a family,** and you know **do they really want the people who are willing to work 16 hours a day, and miss their kids?** (8004, 64)		2-EM	The way some workplace systems are defy mastery
And with kids it just compounds the problem because there is no feed them three times a day, water them, wear these kinds of clothes and they're good (loud laughter and comments) something to tell you what you're supposed to be doing you know. And I feel like, you know some days okay the kids are fed, they weren't horrible, they behaved in front of grandma you know were good. And the next day we're pooping at preschool (loud laughter). You know we were on a roll, we were making progress (laughter). I think especially with kids when there are a lot of		2-EM	The role of parenting defies mastery

things in your life like you say you know if you put in time, or if you garden a lot you're going to have a gorgeous garden, but kids are not like that. **They are like such a moving target all the time, which makes it great, but at the same time it makes you feel kind of inadequate a lot of the time and totally out of control** (7XXX, 65)			
Yes exactly, **I have to keep it, if I want to keep it I have to do these other things so I do have to check all the time** and they do have to you know answer those messages and **even you know in the middle of picking up kids I have to say you know what I do have to take this call ,** I had a situation recently where my daughter, I picked her up and she was talking about going to the bathroom at daycare, and I'm like I am so sorry for this guy and he's like don't worry I have a four year old, and it's just like oh my that did not go at all how I planned (laughter) (8001, 68)		2-EM	When you think you have it mastered it comes undone Mastery is fragile
It raises the question of part time work (right, murmurs of agreement), and if you're really part-time or if it's just that you have part-time hours but the same workload, I mean I think that happens a lot (murmurs/comments of agreement), you now because it's pretty hard, I think in those jobs to say while I think this will take me exactly 30 hours a week and so hence it is a 75% job. I mean I think it's not really that way I don't think in most jobs and so there is that imbalance into the air because you have work to do (7XXX, 23)		2-EM	part time stress
I guess if I could wake up tomorrow, I don't know if that would be a miracle, but sort of a geographical thing, I would live in the same place as my parents. My brother and his family live in Madison so that's not too far away, **but I'm very close to my parents and it's just hard being a plane ride away**, they are outside of Rochester, New York which is where I am from, so, and my husband's family is in the Vancouver area so we are kind of far from both of our families and **if we could relocate them all here that would be a good thing**, (8xxx, 109a)		2-EM	Physical location – discusses a different situation (having parents in town) that would be a "good thing" implying that current situation is not necessarily a good thing.
My children complain that I work too much. And I am a victim. That's why I couldn't be here at 4 because somebody has to schedule a meeting with a VP til 4:15. And I couldn't say no, I am sorry I couldn't say no, and then she says (points	2-EM	2-EM	Challenging to be where she wants to be when she wants to there – someone else tells her she needs to be at a meeting.

at PA) well Saturday, I could come Saturday, but I wanted to be with the family on Saturday. So I said, you guys are just going to get an hour from me. (4009, 25d)			Also coded F: (2-EM) She expresses her own choice about where she will be on the weekend.
Everything is quite reactive…my husband is an attorney and he does corporate transactions so his schedule is totally at the whim of the clients.… **we had a nanny, we were both very, very busy and it just came to the point where we couldn't keep it together.** It was too hard and it was really making a toll on our whole psyche, it was exhausting. And not to say that I'm not still exhausted physically but it was mentally exhausting. I am more physically exhausted because I have 3 children at the ages of 4 and under, two of whom are twin boys that are 2. (2004, 20a)		2-EM	Nature of her husband's work is not one that can be mastered.
My advice was to get a job where you can work part time. Like where it is a good, fulfilling job, but you can have options… **where I work, you may be able to work part time but it is a totally different job and you are a, it's just different, you're, it's just different. I don't know anybody who's done it successfully.** (5006, 178)		2-EM	Even though her company allows part-time work, it does not seem like a good choice to her.

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PERSONAL GROWTH (2-PG) - Insight into one's potential, sense of development, and open to challenging new experiences.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
And you know it's just, in the course of all of this I have come to realize that being a mom and **being a working mom it's very, it's kind of like sainthood. You really reach the depths of your patience and you also see the opportunity of how great it is. It's really like this amazing opportunity but it's really challenging at the same time.** (2004, 83)	2-PG		GREAT QUOTE Open to challenging new experiences
I don't know how, you know, so **sometimes I feel like I'm letting myself down sometimes, letting my family down,** you know keeping up with housework and you know like I said just trying to do the little things for myself like this meeting, something like that that I wanted to do, so dramatically different than life was 2 years ago**. But at the same time, there is nothing I would really change**, but sometimes I do feel, but you know **on the upside the reward is you know I think that I have been able to juggle what I do and** that I've been able to, you know before I had my son, I would work 60 or 70 hour weeks and I would be able to continue to do that, I could take on a new role and still accomplish the same kinds of things, that I could keep [unclear] that **I could have a family and it would work out and still be given new opportunities to grow within the company and have a career.** And that you know I feel like I do have a good family life too so. (4003, 22c)	2-PG	1-A	Illustrates the complexity of coding. She is not flourishing in some ways (2-EM) yet indicates openness to the challenge. Example of coding based on matching participant words to the definition of the code ("opportunities to grow")
For me personally, **the rewards have been that I have grown personally, and that has been huge.** I mean, I have 4 girls and 1 boy and I think about my kids, I was just having a conversation with kids about working, what they want to do. And I said you know you can do anything you want to do. And I said you know what I never had anybody tell me that. It wasn't until my age in the last few years that **I realize that I can do anything I want to do if I really want to do it, it is just putting my mind to it**. I have the opportunity to do that and I have choices available and I never felt that. You know, for me, I remember going back to	2-PG		Insight into her potential Example of coding based on matching participant words to the definition of the code ("I have grown personally")

college, I mean I thought I could never even get my degree and now I am going to start a masters program here in the fall and that is really exciting me [murmurs of agreement] **And so for me going back to work was really personal growth** (4007, 31a)			
I think that's, that's well said I mean that's the thing you do**, I mean the professional part is very important it's very rewarding**, I loved maternity leave, I was home six months, I loved it, I wouldn't have done anything differently, but it was with utter relief (loud laughter) and I mean that in the best way, I mean I loved being a mom absolutely, but it was, I really like doing something else for a while during the day, I like being surrounded by adults, I like thinking about law again **I like using my mind in a different way**. I mean I was using my mind as a mom, and that's, hugely rewarding (8003, 89)	2-PG		Sense of development - expresses that both her work and being a mother are important and rewarding domains of life.
I should, I do feel very whiny in general right now about my work and myself, but I think it's a good thing, I mean with my children we have a lot of discussion about **how this work helps a lot of other people and they know a lot about anatomy (laughter), but I think it also being a mother has helped me be a better doctor, and certainly gives me an edge on parenting and breast-feeding issues,** and also helps in a really intense work environment, and you know you could stay and stay and stay, and **so it helps me sort of detach a little, and I think in an appropriate and good and healthy way,** and go home and get home because I have people who don't try to get home and so I think that's good (7004, 96)	2-PG	1-A	Open to challenge. Acknowledges that although she is not totally flourishing, each domain of her life helps her grow/perform better in other domains of life.

Coded as NF:
(1-A) Expresses lack of satisfaction ('I feel whiny') in multiple domains (work, and personal life) |

EXMAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
I agree with that absolutely, **there are things in life that you at the very least have to get put on hold for many years and it's hard, you feel like you gave up again at least temporarily, parts of your sort of individual self,** (And your identity) Yes and your identity, that you don't have time to really work on or enjoy anymore, and that's hard (8XXX, 61)		2-PG	Not being able to fulfill her sense of development that she could do/be more is hard.

PURPOSE IN LIFE (2-PL) - Has goals, beliefs that affirm sense of direction in life, and feels life has purpose and meaning.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
I also say that **I think having a professional career gives me that sense of competency**, whereas sometimes parenting doesn't feel very (laughter), I don't feel that competent or like I know exactly what I'm doing or where it like in my job I'm very competent and I'm really good at it. And my kids are so little and so I don't know how much they see like oh mom works, mom has this big position. But **I have brought my seven-year-old to work with me,** like up to the state Capitol with me, or bring your child to work today. And she kind of comments she does have a sense of the, **and my organization is very mission oriented and works on kid issues and she kind of gets that**, oh you make things better for kids and I want kids to have good quality early education, and she kind of gets that**. I don't know how much she gets up to oh my mother is a working mother and I could do that if I wanted to someday, but I think that at some point she will, and I think that's important too** (7002, 99)	2-PL		Sense of purpose in her work, and in showing her kids what is possible
For me there is kind of a little bit of frenzy, in addition to all of that too, you know this time is going to go so fast and then they're going to be in college and they're going to be gone and then we're going to be like okay so here we are, I mean so **like you kind of want to enjoy it and embrace it even all of the stuff that makes it interesting and exciting and stressful is still what makes a good, and you don't want to miss that and become all stressed out about it,** and then end up sitting at home going well now here we are. **I mean it's hard to kind of keep perspective on, it's really a pretty short time in your life that it's going to be this way.** (7XXX, 121)	2-PL		GREAT QUOTE Purpose and meaning – sense of direction
Yeah I mean come on **my life is so much richer with having a kid,** I am, it's just, it is astonishing to me how happy he makes me and my husband. People told me that before I had kids and I was	2-PL		Having a child gives her a sense of purpose

like yeah yea you know that's great whatever (loud laughter) but it's like you can't even explain and now you think, you **know I have a couple of friends that are married and they don't have kids and you think well what do you do with your time and what you do with your money on what you save for I mean there's only so many vacations and cars and houses and stuff you can buy and then what?** You know, it's totally invalid I mean I'm sure everything they do is great, but it is just so out of my realm now what you would do and why you would do it, and I didn't used to be that way (7XXX, 85)			

*There were no comments in the data that were coded NF, (2-PL).

POSITIVE RELATIONS WITH OTHERS (2-PR) - Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships, and is capable of empathy and intimacy.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
When I took the position as Dean, my husband actually decided that he would step out of the work force for about 3 years. He worked out of the home doing different things just so somebody was there til I got used to what I could and couldn't do in the position. (2002, 31) He was home doing consulting out of the house. He was there all the time when the kids had to get to the orthodontist, and all that I didn't have to worry about it. Well now we live up in Moundsview and he works down in Bloomington so it's me that has to rearrange everything and that so it's kind of my turn to do this. He's home by 4:30, 5:00 every night so at the other end there's things going on you know one of our boys is in football and they have to be there at 5 to 5:30 so I don't have to worry about that**, so we've kind of juggled it back and forth now.** (2002, 67a) For 3 years he just took care of it. If the kids were sick I didn't have to worry about staying home, the whole works. [Background comment: "Lucky"] Now we have to (2002, 69a)	2-PR		Trusting relationship - lifetime partnership over the course of the family
So my husband negotiated a move back here where he's originally from and families are close by to help out. My mom comes over all the time. I'm like you're making up for it because you weren't always there for me. It's really helped our relationship. And my husband works from home 3 weeks a month and then he flies out to California 1 week a month **so it's great because he's there with the kids and has breakfast with us. It's not at all a part of his personality and I never would have predicted he would play this type of a role and so it's exciting to see him [unclear]. I've let go because he'll step in.** So that's about me. (4008, 17d)	2-PR		Satisfying relationships with mom and husband
I think I'm like you in **that I do have a husband who helps out**	2-PR		ongoing negotiating

quite a bit, he hardly ever travels for work his schedule is very flexible, he will stay home with the kids when they're sick at least half the time, and **we communicate constantly** so we are always going to compromise on responsibilities and my husband usually does drop off and I do pick up, and ever since the 35 W bridge collapse its added 25 minutes to the way home with pickup and everything every day and I mean I'm not complaining it could have been much worse, we could've been on the bridge but it's, and traffic has been much worse, and you know I said to him you know I can't take this every day I just can't and so now he picks up the kids a couple of days a week and we kind of work that out (8001, 45a)			
See it sounds like I'm cutting him slack if I say that. [general laughter]. You know, step up to the plate, overcome evolution or whatever [general laughter]. But I agree it's definitely different having a baby, He could be sitting there crying and crying, and he still does it, he'll turn up the TV volume [loud laughter and murmurs of agreement]. I physiologically cannot do that. The baby is crying. You go and take care of the baby. I'll be on the phone with him and I'll hear Matthew fell down and he's crying and he's still talking and I have to say go and make Matthew feel better now. And like you **said it's a different style and I learned really early on that I wasn't going to tell him or criticize him because then I would be taking care of children all the time.** So the fact that I go out of town for three or four days and they don't get a bath. They'll live. (2003, 98) 2003 There are certain situations where I have to criticize but **for the most part he just does things very differently and the boys love it they love spending time with me they love spending time with him so it's all good. So you have to assume that they are not going to do it the same way.** But at the same time you look around the house and I'm running around from room to room picking stuff up and vacuuming and he's watching the football game and that happens all the time and that's just the differences. (2003, 100)	2-PR	2-PR	Acknowledging and Respecting differences in her partner Empathy that he is different Trusting her partner Also coded NF (2-PR) Feels she needs to criticize husband at times
and I mean luckily **I don't know how I would manage to cope and balance if my husband didn't have a great sense of**	2-PR		Trusting, satisfying relationship

