

Megan Hills interviews

Jenny Beatson,
IT Policy and Compliance Officer,
University of NSW



Juggling professional success and family life

Jenny Beatson was one of those ‘power women’. With a high-ranking job, a position on numerous prestigious committees, and being an organised single mother, Jenny was a success. Then one day everything changed.

It began when her 15-year old son left high school, vowing never to return. Jenny realised that while she may have been there physically for him, she hadn’t really been there mentally or emotionally. Work had come first. “Counselling sessions for both my son and I began immediately,” Jenny explained. “Work was no longer brought home. I took a new job with lower pay and less stress - and resigned from those committees.”

“Basically, I learned to ‘be there’ for my son, both in my heart and in my head. He eventually chose to return to school, and stayed there until he graduated. He is now a mature and thoughtful young man, working full-time and creating a life of his own.”

Jenny’s Top 3 Tips for those who want to juggle professional and family life successfully:

1. Don’t take work home in your briefcase - or your head

Clear your head after work in a way that suits you. Jenny’s ritual: Sit in the car and pay attention to your immediate surroundings (the seat fabric, how the steering wheel feels, etc.). Stop thoughts about the meeting that just happened, or the dinner you’re about to cook. Be calm and ‘in the now’.

2. ALWAYS schedule time for yourself

You can’t be of use to others if you don’t nurture yourself first. Whether it be a bath, coffee with a friend, going to the gym, yoga, or performing in community theatre – whatever works for you.

3. Grab time on weekends for planning

Use the weekend to make the weekdays easier: prepare your menus, shop, and cook for the week ahead. “To live a balanced life you have to be a bit ruthless,” Jenny says. “Let go of people who aren’t good for you, speak up about what you want and need, get everyone at home and work to pull their weight – and learn to say ‘no’ and mean it.”

What Jenny Beatson says about Think Learn Succeed

“I’ve known Eleanor for over eight years. She’s got extraordinary vitality and passion for her craft. I’ve seen her quickly turn reluctant participants into enthusiastically involved ones. She is great at using stories to explain situations. Eleanor is one awesome lady.”

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