humor and to be a man and also sort of go, "Hi, let's look around at the big picture," (laughter) and I had to do these periodic checks of our priorities and they'll follow so things are here okay so okay all the kids are alright, okay so we can probably cut this down and we can trim back here and here and not go to that birthday party and not go to that event and we have to do those reality checks you know regularly that kind of, we don't have any family in town to sort of help with the coping and a balancing and so **sometimes we have to make these kind of really conscious and checking in with each other a lot** (7004, 43b)			
For me being at home for so long, I love what I am doing right now. I like being there for my kids and I like being able to do whatever I needed to do or wanted to do with them. I could go on all the field trips, I could see all the shows, I could be the girl scout leader. I could do all this stuff with them**. And I feel like I became very close to my children because of that.** But I love to work. I absolutely love going to work.(laughter) And when you say it's hard work. It isn't any fun. It's wonderful to be with your kids. **And I loved being there as they were growing up. And I loved being able to see all the stages.** But I hated being a stay at home mom. I was, well I guess the housewife part of it. That's the part I hated. I didn't mind being the mom, I didn't mind being with my kids. (4004, 20a) **I mean I feel very fortunate because I did get a break I mean my husband's been working ever since he graduated from college he's never had a break** and even though I didn't especially like some of the things I was doing as a housewife it was a break and it was something totally different than what I had been doing so that's kind of depressing isn't it? (4004, 64c)	2-PR		Satisfying relationship with children Expresses empathy for husband
The environment that I have right now is my husband and I, listening to you, how you went and discovered yourself as being independent**, I feel actually lucky, I have a partner, especially after I have a child because I don't know how single parents do it.** This is what I told myself when I had a child. I don't know how single parents do it, you don't get a break. You don't have, especially with those babies, you don't have somebody to say you know I'm tired, or to say I don't know what to do with this	2-PR		Trusting relationship with spouse

situation, so **to me it's always been very nice that I can have somebody else very different than I am to kind of compensate, maybe even make me see the world a little bit different way or I would always be looking on my own thinking, so I'm, I actually like that help in my life,** but I haven't been single after being married. (4009, 25b)			
I think the biggest challenge that I've had to deal with is not so much what my husband expects of me, but it's the, the changing landscape, the role reversals, well not even the role reversals but the changing roles and so that in that, when my family fails at something it reflects on me. So like if we don't send thank you notes out for Christmas, all of my relatives are looking at me. They're not looking at my husband (murmurs and laughter in agreement) they're not looking at anybody else cause that is implied in my role and, **and I happen to be really lucky in the sense that one of the greatest things is the same thing as the reward is that my husband and I have a true partnership and he cooks all the meals one week I cook all the meals the next week and those kinds of things. And he does just as much maybe even more with the kids than I do and so my kids are being rewarded much more than they would have been 30 years ago with my dad. But still if something falls through the cracks, everybody looks at me.** (5001, 35)	2-PR	3-SCOH	Trusting, satisfying relationship. Also coded as NF (3-SCOH) Expresses frustration that even though she and her husband have a "true partnership" she still senses a social expectation that she is responsible for childcare and other "relationship" work for the family.
Well I think too that the experience with the family is that I want to enjoy my time with my daughter but I also have to remind myself that I also want my husband to enjoy time with his daughter and that it is so easy to fall back into the patterns because he's not used to it, or I'll just do that. Because you don't want to deal with it. I'm like you know that's a lot of experiences that he's losing out with our daughter because that's just not the way he was raised. And I don't want my daughter to believe that somebody's going to come up and make her bed every day and a lot of those things that he took for granted when he was growing up, now **even though it's frustrating for him sometimes, he has the best time with her in ways that he wouldn't do if I did, I stepped in all the time you know, so I look at it in terms of not only is it impossible for me to do everything but it's also, I'm**	2-PR		Expresses satisfaction with her husband even though she has to encourage him to behave differently than he might be used to at times – expresses concern about his life experiences as a parent.

depriving him of wonderful time with our daughter because it's just assumed you know that I'll do these things (5005, 33a(1))			

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
We in our family, have this tacit agreement that it's going to be me that's going to be that person. (2003 With the change in job did that happen or was it before that?) It was before that too. (Facilitator - that cut back?) Yeah. It was always me. And that's because he's, you know, economically in a situation where he's making more money and had obligations as a partner in the firm. (Facilitator - his particular job). Yeah. **And there are times when I really resent that.** And I talk to him about that. I'm like why does it always have to be me? (2004, 76)		2-PR	sharing household duties
I think it's interesting because my daughter was gone a lot over the summer to different camps and some of them are overnight so my husband and I were alone for the first time [laughter] and we were like, and we sort of had a taste of like, oh yeah this is what it's like to be married [laughter]. Because you feel so much like when you're working and you're being parents, so much of your day is about tasks. You gotta get this done, you gotta get this done, and so this summer when she would be gone somewhere is a different thing and I think that the sort of wake-up for me was that, you know, I have to pay even more attention to him, to my marriage. **It's so easy to go about your day, and I've got other stuff to do, and then not pay attention to your relationship. My fear is that my daughter, I mean, you know, she's going to go to college in eight years, and my fear is like we won't have a relationship. So we need to work on it.** (2005, 239)		2-PR	Expresses concerns about relationship with spouse.
Well I think, I don't know if it's a miracle for sure, but it would be for 2 kids to wake up happy, and not have to struggle with getting them dressed and getting their shoes and going to the bathroom		2-PR	Relationship with children

before we leave for school. **I mean just stupid little things, but on mornings that they are happy the whole day goes better. When I have 2 drop-offs when they say bye mom and give me a kiss, life is just good. It's those days when they're clinging and like mommy, no. It's like, I need that finger, I need that too. You know ,it's just, I don't like starting the day that way.** I don't know how other people would see it. They probably wouldn't see a difference, but I think that would be just fantastic to have that every day. (5002, 168)			
I think that he, well I commute more than 60 miles and he still lives on the farm that he grew up on, he's very traditional. And I don't know, I was thinking while you were talking about you know women are in power we don't have to depend on anyone we don't want to if we don't want to and men are threatened by that and I think that they are actually bitterly weakened in some cases, they're not going along with it, I think men have some pretty interesting challenges going on, and I see a lot of men really not rising to the challenge, really kind of crumbling under it and leaving their families for example and doing lots of things and so it brings in the dynamic of the need to watch over my marriage, so anyway I don't know why I said that, **but somehow there is this idea in my mind that we would be more of a team again instead of this constant struggle. For me even, it's not even so much on him doing it, it just really grates on me, it is just not there** (7005, 107)		2-PR	Expresses frustrations with marriage partner
and I would say with my husband, is we put so much of our energy into, when we're home, with the kids and it's like all, especially being pregnant now, and then, you know just so much going on, it's like it's all I can do, and we have two dogs, two big dogs, it's all I can do to take care of the 5 bodies in our house and make sure everybody is fed, happy , alive (laughter). I mean literally it's all I can do to actually get that done. **So I feel like we're not flourishing in our relationship. It's not bad. There's nothing bad, we're not, but it's not like it used to be. And I know that it's not, I don't want to go back to how it used to be, but I do want to find a better way to balance and you know, that beauty and passion and time for our husband**	2-EM	2-PR	She is managing but still missing out in her relationships.

and wife relationship. That's where I really, what I really miss. (5007, 132c)			
It's been really hard for [my partner] to adjust to being a parent and so **it's brought stress into our relationship… it was easier for us without children**, to talk and … it has been continuously difficult every stage of our child's development. So that's a stressor in our life (8005, 93)		2-PR	Loss of closeness in relationship
Yeah, we have my husband owns his own business. He has about 45 employees but they are still kind of at that point where they are still kind of trying to make sure that this is going to be successful and so he stays up late at night because he wants to be with the kids. We both want to be with the kids in the evening and I go to bed at 11 or 12 and he's up til 2 getting stuff done for work like his partners and his other employees have done and so **that's it definitely puts a strain on your relationship I think.** (4005, 37a)		2-PR	Feels their work is putting a strain on their relationship.
It's so hard to hold your temper. I walk in the door make a dinner, do the dishes clean up the house. (2001, 101) Last night I walked and, and before I had my coat off I was putting dinner on for the boys and it was like seven o'clock by the time I got home from work and I'm like why have these children not been fed?" (2003, 103)		2-PR	Expresses anger towards spouse for not helping out more with the evening routine.
[My stay-home husband] also felt like that when I came home he's been working all day and he was going to kind of kickback and I was like you know I've been working all day (murmuring, overtalking) not only am I supporting the family but I'm working I'm not playing all day and then coming home. **And that is an ongoing point of tension really because I'm not negating at all that I think his job is a lot harder but nonetheless it doesn't really seem fair to me that I would have a full-time day job and a full-time night job and he has a full-time day job and be watching TV at night** or whatever which he doesn't really but it is that level of kind of frustration I think of okay I hit the wall now when you need to sort of step and but still I'm tired after a long day and **we need to share the second stage of the job** (7004, 30b)		2-PR	

SELF ACCEPTANCE (2-SA) - Positive attitude toward oneself and past life, and concedes and accepts varied aspects of self.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING</td></tr>
<tr><td align="center">Quote (Example)</td><td align="center">Flourishing</td><td align="center">Not Flourishing</td><td align="center">Explanation (Justification)</td></tr>
<tr><td>You always have a situation where it is unworkable, there is no ideal situation, you just do the best you can and not feel bad about it, you just do the best you can. (2003, 27)</td><td>2-SA</td><td></td><td>GREAT QUOTE – demonstrates conceding/accepting</td></tr>
<tr><td>All I would say is that, you know, nobody is perfect and you have to know that sometimes you're going to screw it up and hopefully it won't be too bad but it's okay. Set your expectations early on what you can actually achieve and don't be disappointed if you don't. (2003, 273)</td><td>2-SA</td><td></td><td>GREAT QUOTE – demonstrates conceding/accepting</td></tr>
<tr><td>One thing I would say is don't listen to the advice. I will give you advice but not to listen, just trust your inner compass to guide you through this. I mean everybody's coming at it from a certain way (murmurs of agreement) and for everyone the parameters are different so what works for you may not fit into the blueprint for my life so don't get hung up on how other people do things (murmurs of agreement) (4008, 113)</td><td>2-SA</td><td></td><td>Advising others to accept themselves</td></tr>
<tr><td>You need to learn how to be a general contractor. You are not going to be perfect at everything. In fact that's one of my advice I would give people is say, and you know what I say it out loud, I can be perfect tomorrow. When I get in that mode of I gotta do this and here's this and I haven't done this right, just give up. You know, I can be perfect tomorrow. There is always tomorrow to be perfect. And literally every day you say that and it's never going to be perfect but just let it go and there's always tomorrow. (5002, 183(2))</td><td>2-SA</td><td></td><td>Active self talk
Also coded as (2- EM) because of statement about being a general contractor.</td></tr>
<tr><td>My family loves the movie The Incredibles. So Emily is Violet, Tommy is Dash. We don't have a Jack-Jack and that's okay. And I'm Elastigirl, and my mom goes that just fits you to a T. You're flexible, you stretch, you can accommodate anything. I think that's what you have to be to be a working mom. You don't have the luxury of setting up your expectations and having your expectations met every day. I've lowered my expectations</td><td>2-SA</td><td></td><td>Demonstrates conceding – "I'm doing the best I can."</td></tr>
</table>

where they're fed, they're clothed, they're in bed reasonably on time, you know, the whole rest of it, I have to let go or otherwise I'm going to be beating myself up. And so I've got to sleep when I can, eat as many decent meals as I can, go to McDonald and seldom as possible, but know that that's okay and just be flexible. (5002, 177(1))			
To be a working mother (pause). I think you have to be ready, you have to let go, you have to realize that you are going to be outsourcing things. You cannot, I mean you, you haven't, you have a baby, and I just went through this again where you don't want anybody to even hold them for the first few months right? I mean I didn't. I don't. You know I don't ever actually ask to hold people's newborn babies because I don't want people holding my newborn babies. But over time you have to let go of things, right? And I think you guys have used the term outsource you know. And I use that. I am outsourcing the outsourcing the education component. I feel like I am in charge of love and I'm in charge of you know, sure I need to, you know do the score card on the education, but someone else is in charge of kind of doing the tracing of the name and the this and the that and you have to be able to let go. (5006, 180(2))	2-SA		Demonstrates conceding – "you have to let go"
Well I was going to say that rushing to achieve the balance is very, very much something that I have also recently been thinking about, like hearing my husband say you know it never ends, it's never ending. **I just can't ever get the feeling that I never get enough work done, that I never have enough time with my kid,** and what I was thinking you do need to kind of take it back like an addict, and say **take it one day at a time I need to have one good day, recognize that, and not even a weekend, but say today I was able to get one chore done and I did a couple of projects, and I had a great time with my kids, but recognizing those smaller moments I guess would help** (7XXX, 120)	2-SA	1-A	Demonstrates the complexity of coding using this scheme Expresses that she is NF (1-A) because feels lack of satisfaction in multiple domains (work, time with child). But also expresses F (2-SA) in that she is actively working to concede and accept these various aspects of herself.
For me it's like this all the time (moves hands like a scale) like that statue in front of the justice building [laughter]. It's a constant balance, It's just always questioning am I, you know I decided to go on a field trip with my daughter and as a	2-SA	1-A	Accepting various aspects of self – desire to be with children, desire to be at work Also coded as NF (1-A) for the following

result I was delayed if the bus got, you know was slow coming back. And I had told my team I was going to be on the field trip about a week in advance, and reminded them the week before. The bus took longer to get back so I was about 20 minutes late to a meeting and all hell broke loose during my absence and I walked into a really terrible tense conversation and you know why did I make that decision, and it was so important to my daughter that I was there on the field trip, but it was important to my team that I was there for the meeting. It's just, you know, I can't win. **I just have to do my best that I can and try to always not beat myself up about it.** I've been also in situations where I've let down my kids for the sake of following through on or at least maybe going a little overboard with a project or something. (2004, 48(2))			reasons: (2-EM) Struggling to master the situation (2-PR) Expresses that she has let her kids down at times
It's really hard to balance. I mean I remember when I had my daughter. You know my first child and it was just like it was the hardest thing in the world for me to put her in daycare. This most precious thing in your life ever and you're handing her over to somebody to take care of for you. And it's heart wrenching. And so then you know but then you [unclear] and then my son and now my daughter who's 2 and feeling that guilt of oh you know I'm not there to, **but in the grand scheme of things I'm the kind of person I think I'm better if I work.** Not necessarily every job I've ever held and not necessarily the stuff that I do right now is very stimulating for me. But you know **what I make a damn good income and I'm making all the benefits for the family (laughter) and I'm not walking away from that.** (4006, 23a)	2-SA		Accepting various aspects of self – need to work, need to mother
You know **I see myself as a working person so I cannot divorce those two things.** I've always decided that I wasn't going to have a goal of being a Superwoman, knowing that we are superwoman as I hear some of you I know we are. **But not trying always to control myself not to do that and be unsuccessful sometime.** My children call me crabby mom. Mom you are so tense after work especially when they have not done their homework or you know you have to sit with them, they don't get the best of me (general laughter). They will say also	2-SA	2-PR	Accepting various aspects of self.

mom I think when your children need your time and your help that you have all the commitments made, that I also find it really, you have to make a decision, **you have to take it in the moment, what are you going to go, what are you going to do? Those are times when I, as working mom, are going to have in my life.** (4009, 27b)			
Well I just for me I do I do feel some for me I feel guilty that my kids are in someone else's care for too long. I don't feel guilty at all that I'm working but I do wish that it was less time and but I also then **I've just decided to just kind of just live in that grey zone I guess because I feel like at work there are not options that are realistic that would make me feel good about my job and how I'm performing and how I'm working that are less than what I work today. So I'm in a catch, I feel like I'm kind of in a Catch 22 and I guess after 3-1/2 years I'm okay with it.** You know, it's like all right I'm not you know I remember the first week after I was home after having my first daughter and going back to work and my husband took that week off and I remember coming home and his parents were upstairs and I called him and I'm like you have to meet me at the car, like you have to come down here and I just cried and I just was like I'm going to be a lousy worker and I'm going to be a lousy mom and I just that was my feeling at the time of that. (5006, 64a)	2-SA	2-EM	Accepts the various aspects of her life. Coded as NF: (2-EM) Is not able to have her children with her as much as she would like.
It's interesting because for me, there is a tension. And I knew when I decided to get pregnant that there would be that tension and it was a mindset from the beginning of saying okay, **I can either feel like, I mean exactly what you said when you first came home, I'm going to be a bad worker, I'm going to be a bad mother, or I can say, look I am doing the best job I can in the moment right now, and when I'm with my daughter I give her all of my attention and when I'm at work I give that all of my attention. But it's that tension because it's not, it doesn't work like that.** It kind of does, but it doesn't perfectly like that idea. So it's that tension where **so if I felt like I was really flourishing somehow in my mind there'd be less tension. But I know that the reality is there will always be that tension. And it's a good healthy tension. I just, it's all about**	2-SA		Not expressing avowed flourishing, yet is able to talk through her circumstances and a mom and as a worker and come to acceptance.

mind set and saying okay I have to concentrate on the positive but living a good life, hey the 3 of us are happy and have smiles on our faces, I mean what more could I ask for? (5004, 125)			

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
Well it's hard to because sometimes you make choices to say you know I'm going to go out to Caribou or whatever, and I'm going to go do something with the bunko group in our neighborhood, but then if you have too much to do, then **sometimes you can't make yourself relax,** you know, I'm distracted by that stuff and, I have to get up early, and it's almost worse because then you feel like you're wasting time even though, you're not even enjoying it and you're like you know I gotta go. **And so it's hard to tell you know when you need to relax and when you can actually do it** (Yep and your Blackberry is under the table in you're checking it). Exactly! 7XXX, 53)		2-SA	Expresses difficulty relaxing and enjoying time that she has with friends/social group.
I don't know if anybody feels the same way I do in **that I don't think I could stay home full time but I feel guilty almost for not staying home, I mean I want to work, but then I also want to be home**, but I know I couldn't be on a full-time basis (7XXX, 73)		2-SA	Expresses internal conflict over various desires.

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SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE (3-SACP) - Positive attitude toward others while acknowledging and accepting people's complexity.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Another [magazine] that is good too is Brain Child. Has anyone read that? There's hardly any, have you guys, there's hardly any advertisements in it, it's actually all moms writing the articles, and what they do it, like they have something about, they had one about working moms and non working moms for example, so it kind of takes you at the whole, it's monthly, and it takes a whole week to read because it's pretty deep, it's all, like there's not pictures. So they had like one mom who worked write an article and say here's why I love it, and here's blah blah blah the pros and the, and then a mom who stays home and did that side of the story. Here's why that's you know the better way. So it kind of gives you both. **It doesn't really take a stand on anything or say it's all good. It's very, it's more close to reality maybe.** (5007, 158)	3-SACP		Example of taking an interest in different perspectives
because I think it's possible to your point when you ask were not necessarily socialized to ask and we don't know who to ask if we don't know what to ask and we don't have a model because we're making it up as we go and so **we don't necessarily have to worry about whether or not this stay-at-home mom down the street has the same life that we have because I wouldn't want that person's life but I also think that the other component is changing landscape is that we don't want to diminish that that is work and what they are doing in the home and how they live their life** is work but because women in our society aren't paid we're all probably working three jobs right now but we don't get credit for other things that we do and I think that we have a societal needs to start figuring out what that is supporting stay-at-home moms and that's not a decision that I want but I still think that you know that they sit and eat bonbons all their part (5005, 8b)	3-SACP	3-SCOH	Positive attitude towards others

NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
But on the reverse side, it's so unfair that stereotypically, and I realize this is not the case here, I mean it's wonderful to hear that a man stays home to raise his family, but that is rare and **so I feel sometimes frustrated that the men,** with when I look around my lab its man in high places, and women like me, I'm doing really great work, maybe a little bit less of it, but I know it's at the level that they do, but **because I'm not quite willing to risk taking a tenure-track position, because if I don't get tenure I have to leave, and move my family, and that's how I think, and men just don't, so they end up at the top with you know jobs where they are able to accomplish their goals, and they get better salaries whereas I am just like you know down lower, just because I care about roles.** (7005, 18)		3-SACP	Expresses a general perception that men don't care about roles or family with no reference to individual complexities behind behaviors

SOCIAL ACTUALIZATION (3-SACT) - Cares and believes that, collectively, people have potential and society can evolve positively.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	**Flourishing**	**Not Flourishing**	**Explanation (Justification)**
well actually it just thinking about everything that we have all said to be is that **I think it's striking that this is not a discussion that we would be having with men** that were not asking you know what why are men staying at home it's that the assumption is that let's just take on three more jobs and do all of that instead of -- you know what am I asking my spouse to change in his life so that we can have the life that we want as a family and we don't have the expectations **and I think that that's one of the things in this changing landscape that we can either have this extreme dichotomy or we can start addressing the changes that we need in our spouses** (5005, 24)	3-SACT	3-SCOH	Believes that change is possible and wants to push for it (especially with regard to gender equality at home) Also coded NF: (3-SCOH) Indicates that it's illogical (striking) not to include men in the conversation
I think you were saying earlier that you feel to a certain extent we need to keep on working as women, or at least to this is how I was interpreting what you are saying, because **there are women who went before us who made the strides that they did and basically made it possible for us to have the jobs that we have now, and I do kind of still feel that sense of duty as being able to show the next generation that it is possible to struggle but to still try to make something work where you are doing what you want to be doing, again to the extent possible and that if I stepped out of the work world it would be harder for those who come behind me** to be able to try to figure out new and different ways to try to balance life and work together (7XXX, 100)	3-SACT		Believes that change is possible and wants to help those that come after her
But the reward that I think about is that, I'm going to have a little girl, is to demonstrate **that we can break out of this idea of dad having to work and mom staying at home and say there are so many different opportunities for you. I think of my mom having to stay at home and her thinking her options were limited where I get to go to [my company] and different places, it's like a totally different world than what I**	3-SACT		Sees society evolving positively from her mother's generation to now.

experienced growing up and watching her. And so that's what I think of is the reward is to show that it can be different than what society has been in the past. And I also ask am I giving something up? You know and I don't know that yet. It will depend when I get there whether I have the flexibility to be able to you know go where I want to go when things come up. So I think those are kind of the things. My plan is to go back to work and kind of balance and try to figure out where's the give and take on that. (4003, 21b)			
But the positive side too though then I look at is **wow do we have a lot of opportunities as women today going back to the standard of 20 30 years ago whenever your parents were raising you. My mother didn't have the same opportunities, you know** didn't go to college, worked as a receptionist for awhile so for her she didn't have as many choices in front of her to actually work outside the home and to have the same level of success that I think a lot of women a lot more percentage of women have today, which creates issues for us and more of these like how to having to balance it all. **But it's also positive in that we do actually have more choices and more opportunities.** (5007, 70b)	3-SACT		Sees society evolving positively from her mother's generation to now.
So my partner, so what else, what are the ways he committed to do. First understanding that we also that he will see me as an equal. **In the society I grew up you are not an equal really,** you are supposed to do the housework. But here, no, you notice these, where I've seen women get treated the best, even though that is not quite [unclear] it's the best in my experience. **At work it's an engineering place, a scientific place, it's still a man's world. So I still am in meetings with maybe sometimes the only women or only 2 women. So it's just the world. It's changing, it's really changing. The other day there were 4 of us, only women at the table and I was like am I seeing correctly? [general laughter] We were the decision makers so this was fun [more laughter].** So for my, when I look at my daughter for example, I would like her in the future to have kind of a life like mine knowing that it's going to be challenging, this is what I wanted to leave up to her. (4009, 27c)	3-SACT		Sees her own workplace evolving positively. Also notes the difference from the culture she grew up in (Venezuela) and the US.

And that's **where the landscape is really really changing I think is that in equal numbers the man who are leaving to pick up kids in daycare earlier and the men who are having to take care of sick kids and men who take maternity leave, I think that's a change** (8xxx, 35)	3-SACT		gender equality

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Think about it. Women going to work is the reason we have fast food in the world [general murmurs of agreement**]. It's women going to work that has caused nutrition in our society to go down the tubes** because we buy packaged foods that are easy to prepare and they're full of bad stuff for you and fast food. (2001, 133)		3-SACT	Dire consequences of mom working!
When you said about the part time with advancement it made me think though I think men want that to I really think that everybody is just on this track **and I don't know if we can step back and say okay were not going to be as pressured and were not going to do as much here. I mean as much as technology comes in I mean is more and more of it comes in and everything is getting faster and everything has to be done now and everything has to be addressed and I don't know that we could step back and say okay we're going to have this part-time person who's going to be on this track to be an executive and just be an executive part-time I just don't see that happening** (side conversations - energy and discussion) (4004, 64b)		3-SACT	Technology is not taking us a positive direction
I had sort of the same reaction I think when I looked at the title, was to say well is the landscape changing? Sure but I guess it would mean compared to what? And did, do I have different options than my mother's generation did? sure, and when I was working in the private law firm if I looked at my level of the associate women was the situation very different professionally for them as far as a maternity leave policy and reduced time options, you know yes, I think that landscape is different. **There are many ways to have a practice where it's hard to see I**	3-SACT	3-SACT	Acknowledges positive change over all, but not seeing positive change within her own industry/company

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guess how I guess that translates out in the long term when women get to be senior associates in the long term and they still leave because no matter what the policy is, it's still very hard, and you still get sort of unofficially penalized if you take off for maternity leave, and the partners are still, by a very large majority, all men whose wives stay home to take care of the kids, and that kind of thing so I think in some ways absolutely the landscape is very different whether that really filters all the way up to making people change I haven't totally seen that yet (8XXX, 22)			
So I guess to, what you were saying earlier, I feel like we women have done so much work to prove that we women can do it and that's wonderful, and I think it's great that we have all these opportunities, but at the same time I feel a little bit like we've got ourselves in a trap because **now we're expected to do it all and the standard of living is set now based on two incomes and so now we're stuck having to work, and raise the family, and did we really do ourselves any favors?** And in my family know **I'm reading Laura Ingalls Wilder to my daughters and you know some people were saying to me should you really be reading that your kids I mean that such an old concept, it and I thought at least then the roles were defined, mom cooked and cleaned and pa went hunting,** and now my husband and I are just like no, it's not fair, I mean why should I have to cook every day because I was away from home all day in the first place, and so I feel like it's a wonderful world of opportunities but it's also a bit of a trap and I'm not sure what else to say, it's a bit of a trap (7005, 16b, 16c)		3-SACT	Not sure the change has been all positive

SOCIAL COHERENCE (3-SCOH) Has interest in society, feels it's intelligible, somewhat logical, predictable, and meaningful.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
I grew up in a family with a mom and a grandma who worked so I was never in my life I didn't think that was a possibility that it wasn't what I was going to do. But I think the biggest challenge that I face for being a professional and a mother is being a wife (general laughter) because my husband works retail so he is gone every Saturday, every Sunday and those are the days that I am home so it is almost like he's not there [unclear] very very much so but he works such such an odd schedule so he can spend more time with her, that we don't get to see each other so that is probably the biggest challenge that I am facing right now. (4001, 36)	3-SCOH	2-PR	Predictable that she would be a working mom. One of very few examples of SCOH impacting sense of flourishing.

NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
I think I would've liked a longer family leave, I would have liked a least a six-month family leave so I could have breast-feed comfortably at it and to be you know doing that at work I do think we need a longer family leave physically I feel. It is a live person's body going through delivery. ***I mean we talk like it's no problem when you're pregnant you go to work and people expect things of you and we want them to believe that, but I thought my body was working very hard and a longer family leave is something I envy in other countries*** *and the other is saying would be really to work part time with advancement opportunities work that allows me to do what I'm doing and move out that I can be whatever a director or whatever I want to be I don't think that is possible (4009, 57)*		3-SCOH	Illogical - Inconsistencies between pregnancy and childbirth and workplace expectations/policies

Well then who does it get outsourced to? I mean in terms of childcare, childcare goes from 9 to 5 and a lot of times, I mean, **I know this is true my daycare it bothers me that it's all women. My daughter is growing up thinking she is going to be a childcare provider and that's not, not that there is anything wrong with that, but there are no guys there. And that's the model that she's seeing is that women are childcare providers and men go to work and that's a completely different model than I want to set for her,** but there aren't necessarily options right now because we haven't, again men aren't necessarily stepping up to the plate and saying you know what I want to be in those positions. I think that this is valuable to our society. (5005, 58)		3-SCOH	Model for caregiving is at odds with a mother going to work
And I think in some ways there is, I mean obviously we all feel some guilt, and obviously some of it is universal, but I feel like a lot of the magazines that I've seen are like what to do if you work from eight to five, you know I'm like what about if you have to work nights for two weeks and then what do when you were back on day, while I can't find it anywhere, so I've often felt that **my situation is just so wacky that it doesn't fit anywhere** (7004, 148)		3-SCOH	Media representations of working mothers not predictable or logical for her.
I have something that I want to clarify. I totally agree that that's fine, and I am not really expressing frustration that he doesn't have more of a nurturing desire, I'm expressing frustration that the role that we get, that we get less pay and we get less, and we don't get promoted to places we could belong, it's just that they look back and they say you're not really serious about this work, you're only 75%time, and the salaries are so much lower, it just, **to me it just doesn't seem fair when I'm doing a little bit less but as high quality of work is the man, so I'm only getting paid two thirds of the salary, shouldn't I get 75% of what they're getting?** (7005, 20)		3-SCOH	Illogical to experience greatly reduced salary for slightly less work.

But I get Parents [magazine], my sister got me a subscription to parents, and I reviewed it and I can't stand it. And I thought it when I read the copy of Working Mother that I lifted I was like a least this sounds a little bit more relevant to my world because parents is so stay at home mom friendly **that it seems like it just doesn't recognize any of the issues [I'm having].** It's like Martha Stewart crafty things that are like you need and you need a professional to assist you with come up like a birthday cake looks perfect (7XXX, 145) **It does seem like there's nothing in between** (7XXX, 146) Well and I think it's new, it's certainly new ground and **there's not a ton of people that have the same situation and there is not any answer** (7XXX, 147)		3-SCOH	Media messages are inconsistent with reality for her life circumstances
I think that women are taking on more professional roles, and taking a more predominant role across America, but I see it very differently at home. And I see it very differently with our families and friends that the men have careers too but they are not assuming more responsibility at the house, that women take on more and more and more, and put more hours in every day and the man comes home and expects dinner to be ready. That's more my experience (8XXX, 16)		3-SCOH	Gendered behaviors inconsistent with reality of life.
As far as the changing **landscape I don't know what is normal anymore.** I kid his mom because she has a very different life, and I have one sister who works halftime as a nurse and a sister who worked for a little bit here and there and now she's taking classes working towards a Ph.D. and she has a husband who is home and who helps so that's a different world than I am into **so just figuring out what's normal what I should expect myself to be doing and what I can actually do, am I normal am I overachieving am I underachieving I don't know** I think were doing okay but you know it's good to discuss these things with other moms and get some insights from other people (5002, 5c)	2-SA	3-SCOH	No role models
[My company has] been written up in Working Women's magazine about being one of the top companies for women [because] they have offered flextime, you know what I mean where it's like you work for 10 hour days or whatever and then you get a day off whatever it happens to be and I used to do that		3-SCOH	Disconnect between the ongoing nature of family life and the "family friendly" policies in the workplace.

a while back - work two days and have a day off, work two days have two days off. It was great, but now the company is starting to cut back on people getting flextime …**they use to offer a lot more and then they started cutting back on it and then they started limiting the number of people who are allowed to do it in the department.** For some reason they didn't think it looks good with not as many people there on Fridays. **And I'm thinking that this is a company that supposedly understands the working mothers of the working families needs or whatever…and that to me really indicates that they don't understand…you can take vacation time to go see your kid's program… they're fine with that, But if you want to flex that schedule on a regular basis and put in 10 hour days just so you can leave for half a day, you know leave at noon on Friday on a regular basis, if it's something special every once in awhile**, okay it has to be an exception it cannot be a way of life for them. (4006, 73a, 73b)			
The miracle that I would like to see is a longer maternity leave. Just look at all the recommendations on breastfeeding now and **how pediatricians want you to breastfeed for a year. World Health Organization says 2 years and maternity leave is 12 weeks. And those two things are competing, so there are many reasons, but that one is so blatant.** I mean 12 weeks and a year. And pumping is just you know (someone says "hard). Yes. That would be my miracle. And I could easily take a year off. Even though I don't, even though I don't think I could quit, but you know a year off. (5006, 192)		3-SCOH	Disconnect between the realities of nursing a baby and maternity leave options.
We have more technology, we have more money, **we have more of so many things that we don't necessarily need but we're not using it to our benefit. You know there is a lot of technology that would allow people to not travel as much, but that's not where we're focusing our finances**. And **there are a lot of people who believe that they need to both be working and it becomes you know I need to work rather than we've made an economic decision to work and live at a certain lifestyle**, and that has just become the norm even though chances are our parents didn't have that type of lifestyle or our		3-SCOH	Seems illogical that we are not being smart about using technology to help us work less rather than more.

kids could care less if we have, if they have 3 more toys rather than 10 more toys. (5005 68c)			
My husband picks up our daughter, normally feeds her dinner and I am and I'm coming home at about that time, and I see that he expects much more gratitude and thanks for accomplishing that task then I would ever even think of…it's just not something I would do. (7004, 26) It's funny you say that. When I had my first daughter I was working with [company]…the CIO of that company is a woman, and she's very nice and we got to be pretty good friends and she said you know when you have this baby, and my husband is a nurse and he's casual so he stays home with the girls, and she was like you know he's big stuff and everyone's got to be like what a hero, what a great guy, for stuff that any parent should do. But people are going to go like oh you're working. And she's right, people just don't expect that, even after, and he does work, he works two shifts every six weeks, but not a lot and he doesn't even get always that in, and he works hard with the girls but nobody expects it so **men expect a lot of atta boys for stuff that, and like you say nobody would really think twice about saying to me good job making it to work today.** (7001, 27)		3-SCOH	The change in women's work roles has not been met with a corresponding change in men's roles at home.
We need a much longer maternity leave (right, right), well I think that there is such stress associated with that and then that stresses everything else in your life and **I mean there's mastitis and all these things that you know that happen because of these irregular difficult situations, physical symptomatology goes along with it** (8xxx 76)		3-SCOH	Disconnect between physical experience of pregnancy and the available leave from work.
One thing I notice and talk to my friends about is that it still seems **like it's on the mom to do things like doctor's appointments, interviewing for a new day care, the options for that, the extracurricular activities, where are you going to be at, organizing carpools, … getting a babysitter, all those things. It's the woman covering it even though we work as long**…,		3-SCOH	The change in women's work roles has not been met with a corresponding change in men's roles at home.

and my husband is great with the cooking and the laundry, but I do all that stuff on top of work and he doesn't ever. (8xxx, 17)			
I really just don't think that most workplaces have adapted in the way that it should be by now, I just think it's ridiculous that we are expected to have so many hours behind the desk and there is this assumption that if you are not sitting at your desk you are not working, because there are a lot of times when I am up late at night or on weekends when you know maybe some other people who don't have kids aren't (murmurs of agreement) they're out doing those other things that we wish we were doing (loud laughter) so **I think employers should be concerned about people who are working 12 hours a day because how can you be efficient and be happy when you are working that much**, and so to me I think that companies should discourage that but I don't think that's happening (8xxx, 63)		3-SCOH	Workplace structure does not match line up with family life

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION (3-SCONT) Feels that one's life is useful to society and that one's contributions are valued by others.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING

Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
and it is **something that I think about in my job too is giving back to other people**. I mean it's very appropriate. Somebody gave me an opportunity to work at the company I am working for and it was just a Kelly temp job, and 18 month job. And I had never, I mean I was a stay at home mom for how many years, 15, I don't know how many years it was but it was 10 years or 15 years and I had no experience and I had a degree in psychology so it's not like I had you know big, a business degree. And I kind of laugh about this to people that are hiring. I mean no one would have hired me today, you know, and someone gave me an opportunity because they saw something in me and you know within the 18 months I was there I was able to get a position and move up. So again I think that the reward has really been the personal growth that I have and the people that I have had as leaders that have provided that opportunity for me. **And so again it's turning around and sharing that with your kids as well, and see that you know you do have opportunities to give and it's just going after whatever your dream is.** (4007, 31b)	3-SCONT		Contributing to/through her kids
I would love to be able to have enough money to, and it's not even the money I really don't even think I'm greedy, I would buy time back with it, I already do have a cleaning lady, someone to cook meals or enough to go out to eat and never be, I wish someone out there or would invent a business where they cook healthy food and bring it to you, or you could pick it up and you can get decent meals, just all those things that I feel like those aren't exactly what I value, it's not what I want to do so if I could make enough money, **I mean I'm trying to prevent neurodegenerative disease you know, if only that would give**	3-SCONT	2-EM	Contributing through her work – persists despite the struggles because of belief in the contribution

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me back enough so that I could buy meals for my family so I don't have to give up food without cooking you know. (7005, 123a)			

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
And Target is very, before I had children working at Target, a lot of business got done after hours in a social environment. You used to go out for happy hour, I mean my husband and I lived the classic DINK existence. We had a home in uptown, we would go out to Lake Calhoon. We would typically go out at least 3 nights a week with our co-workers. We had our whole social network through work. And we got a lot of business done outside of the office. **And when we had children and you would find out just by checking e-mail at 11 at night that some decision that had been made earlier in the afternoon might have been reversed because of a conversation that somebody had had at happy hour at Champs [general murmurs of agreement] two hours ago, and you would be like how do I keep up? And it would make you feel really like Oh God I'm not performing to my best capacity and maybe I'm not a contributor to the team and it was a big adjustment for me to realize that there was nothing I could do about that.** (2004, 41a)		3-SCONT	Concerned she is not contributing at work Example of using the word from the definition to determine the code for a comment ("contribute")
Or there's pressure to volunteer, the school my daughter just started that is really into parent involvement in volunteering, and I work in Woodbury and I live I live in Golden Valley and the school is in Golden Valley, there is no way I can come in to help out at a lunch, unless I was working from home, and I wouldn't be able to do it on a moments notice, and so yeah I see **that because there are all these parents who volunteer a lot to make me feel like you're not helping or you're not seen as being involved but it's because you have a job** (8004, 80)		3-SCONT	Frustrated by circumstances that prevent her from contributing to the community.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION (3-SI) - Feels part of, and a sense of belonging to, a community, derives comfort and support from community.

EXAMPLES OF FLOURISHING			
Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Bosses make a huge difference. **I remember changing bosses in short order when my second was a baby and just the relief that came with the new boss who is so flexible and a family man and had kids of his own that were approaching their teenage years.** It was like this huge weight was taken off my shoulders. (2001, 198)	3-SI		Derives comfort from boss situation
Since we don't have any family up here our neighborhood. We have lots of kids are the same age as my kids and we know the parents real well and I actually had day care at my neighbor three houses down and so we still know them and so if I'm going to be way late or my husband's going to be way late we just call Clarissa or Vicki and say can they come to your house for a little bit after school till I get there and it's no problem**. If I didn't have that I don't know how I would do it.** (2002, 140)	3-SI		Derives support from neighbors
My parents live in the area and my brother lives with his spouse. So we've actually never had a babysitter for our kids really [unclear] but usually it's family. They're not obsessive about it but you know they always want to see them and so you know, it's really different. **So it surprises me that nobody else has that. That's really impressive that you guys can pull that off.** (2003, 29)	3-SI		Derives support from extended family
I know for me to go to **I am lucky enough that when my parents are in town they do help** when there's a sick day and my husband is traveling and I do have some meetings that I really really, really should try to be at, you know they will help, and **so for me it's helpful to have family, it's that whole it takes a village, and so I really need the help, and we're fortunate.** (8XXX, 42a)	3-SI		Derives support from extended family

It's been an interesting experience for me to come back from leave. For one, the maternity leave is 12 weeks, but you can take a personal leave of absence on top of that which is what happened to me when I called and was like yep I'm gearing back, coming ready and then didn't sleep that night at all and **then just decided all right I'm going to ask and see what happens and that was a good thing, just ask. I think you said that (to 5004) and so I asked for an extension and they gave it to me, which was awesome. And then I also asked at the same time, I'd like to come back part-time and so they, as a transition, which is what it has been, transitioning back, and it was 3 days a week** and what was, I found interesting, was they couldn't get the HR set-up done so (laughs) like it was technically kind of a real pain and in HR they would have had to make a whole new job description, a whole new everything, cause I was just like just pay me for 3/5 of my salary no problem whatsoever and they were like okay sure, and I was like Geez that was easy, and then the details came and (laughs) and it was like (5006, 101)	3-SI	3-SCOH	Deriving support from the workplace even though there is no official policy

Also coded NF:
(3-SCOH) Policies and HRIS not designed to accept a part-time arrangement in her role |
| **So if I'm not sitting at my desk, nobody would ever think to question is she working is she getting her stuff done,** because everybody knows, probably it's the technology too, because first thing they do is call me on my cell phone (laughter) are you in the building, or can you talk right now or can we do this over the phone, so that's one part about it, **they have created an environment that is more supportive of the not the checking in or you have to be sitting in your chair to actually be doing the work. So that's the good part of it is that is has created a very good environment.** (5007, 92b) | 3-SI | | Derives support from workplace |
| You know another thing I thought of with the changing landscape is when I was working retail prior to giving birth to my daughter and I was, it was before I delivered, when I interviewed at corporate just to check it out, first of all because I knew it would be the best choice for my family, but if I look back that **they interviewed me when I was that pregnant, and knowing that they were going to need a leave, there is no way in my mind that I would be offered this job.** So I went on the interview thinking I was just going to pass an hour of my time, thinking | 3-SI | | Derives support from workplace |

about when I could finally go to the hospital and get this thing out of me (general laughter) and I was offered the job. **And it's just so different than what I ever expected or what anybody I told that I was going to go on an interview would have ever expected and I think that it sheds a very positive light on the people that hired me and they knew I was going to go out on maternity leave and they were still willing to give me opportunity. Made me open my eyes in a completely different way and I'm very appreciative.** (4001, 38)			
My sister stays home most of the time with her kids and works in the evenings when she does work. **And I see what my kids do at daycare, and I love it.** Because if I was home staying with my kid, we wouldn't be doing the artsy crafty, go to the library, read books (chorus of agreement) we'd be doing the laundry and the cleaning and the doing projects and mommy stuff (yep, yep, totally) it would be totally centered around what I want to do not what they need to do. **The fact that there are fulltime people caring for my kids, that's their only job, they've got somebody else making the food, it's awesome.** (5002, 117)	3-SI		Derives support from caregiving resources
What has been most important for me is without a doubt, I mean there is the husband part, but also great daycare. If I didn't feel good about how she was spending her time during the day (chorus of yeses in the background) **and I can't believe actually how much easier it's been, maybe it's just the second kid thing, but yeah I just take it for granted now because I have great daycare so I don't even think about that.** I think of the times, you know, transitions in the teachers, you know, turnover and that is just, it just compounds it. It just makes it much much worse. (5006, 116)	3-SI		Derives support from caregiving resources
For me, there's nobody that I really get advice from, but **I think that the most comforting thing for me is having a circle of friends in the same situation where you realize that if you go to their house for dinner, and it's perfect, it must always look like that where with your friends like you know actually that's not really true because they just cleaned it out because you are coming over (loud laughter) and they think the same thing about your house when they come over,** but I do have a	3-SI		Derives support from friends

Quote			Explanation
friend who about three or four years ago she kind of cherry picked a handful of women who kind of we all work in a similar field like we all work in social policy who are married with children and some who she knew and some who she didn't, and she is at this little kind of networking, kind of social kind of support group of women a kind got the ball rolling over time and that was my sounding board, and everybody was experiencing similar kinds of things, and to me I think just the normalizing of the journey is the most important thing, not the failure, not the oh everything is so out of control and it's not going to get any better. (7005, 152)			
And changing landscape, I would agree with what's been said so far that I can't go to my mother. My mother thinks I should stay home. My mother-in-law thinks I should stay home. My grandmother in law thinks I should stay home. We decided that I wasn't going to and we are very very comfortable with that. But it is taking bits of support and comfort from different people, and I don't really even have a role models at work that I say that's my life that's the one that I aspire to because I look at people that visit their kids. Well I don't want to visit my daughter. But I need to find some different inspiration and balance so I just take snippets here and there and make a pattern that works for me so far and so far it works. (5004, 7c(1))	3-SI	3-SI	Feeling unsupported by extended family – but still actively seeking comfort and support. Example of the participant using explicit words from the definition of the code (support and comfort)

EXAMPLES OF NOT FLOURISHING

Quote (Example)	Flourishing	Not Flourishing	Explanation (Justification)
Well I would say with the more flexible schedule I really, really try to go out of my way to make sure I am meeting all my commitments or exceeding. And what's frustrating is that depending on who you work for, your boss may see it that way, and they might not. **Because I was given the 4-day week by my former boss. Then the new boss came in who is remarkably not flexible and so I hear these comments and hear, and I know I am working as many hours as I did working 5 days a week. But it his mind it's at 4 days. So I have the internal pressure on myself to do and exceed what I have committed**		3-SI	boss not supportive

to do and then the frustrating part is when I have someone hinting or jabbing, I can't even shoot back it's so subtle, but hinting that I am somehow inconveniencing them by having that one day off. (2003, 44)			
I feel like **there is a expectation where we're going to say it's okay for you to leave at 5 and do the daycare pick up, however, we expect you to put in 3 more hours after the kids go to bed**, you know (general laughter). And I feel like that's sort of a new thing of okay you know that we don't shut off work and all of that. And sometimes that's absolutely fine with me, and sometimes I'm like you know if I'm at home I get my daughter down I'm exhausted and I just want to go to bed, **but I do feel like there's that tension, that you know if you're going to leave at 5 then there's a price to pay for it sometimes.** (5004, 65)		3-SI	Feels the overall system is not supportive
Sometimes we question should we be living closer to family because we have no immediate family in the area and that support network. I had the perfect storm of a situation a couple of weeks ago when there was a major event that my organization was hosting and I was pretty much responsible for all of the, my team handled all the logistics, made sure the press was informed, just all the aspects of it, and one of my kids ended up getting a fever that day and my husband was in Nashville for work that day as well. So the teacher basically called me and said I know you have this event going on but you gotta come and pick up Sam and I had no backup whatsoever so literally had to take my feverish 2 year old to this event [general chorus of sympathetic "ooohs" – participant has tears in eyes] because I had no back up. I mean I had no back up. I literally like, later that night I drank a big glass of wine, and I was like okay what am I doing? (2004, 24b) You know, is it, you know, I'm very frustrated and I talked to my mom and my husband got home at midnight that night and I was like this is the stupidest thing we've ever done, we need to move to be closer to family**. And many times we question does it make more sense for us to have that support network still. Anyway, it was just very much like I said the perfect storm. And it really, when you have those kind of reality checks, you**		3-SI	Feels lack of support due to no family help

wonder, is there a better way to balance. You are doing every thing you can. I mean I couldn't have a more really great set up, but even then I had a sick kid. (2004, 24c)			
oh let me see am I missing anything oh yeah the changing landscape I think the changing landscape in terms of family life and work life and women entering the workforce it's changed so dramatically that **for me it's harder to find support networks and I can't pick up the phone and talk to my mother because she doesn't get it and I also have a lot of friends did or stay at home moms and there's that divide** I feel I were at a position in the culture where we are embracing this newness of women returning of women working full time and career oriented and **we still have a little bit of these extremes and there's kind of this infighting so I have struggled to find a lot of support with that** because I have a lot of friends that are stay-at-home moms who don't get what I'm doing either or they work in professions that are completely different like teaching it's much more family-oriented (5001, 4)		3-SI	Feels lack of support ("infighting") due to generational differences and situation differences with friends.
But where I struggle is that aside from the professional, because there's the, I know I do a good job, a great job, and I don't mean to sound like I'm [unclear] such a great job, so that's fine right now, I like it okay, don't tell anybody (laughs) I mean I like it fine, it's not my ideal job I think, but what for me **what it would really look like if I felt like I was flourishing in a couple other aspects with a lot of my friends, and I would say extended family I don't feel like I give them enough I never, I never, I hardly ever go out with friends. I hardly ever have a girls night out. And if I do it's like a big oh my gosh, you're doing that or you have to make all the logistics happen so you can do it right (loud laughter) right, every 6 months. So that's the part of what good would look like, flourishing, if I really felt like I had that balance of, I'd still have that network of friends, you know really close,** (5007, 132b)		3-SI	Does not derive as much support from friendships as she wants.

		3-SI	Does not derive support from school community
I've heard people talk about that, **being on parent committees and being the only working mom, and it's, it's (yeah) it's not easy because there is a real attitude** (8XXX, 79)			
I think one thing with the work world is that it doesn't, one issue that has come up in my office a number of times for me and for other women is breast-feeding. And when you have to pump there is nowhere to do it really privately, I need you know you just find an office that is vacant, and you need keys to that but there is no accommodations for any types of things that (8003, 70) There is supposed to be -- but there is no (overtalking, side comments). Yeah well it's kind of like having policies on the books (exactly- it's a law) it's just, it's just one thing to say that the law, but **it's another thing to say if you're in a male-dominated workplace you are going to go to your boss and he doesn't even know what the word breast pump means, and say I need a lock on my door, I mean that's hard.** (8003, 72) And if you do do it, I mean I had a friend at the law firm who went back to work after maternity leave, and started trial, and I mean is scheduled for trial out of town somewhere and you know she had to go and breast pump in the car when she could like over lunch and you just think there are times when you have circumstances like that where it**, I mean how do you say to your very senior male partner and your male judge and everybody else, I mean you can't stop trial because you need to go pump, you know you can't (well than you leak all over your front!)** (laughter) yeah I know (not really how to impress the jury – loud laughter!) So there are, I mean I agree with you breast-feeding is one of those issues that is hard to negotiate (8004, 74)		3-SI	Workplace is not supportive or comforting with a normal personal issue that goes along with motherhood.

APPENDIX H: INITIAL LIST OF THEMES

Overview

The women who participated in the Focus Group Sessions were able to describe their experiences of flourishing both explicitly and implicitly. They also described their experiences of not flourishing explicitly and implicitly.   This document categorizes key comments by their codes according the symptoms of Flourishing/Not Flourishing in the coding scheme. Based on frequency and intensity of the women's comments, initial themes are tentatively identified within each element of the coding scheme.

1) **Avowed Flourishing (1-A) - Feels happiness or satisfied with life overall, or domains of life.**

   a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

      i)   I am flourishing.
            (a) "I just feel good about doing it." (2003, 14b)
            (b) "I feel grateful that I am able to have both." (8001, 88(1))
            (c) "Just that rich, rich quality of existence to me, and you get both of those worlds I mean your mind is fed and your soul is fed if you keep your work when you have children." (8002, 90(1))
            (d) "I feel like I'm doing exactly what I would like to be doing at this point in time." (4004, 64a)
            (e) "I don't doubt that I'm capable of doing what I'm doing." (5005, 105)

      ii)   I am flourishing but…
            (a) "I mean is it absolutely perfect? No, there are things that could be better, but I do feel like I'm flourishing from the way I see it." (8001, 103(1))
            (b) "I try to just really embrace every single piece of it, and even though sometimes I'm really just … crabby and overwhelmed and whatever, it's usually pretty short lived in the grand scheme of things." (4006, 23f)
            (c) "I do feel that it's flourishing. It's all good. The only thing is I don't feel like I have time for myself, and I really, really want time with my friends [general chorus of agreement]… I still feel like I'm in a good point in my career, and then you know the kids, and the husband, it's good and I mean it has its up and down days, believe me, but it's all good." (2003, 230)
            (d) "Well I feel like I'm flourishing right now but I just have too much of it. …And it's fine, and I feel like all of those things bring incredible joy into my life, but I just need a little bit less of all of them." (2005, 229)
            (e) "I think for me right now I have the ideal situation… [but] I don't have any role models who are managers who have what I would say is a good balanced lifestyle." (5002, 78)

b) NF – Key Comments/Potential Themes

   i) I am not Flourishing.
      (1) "There is always something that's lacking." (2001, 49)
      (2) "So you just feel inadequate…then you kind of go like oh I'm kind of inadequate in every realm in my life … it's like oh this doesn't feel good to me… I want to do a lot of things in my life but it is just not humanly possible." (7004, 64)
      (3) "It's not possible for my life to look exactly like I would want to look because of the nature of the way my life is set up, it's not possible." (7005, 153)
      (4) "It's hard to ever feel like you're doing well … it's so hard." (7XXX, 63)

2) Autonomy (2-A). Comfortable with self-direction, has internal standards, resists unsavory social pressures.

a) FL - Key Comments/No theme identified.
   i) "That's just my own personal thing." (8004, 8)
   ii) "So I kind of start to talk back and say look, this is how I feel about it…you're never going to change my mind… So it's kind of choosing when to stand firm and when to bend and when to just say I don't really care what you think, sorry." (5004, 62)

b) NF - Key Comments/No theme identified.
   i) "But I still worry about that perception from others in the office." (8001, 62)
   ii) "I kind of feel guilty saying I have a work from home day." (4001, 68b)

3) Purpose in Life. (2-PL). Has goals, beliefs that affirm sense of direction in life, and feels life has purpose and meaning.

a) FL - Key Comments/No theme identified.
   i) "I have brought my seven-year-old to work with me… and my organization is very mission oriented and works on kids' issues and she kind of gets that … I don't know how much she gets, 'oh my mother is a working mother and I could do that if I wanted to someday,' but I think that at some point she will, and I think that's important too" (7002, 99)
   ii) "You kind of want to enjoy it and embrace it even all of the stuff that makes it interesting and exciting and stressful is still what makes it good, and you don't want to miss that and become all stressed out about it… I mean it's hard to kind of keep perspective on, it's really a pretty short time in your life that it's going to be this way." (7XXX, 121)
   iii) "My life is so much richer with having a kid… I have a couple of friends that are married and they don't have kids and you think well what do you do with your time and what you do with your money and what you save for? I mean there's only so many vacations and cars and houses and stuff you can buy and then what?" (7XXX, 85)

b) NF - No Key Comments/No theme identified.

4) Environmental Mastery (2-EM) - Has capability to manage complex environment and can choose or create suitable environs. [We interpreted this code broadly as being able manage the complex environment of the "changing landscape" (macro environment) and being able to master their own schedule so they could be where they wanted to be when they wanted to be there (Micro environment)]

    a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

        i) I will move (change environments) in order to have flexibility.
            (1) "One of the main reasons that I went to that position is because … now I can actually be a little more flexible."   (2002, 32)
            (2) "So I made the conscious decision to go into the non-profit sector at a dramatic a pay cut… It's a pretty flexible arrangement." (2004, 20b)
            (3) "I made sure I moved close so I made sure the commute was doable…it involves negotiating everything in your life." (8002, 81)
            (4) "I relocated to be near my mother and it made a huge difference … but I did have to move across the country for it."(8002, 44(1))

        ii) I really like/appreciate the flexibility I have at work.
            (1) "That's one of the great things about [my company's flex-time program]… That flexibility is hugely positive." (5006, 103c)
            (2) "One reason I like working for [my company] is that I know my kids can call me at any time of day and that they can get hold me and that they allow me to respond to my kids if I need to…I don't abuse any of those opportunities they give me to be with my family but I know that I have that choice and I really like that." (4007, 16b)
            (3) "I'm working as hard as the next person, but you know it might be at 10 o'clock at night or it might be on Saturday or it might be whatever fits for me, but I think at least in my particular [work] group I think it's helped a lot with that kind of frustration, because you can take a full-time job that you can work where you need to be." (7001, 21b)

        iii) I speak up and ask for what I need.
            (1) "If I asked I have always gotten what I have asked for. I just need to remember, 1) I need to remember to ask and 2) I need to be very aware of the consequences that can come with that… and it's a choice." (5004, 67a)
            (2) "Before we decided to have kids I went on a little bit reduced schedule, I talked to my boss and I said I only want to work four days a week and took a reduction in pay and started working four days a week and started setting an expectation for post baby." (8004, 7)
            (3) "But it was kind of a conscious effort to say [to my husband] you know what, we're going to split this up, you have to take some of those…I think you really have to make an effort to not take it all on." (7001, 29)

b) NF - Key Comments/Potential Themes

i) There is always too much to do/I am never done.
(1) "I think that the invasion of e-mail and voice mail to home [general murmur of assent] impacts you … It's so hard you want to go home and not think about work, but I think now in this new age of working you are never done." (2005, 50)
(2) "My biggest challenge has been having enough time for everything and living up to my own expectations."(4002, 22a)
(3) There is an opportunity cost to absolutely everything I do… and there is always more than one thing that I am not doing because I'm doing something else." (7006, 41b)
(4) "My children complain that I work too much. And I am a victim. That's why I couldn't be here (at the focus group session) at 4 because somebody has to schedule a meeting with a VP til 4:15. And I couldn't say no, I am sorry I couldn't say no."(4009, 25d)

ii) I don't feel like I am in control.
(1) "I think especially with kids …they are like such a moving target all the time, which makes it great, but at the same time it makes you feel kind of inadequate a lot of the time and totally out of control." (7XXX, 65)
(2) "Everything is quite reactive…my husband is an attorney and he does corporate transactions so his schedule is totally at the whim of the clients… we had a nanny, we were both very, very busy and it just came to the point where we couldn't keep it together." (2004, 20a)
(3) "You are always questioning are you making the right decisions … it's that doubt and guilt associated with that, and I think a flourishing would be not having to feel that so powerfully, to be questioning your decisions and your abilities." (8XXX, 101)

iii) Even flexible work arrangements are hard to manage.
(1) "If I want to keep [my part time status] I have to do these other things so I do have to check [messages] all the time… even you know in the middle of picking up kids I have to say you know what I do have to take this call."(8001, 68)
(2) "It raises the question of part time work (right, murmurs of agreement), and if you're really part-time or if it's just that you have part-time hours but the same workload." (7XXX, 23)
(3) "Where I work, you may be able to work part time but it is a totally different …I don't know anybody who's done it successfully." (5006, 178)

5) Personal Growth (2-PG) - Insight into one's potential, sense of development, and open to challenging new experiences.

   a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

      i) I want to grow/I feel good that I am growing
        (1) "Being a working mom it's very, it's kind of like sainthood. You really reach the depths of your patience and you also see the opportunity of how great it is. It's really like this amazing opportunity, but it's really challenging at the same time." (2004, 83)
        (2) "There is nothing I would really change…on the upside the reward is you know I think that I have been able to juggle what I do and… I could have a family and it would work out and still be given new opportunities to grow within the company and have a career." (4003, 22c)
        (3) "For me personally, the rewards have been that I have grown personally, and that has been huge… I realize that I can do anything I want to do if I really want to do it, it is just putting my mind to it… And so for me going back to work was really personal growth." (4007, 31a)
        (4) "The professional part is very important, it's very rewarding, I like using my mind in a different way. I mean I was using my mind as a mom, and that's, hugely rewarding too." (8003, 89)

   b) NF - Key Comments/No Potential Themes Identified

      i) "There are things in life that you at the very least have to get put on hold for many years and it's hard, you feel like you gave up again at least temporarily, parts of your sort of individual self… and that's hard." (8XXX, 61)

6) Positive Relations with Others (2-PR) - Has warm, satisfying, trusting relationships, and is capable of empathy and intimacy.

   a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

      i) My y husband and I are a team.
        (1) "We've kind of juggled it back and forth." (2002, 67a)
        (2) "I've let go because he'll step in." (4008, 17d)
        (3) "I do have a husband who helps out quite a bit…We communicate constantly." (8001, 45a)

      ii) My husband is different than me and that's a good thing.
        (1) "Even though it's frustrating for him sometimes, he has the best time with [our daughter] in ways that he wouldn't do if I did, I stepped in all the time you know, so I look at it in terms of not only is it impossible for me to do everything but it's also, I'm depriving him of wonderful time with our daughter because it's just assumed you know that I'll do these things." (5005, 33a(1))
        (2) "It's a different style and I learned really early on that I wasn't going to tell [my husband] or criticize him because then I would be taking care of

children all the time…For the most part he just does things very differently and the boys love it they love spending time with me, they love spending time with him so it's all good. So you have to assume that they are not going to do it the same way." (2003, 98, 100)
- (3) "To me it's always been very nice that I can have somebody else very different than I am to kind of compensate, maybe even make me see the world a little bit different way or I would always be looking on my own thinking, so I'm, I actually like that help in my life." (4009, 25b)
- (4) "I don't know how I would manage to cope and balance if my husband didn't have a great sense of humor and to be a man and also sort of go, "Hi, let's look around at the big picture." (7004, 43b)

iii) I feel lucky to have a partner.
- (1) "And I loved being there as they were growing up. And I loved being able to see all the stages." (4004, 20a) "I mean I feel very fortunate because I did get a break, I mean my husband's been working ever since he graduated from college he's never had a break." (4004, 64c)
- (2) "I feel actually lucky, I have a partner, especially after I have a child because I don't know how single parents do it." (4009, 25b)
- (3) "I happen to be really lucky in the sense that …my husband and I have a true partnership and he cooks all the meals one week I cook all the meals the next week and those kinds of things." (5001, 35)

b) NF - Key Comments/ Potential Themes

i) I need/ want more time for the relationships that are important to me.
- (1) "It's so easy to go about your day, and I've got other stuff to do, and then not pay attention to your relationship. My fear is that my daughter, I mean, you know, she's going to go to college in eight years, and my fear is like we won't have a relationship. So we need to work on it." (2005, 239)
- (2) "So I feel like we're not flourishing in our relationship. It's not bad. There's nothing bad, we're not, but it's not like it used to be. And I know that it's not, I don't want to go back to how it used to be, but I do want to find a better way to balance and you know, that beauty and passion and time for our husband and wife relationship. That's where I really, what I really miss." (5007, 132c)

ii) Having children has put a strain on our relationship.
- (1) It's been really hard for [my partner] to adjust to being a parent and so it's brought stress into our relationship… it was easier for us without children, to talk and … it has been continuously difficult every stage of our child's development. So that's a stressor in our life (8005, 93)
- (2) "My husband owns his own business… We both want to be with the kids in the evening and I go to bed at 11 or 12 and he's up til 2 getting stuff done for work like his partners and his other employees have done and so that's it definitely puts a strain on your relationship I think." (4005, 37a)

iii) I need /expect my spouse to help more with the second shift.

(1) "Somehow there is this idea in my mind that we would be more of a team again instead of this constant struggle. .. it just really grates on me, it is just not there." (7005, 107)

(2))"It's so hard to hold your temper. I walk in the door make a dinner, do the dishes clean up the house." (2001, 101) "Last night I walked and, and before I had my coat off I was putting dinner on for the boys and it was like seven o'clock by the time I got home from work and I'm like why have these children not been fed?" (2003, 103)

(3) "[My stay-home husband] also felt like that when I came home he's been working all day and he was going to kind of kickback …and that is an ongoing point of tension … it doesn't really seem fair to me that I would have a full-time day job and a full-time night job and he has a full-time day job and be watching TV at night …I'm tired after a long day and we need to share the second stage of the job." (7004, 30b)

7) Self-Acceptance (2-SA) - Positive attitude toward oneself and past life, and concedes and accepts varied aspects of self.

a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

i) I have to let go.
(1) " I can be perfect tomorrow. There is always tomorrow to be perfect. And literally every day you say that and it's never going to be perfect but just let it go and there's always tomorrow." (5002, 183(2))
(2) "To be a working mother …, you have to let go, you have to realize that you are going to be outsourcing things… you have to be able to let go." (5006, 180(2))

ii) I have lowered my expectations.
(1) "You don't have the luxury of setting up your expectations and having your expectations met every day. I've lowered my expectations where they're fed, they're clothed, they're in bed reasonably on time, you know, the whole rest of it, I have to let go or otherwise I'm going to be beating myself up." (5002, 177(1))
(2) "Set your expectations early on what you can actually achieve and don't be disappointed if you don't." (2003, 273)
(3) "I've just decided to just kind of just live in that grey zone I guess because I feel like at work there are not options that are realistic that would make me feel good about my job and how I'm performing and how I'm working that are less than what I work today. So I'm in a catch, I feel like I'm kind of in a Catch 22 and I guess after 3-1/2 years I'm okay with it." (5006, 64a)

iii) I'm doing the best job I can.
(1) "You always have a situation where it is unworkable, there is no ideal situation, you just do the best you can and not feel bad about it, you just do the best you can." (2003, 27)
(2) "For me it's like this all the time [moves hands like a scale] like that statue in front of the justice building [laughter]. It's a constant balance. It's just always questioning … I just have to do my best that I can and try to always not beat myself up about it." (2004, 48(2))

(3) "I can either feel like… I'm going to be a bad worker, I'm going to be a bad mother, or I can say, look I am doing the best job I can in the moment right now … But I know that the reality is there will always be that tension. And it's a good healthy tension. I just, it's all about mind set and saying okay I have to concentrate on the positive and living a good life." (5004, 125)

    iv) I want to work even though it's hard.
      (1) "It's really hard to balance… but in the grand scheme of things I'm the kind of person I think I'm better if I work. ..I make a damn good income and I'm making all the benefits for the family (laughter) and I'm not walking away from that." (4006, 23a)
      (2) " I see myself as a working person so I cannot divorce those two things… But not trying always to control myself not to do that and be unsuccessful sometime. … you have to take it in the moment, what are you going to go, what are you going to do? Those are times when I, as working mom, are going to have in my life." (4009, 27b)

b) NF - Key Comments/No Potential Themes Identified
    i) "Sometimes you can't make yourself relax, … And so it's hard to tell you know when you need to relax and when you can actually do it." (7XXX, 53)
    ii) " I don't think I could stay home full time but I feel guilty almost for not staying home, I mean I want to work, but then I also want to be home." (7XXX, 73)

8) Social Acceptance (3-SACP) - Positive attitude toward others while acknowledging and accepting people's complexity. (3-SACP)

a) FL - Key Comments/No Potential Themes Identified
    i) "Another [magazine] that is good too is Brain Child… It doesn't really take a stand on anything or say it's all good. It's very, it's more close to reality maybe." (5007, 158)
    ii) "We don't necessarily have to worry about whether or not this stay-at-home mom down the street has the same life that we have because I wouldn't want that person's life but I also think that the other component is changing landscape is that we don't want to diminish that that is work and what they are doing in the home and how they live their life ."(5005, 8b)

b) NF - Key Comments/No Potential Themes Identified
    i) "I feel sometimes frustrated that the men, …because I'm not quite willing to risk taking a tenure-track position, because if I don't get tenure I have to leave, and move my family, and that's how I think, and men just don't, so they end up at the top with you know jobs where they are able to accomplish their goals, and they get better salaries whereas I am just like you know down lower, just because I care about roles. (7005, 18)

9) Social Actualization (3-SACT). Cares and believe that, collectively, people have potential and society can evolve positively.

a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

    i) Things are changing for the better for women.

(1) In the society I grew up (Venezuela) you are not an equal really… At work it's an engineering place, a scientific place, it's still a man's world. So I still am in meetings with maybe sometimes the only women or only 2 women. So it's just the world. It's changing, it's really changing. The other day there were 4 of us, only women at the table and I was like am I seeing correctly? [general laughter] We were the decision makers so this was fun." (4009, 27c)

(2) "Where the landscape is really, really changing I think is that in equal numbers the man who are leaving to pick up kids in daycare earlier and the men who are having to take care of sick kids and men who take maternity leave, I think that's a change." (8xxx, 35)

(3) "Wow do we have a lot of opportunities as women today going back to the standard of 20, 30 years ago whenever your parents were raising you. My mother didn't have the same opportunities, you know … we do actually have more choices and more opportunities." (5007, 70b)

ii) I am part of making change happen for women

(1) "We can break out of this idea of dad having to work and mom staying at home and say there are so many different opportunities for you. I think of my mom having to stay at home and her thinking her options were limited where I get to go to [my company] and different places, it's like a totally different world than what I experienced growing up and watching her. And so that's what I think of is the reward is to show that it can be different than what society has been in the past." (4003, 21b)

(2) "I think it's striking that this is not a discussion that we would be having with men … and I think that that's one of the things in this changing landscape that we can either have this extreme dichotomy or we can start addressing the changes that we need in our spouses." (5005, 24)

(3) "There are women who went before us who made the strides that they did and basically made it possible for us to have the jobs that we have now, and I do kind of still feel that sense of duty as being able to show the next generation that it is possible to struggle but to still try to make something work where you are doing what you want to be doing… if I stepped out of the work world it would be harder for those who come behind me." (7XXX, 100)

b) NF - Key Comments/Potential Themes

i) I just don't see change happening.

(1) " I don't know if we can step back and say okay we're not going to be as pressured and were not going to do as much here. I mean as much as technology comes in, I mean more and more of it comes in and everything is getting faster and everything has to be done now, and everything has to be addressed, and I don't know that we could step back and say okay we're going to have this part-time person who's going to be on this track to be an executive and just be an executive part-time I just don't see that happening." (4004, 64b)

(2) "There are many ways to have a [law] practice where it's hard to see I guess how I guess that translates out in the long term when women get to be senior associates in the long term and they still leave because no matter what the policy is, it's still very hard, and you still get sort of

unofficially penalized if you take off for maternity leave, and the partners are still, by a very large majority, all men whose wives stay home to take care of the kids." (8XXX, 22)

    ii) Not all of the change has been positive
        (1) "It's women going to work that has caused nutrition in our society to go down the tubes." (2001, 133)
        (2) "I think it's great that we have all these opportunities, but at the same time I feel a little bit like we've got ourselves in a trap because now we're expected to do it all and the standard of living is set now based on two incomes and so now we're stuck having to work, and raise the family, and did we really do ourselves any favors? …I'm reading Laura Ingalls Wilder to my daughters and you know some people were saying to me should you really be reading that your kids I mean that such an old concept, it and I thought at least then the roles were defined, mom cooked and cleaned and pa went hunting…." (7005, 16b, 16c)

10) Social Coherence (3-SCOH). Has interest in society, feels it's intelligible, somewhat logical, predictable, and meaningful.

  a) FL - Key Comments/No Theme Identified

    i) "I grew up in a family with a mom and a grandma who worked so I was never in my life I didn't think that was a possibility that it wasn't what I was going to do." (4001, 36)

  b) NF - Key Comments/Potential Themes

    i) I don't see/have a role model for my unique situation.
        (1) "A lot of the magazines that I've seen are like what to do if you work from eight to five, you know I'm like what about if you have to work nights for two weeks and then what do when you were back on day, while I can't find it anywhere, so I've often felt that my situation is just so wacky that it doesn't fit anywhere." (7004, 148)
        (2) "It seems like [the magazines just don't] recognize any of the issues [I'm having]. (7XXX, 145) It does seem like there's nothing in between (7XXX, 146) "Well and I think it's new, it's certainly new ground and there's not a ton of people that have the same situation and there is not any answer." (7XXX, 147)
        (3) "As far as the changing landscape I don't know what is normal anymore…so just figuring out what's normal, what I should expect myself to be doing, and what I can actually do, am I normal, am I overachieving, am I underachieving? I don't know." (5002, 5c)

    ii) Traditional gender roles have not changed along with the changing work roles of women.
        (1) "I think that women are taking on more professional roles, and taking a more predominant role across America, but I see it very differently at home. And I see it very differently with our families and friends that the men have careers too but they are not assuming more responsibility at the house." (8XXX, 16)

(2) It still seems like it's on the mom to do things like doctor's appointments, interviewing for a new day care, the options for that, the extracurricular activities, where are you going to be at, organizing carpools, … getting a babysitter, all those things. It's the woman covering it even though we work as long…(8xxx, 17)

(3) "My husband picks up our daughter, normally feeds her dinner and I am and I'm coming home at about that time, and I see that he expects much more gratitude and thanks for accomplishing that task then I would ever even think of…it's just not something I would do." (7004, 26) "Men expect a lot of atta boys for stuff that, and like you say nobody would really think twice about saying to me good job making it to work today." (7001, 27)

iii) The workplace structure/system does not recognize/represent the daily life of mothers with careers.

(1) [My company] use to offer a lot more and then they started cutting back on it and then they started limiting the number of people who are allowed to do it in the department.…you can take vacation time to go see your kid's program… they're fine with that, But if you want to flex that schedule on a regular basis and put in 10 hour days just so you can leave for half a day, you know leave at noon on Friday on a regular basis, if it's something special every once in awhile, okay it has to be an exception it cannot be a way of life for them. (4006, 73a, 73b)

(2) "We have more technology, we have more money, we have more of so many things that we don't necessarily need but we're not using it to our benefit. You know there is a lot of technology that would allow people to not travel as much, but that's not where we're focusing our finances." (5005 68c)

(3) I really just don't think that most workplaces have adapted in the way that it should be by now, I just think it's ridiculous that we are expected to have so many hours behind the desk and there is this assumption that if you are not sitting at your desk you are not working, because there are a lot of times when I am up late at night or on weekends when you know maybe some other people who don't have kids aren't … I think employers should be concerned about people who are working 12 hours a day because how can you be efficient and be happy when you are working that much, and so to me I think that companies should discourage that but I don't think that's happening (8xxx, 63)

iv) The social system does not support/recognize the physical issues/changes that come with pregnancy and childbirth.

(1) "We talk like it's no problem when you're pregnant you go to work and people expect things of you and we want them to believe that, but I thought my body was working very hard and a longer family leave is something I envy in other countries." (4009, 57)

(2) "The miracle that I would like to see is a longer maternity leave. Just look at all the recommendations on breastfeeding now and how pediatricians want you to breastfeed for a year. World Health Organization says 2 years and maternity leave is 12 weeks. And those two things are competing, so there are many reasons, but that one is so blatant." (5006, 192)

(3) We need a much longer maternity leave … I mean there's mastitis and all these things that you know that happen because of these irregular difficult situations, physical symptomatology goes along with it (8xxx 76)

11) Social Integration (3-SI). Feels part of, and a sense of belonging to, a community, derives comfort and support from community.

a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes

  i) Workplace flexibility is a source of support.
  (1) "I remember changing bosses in short order when my second was a baby and just the relief that came with the new boss who is so flexible and a family man and had kids of his own that were approaching their teenage years." (2001, 198)
  (2) "It's been an interesting experience for me to come back from [maternity] leave. ..[I] just decided all right I'm going to ask and see what happens and that was a good thing, just ask. I think you said that (to 5004) and so I asked for an extension and they gave it to me, which was awesome. And then I also asked at the same time, I'd like to come back part-time and so they, as a transition, which is what it has been, transitioning back, and it was 3 days a week." (5006, 101)
  (3) "So if I'm not sitting at my desk, nobody would ever think to question is she working is she getting her stuff done… they have created an environment that is more supportive of the not the checking in or you have to be sitting in your chair to actually be doing the work. So that's the good part of it is that is has created a very good environment." (5007, 92b)
  (4) "They interviewed me when I was [8 and one-half months] pregnant, and knowing that they were going to need a leave, there is no way in my mind that I would be offered this job… And it's just so different than what I ever expected or what anybody I told that I was going to go on an interview would have ever expected and I think that it sheds a very positive light on the people that hired me and they knew I was going to go out on maternity leave and they were still willing to give me opportunity. Made me open my eyes in a completely different way and I'm very appreciative." (4001, 38)

  ii) Extended family is a source of support.
  (1) "My parents live in the area and my brother lives with his spouse. So we've actually never had a babysitter for our kids… So it surprises me that nobody else has that. That's really impressive that you guys can pull that off." (2003, 29)
  (2) "I am lucky enough that when my parents are in town they do help …so for me it's helpful to have family, it's that whole it takes a village, and so I really need the help, and we're fortunate." (8XXX, 42a)

  iii) Good/trusted daycare is a source of support.
  (1) "What has been most important for me is without a doubt, I mean there is the husband part, but also great daycare… and I can't believe actually how much easier it's been, maybe it's just the second kid thing, but yeah I

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just take it for granted now because I have great daycare so I don't even think about that." (5006, 116)

    (2) " I see what my kids do at daycare, and I love it. ..The fact that there are fulltime people caring for my kids, that's their only job, they've got somebody else making the food, it's awesome." (5002, 117)

  iv) I will find support and comfort wherever I can.
    (1) "But it is taking bits of support and comfort from different people…But I need to find some different inspiration and balance so I just take snippets here and there and make a pattern that works for me so far and so far it works. (5004, 7c(1))
    (2) "I think that the most comforting thing for me is having a circle of friends in the same situation." (7005, 152)
    (3) Since we don't have any family up here [we rely on] our neighborhood. …if I'm going to be way late or my husband's going to be way late we just call Clarissa or Vicki and say can they come to your house for a little bit after school till I get there and it's no problem. If I didn't have that I don't know how I would do it." (2002, 140)

b) NF - Key Comments/Potential Themes

  i) My workplace is not a supportive community.
    (1) "I was given the 4-day week by my former boss. Then the new boss came in who is remarkably not flexible and so I hear these comments … So I have the internal pressure on myself to do and exceed what I have committed to do and then the frustrating part is when I have someone hinting or jabbing, I can't even shoot back it's so subtle, but hinting that I am somehow inconveniencing them by having that one day off." (2003, 44)
    (2) "I feel like there is a expectation where we're going to say it's okay for you to leave at 5 and do the daycare pick up, however, we expect you to put in 3 more hours after the kids go to bed but I do feel like there's that tension, that you know if you're going to leave at 5 then there's a price to pay for it sometimes." (5004, 65)
    (3) "One issue that has come up in my office a number of times for me and for other women is breast-feeding. And when you have to pump there is nowhere to do it really privately…it's another thing to say if you're in a male-dominated workplace you are going to go to your boss and he doesn't even know what the word breast pump means, and say I need a lock on my door, I mean that's hard. I mean how do you say to your very senior male partner and your male judge and everybody else, I mean you can't stop trial because you need to go pump, you know you can't (well than you leak all over your front!) (laughter). (8004, 70,72,74)

  ii) I need more support from family and friends/I have struggled to find support from family and friends.
    (1) "Sometimes we question should we be living closer to family because we have no immediate family in the area and that support network…And many times we question does it make more sense for us to have that support network still. Anyway, it was just very much like I said the perfect

storm. And it really, when you have those kind of reality checks, you wonder, is there a better way to balance." (2004, 24b, 24c)

    (2) "What it would really look like if I felt like I was flourishing in a couple other aspects with a lot of my friends, and I would say extended family I don't feel like I give them enough I never, I never, I hardly ever go out with friends. I hardly ever have a girls' night out. And if I do it's like a big oh my gosh, you're doing that or you have to make all the logistics happen so you can do it right (loud laughter) right, every 6 months. So that's the part of what good would look like, flourishing, if I really felt like I had that balance of, I'd still have that network of friends, you know really close." (5007, 132b)

    (3) "For me it's harder to find support networks and I can't pick up the phone and talk to my mother because she doesn't get it and I also have a lot of friends did or stay at home moms and there's that divide … we still have a little bit of these extremes and there's kind of this infighting so I have struggled to find a lot of support with that." (5001, 4)

12) Social Contribution (3-SCONT) - Feels that one's life is useful to society and that one's contributions are valued by others.

  a) FL - Key Comments/Potential Themes
    i) Because I work I can give to others.
      (1) "Something that I think about in my job too is giving back to other people…And so again it's turning around and sharing that with your kids as well, and see that you know you do have opportunities to give and it's just going after whatever your dream is." (4007, 31b)
      (2) "I mean I'm trying to prevent neurodegenerative disease you know…." (7005, 123a)

  b) NF - Key Comments/Potential Themes

    i) I am not doing enough.
      (1) Or there's pressure to volunteer… because there are all these parents who volunteer a lot who make me feel like you're not helping, or you're not seen as being involved, but it's because you have a job." (8004, 80
      (2) "And when we had children and you would find out just by checking e-mail at 11 at night that some decision that had been made earlier in the afternoon might have been reversed because of a conversation that somebody had had at happy hour at Champs [general murmurs of agreement] two hours ago, and you would be like how do I keep up? And it would make you feel really like Oh God I'm not performing to my best capacity and maybe I'm not a contributor to the team and it was a big adjustment for me to realize that there was nothing I could do about that." (2004, 41a)

APPENDIX I: REDUCED THEMES

FLOURISHING

INITIAL THEMES - These are the sub-themes derived from the clusters of quotes under each symptom of well-being.	REDUCED THEMES – This represents an attempt to hone in on the essence of the experience of flourishing based on the sub-themes.	SUMMARY – This represents a summary of reduced themes related to the experience of flourishing.
• I am flourishing. • I am flourishing but… • I will move in order to have flexibility. • I really like/appreciate the flexibility I have at work. • I speak up and ask for what I need. • I want to grow/I feel good that I am growing • My husband and I are a team. • My husband is different than me and that's a good thing. • I feel lucky to have a partner. • I have to let go. • I have lowered my expectations. • I'm doing the best job I can. • I want to work even though it's hard. • Things are changing for the better for women • I am part of making change happen for women • Workplace flexibility is a source of support. • Extended family is a source of support. • Good/trusted daycare is a source of support. • I will find support and comfort wherever I can. • Because I work I can give to others.	I am flourishing despite the challenges. • I am flourishing. • I am flourishing but… I am want to have work and family in my life • I want to work even though it's hard. • I want to grow/I feel good that I am growing • Because I work I can give to others. I am realistic about what I can accomplish. • I have to let go. • I have lowered my expectations. • I'm doing the best job I can. I can rely on my husband. • My husband and I are a team. • My husband is different than me and that's a good thing. • I feel lucky to have a partner. Flexibility is important to me. • I will move in order to have flexibility. • I really like/appreciate the flexibility I have at work. • Workplace flexibility is a source of support. I have a strong network of support. • Extended family is a source of support. • Good/trusted daycare is a source of support. • I will find support and comfort wherever I can. I am an agent of change in a changing world. • I speak up and ask for what I need. • Things are changing for the better for women. • I am part of making change happen for women	I am flourishing as a mother with a professional career due to my personal characteristics (I want to work and have family in my life, I am realistic) and my external resources (husband, flexibility, network); and I am capable of creating positive change (in my life and in society) in a changing world.

NOT FLOURISHING

INITIAL THEMES - These are the sub-themes derived from the clusters of quotes under each symptom of well-being.	REDUCED THEMES – This represents an attempt to hone in on the essence of the experience of not flourishing based on the sub-themes.	SUMMARY – This represents that collection of reduced themes related to the experience of not flourishing.
- I am not Flourishing. - There is always too much to do/I am never done - I don't feel like I am in control - Even flexible work arrangements are hard to manage. - I need/ want more time for the relationships that are important to me. - Having children has put a strain on our relationship. - I need /expect my spouse to help more with the second shift. - I just don't see change happening. - Not all of the change has been positive - I don't see/have a role model for my unique situation. - Traditional gender roles have not changed along with the changing work roles of women. - The workplace structure/system does not recognize/represent the daily life of mothers with careers. - The social system does not support/recognize the reality of the physical issues/changes that come with pregnancy and childbirth. - My workplace is not a supportive community. - I need more support from family and friends/I have struggled to find support from family and friends. - I am not doing enough.	I am not flourishing. I am overwhelmed. - There is always too much to do/I am never done - I am not doing enough. - I don't feel like I am in control. I am not satisfied with my personal relationships. - I need /expect my spouse to help more with the second shift. - I need/ want more time for the relationships that are important to me. - I need more support from family and friends/I have struggled to find support from family and friends. - I need/ want more time for the relationships that are important to me. Work is hard. - Even flexible work arrangements are hard to manage. - My workplace is not a supportive community. Society has not kept up with the changing roles of women. - I don't see/have a role model for my unique situation. - Traditional gender roles have not changed along with the changing work roles of women. - The workplace structure/system does not recognize/represent the daily life of mothers with careers. - The social system does not support/recognize the physical issues/changes that come with pregnancy and childbirth. - I just don't see change happening. - Not all of the change has been positive	I am overwhelmed by the challenges of trying to function within a social structure that is at odds with my daily reality/identity as a mother with a professional career, and as a result I am struggling in my work and my personal relationships.

APPENDIX J: OVERALL EXPRESSION OF FLOURISHING

I live in a social structure that is at odds with my daily realities as a mother with a professional career. I am able to flourish in this context because I want to have work and family in my life and I am realistic about what I can accomplish; and also because I have a husband I can rely on, a strong network of social support, and a lot of flexibility in my life. I think things are changing for the better for women and I am confident that I am able to make positive changes in my own life, and in the world.