

## Father's Day: A working dad's perspective on work life balance

For Father's Day, I wanted to hear a dad's perspective on work life balance. I know firsthand that work life balance is a struggle for working mothers. But what about for working fathers? Are their challenges the same?

A friend calls Mason Williams a "super dad." So, I asked Williams to share his thoughts on being a father and finding work life balance.

What exactly does being a super dad mean these days?  
Williams explains:

Although he is the Chief Investment Officer/Managing Director for [Coral Gables Trust Company](#), the 38-year-old Williams takes his parenting job equally as seriously. He says his children are his life – two sons, a 6-year-old named Jake and a 3-year-old named Luke. Williams, has been married for nine years to his wife, Ana Lucia, who is a stay at home mom. Ana Lucia makes most of the household decisions, but Williams says he's equally involved in the decisions regarding their children, so much so that he recently listed his son getting into a magnet program at the elementary school as a personal accomplishment on a recent awards nomination.



While Williams' job is set up to be 9 to 5, it extends well beyond those hours. Often, he works 10-hour days. "We're small and entrepreneurial so it comes with the territory," Williams explains. "You have to make an impact all the time for the business to grow. It can wear on you at times, trying to find balance between work and being there for your kids. I struggle but I think it's important to find ways to be with them."

Like most professionals, Williams can't help but check email on the weekends. It's the best time to trade ideas with his colleagues, he says. "With the iphone, email is at your fingertips and it's hard to put it down."

As the sole provider for his family, Williams says he puts expectations on himself that fathers of prior generations may not have experienced. Professionally, there is pressure on him to "do what I need to do at the office." At the same time, he also feels pressure to help at home. "When I'm not at the office I feel like I have an obligation to help with the children so my wife can take a break."

Williams realizes his generation of fathers are raising children in an era when technology has made parenting easier and more challenging. On one hand, parenting advice is at their fingertips. On the other, work is always in your pocket. "I think it's far more stressful," he says. "My parents did not have a Blackberry or iPhone. They could shut down. It's harder for us to concentrate on our home lives when we're home, so that's added stress."

Of course, that's not Williams' only stressor. He says like any parent, his challenge is learning to stop, take a breath and spend time with his family. "I have to tell myself that project at work, or that email can wait. Prioritizing is huge challenge and I have had to learn when to put family ahead of work. I know if I help out at home, I have a happy wife and I have learned happy wife equals happy life."

Williams says as a parent, he gets involved with the time management of his children and the activities they take on. "I'm teaching my son why he should do homework first, so he has free time afterward." Both the Williams boys are involved in sports, something Williams encourages. "We want them to be active. Our oldest is doing swimming and golf. Our youngest is doing soccer and swimming." One day, Williams even envisions an athletic scholarship for college for his sons like the one their mother, an avid golfer, received years ago.

With all the challenges dads take on today, Williams admits their children's accomplishments become that much more of their own personal achievements. Williams proudly tells me his son Jake has just been accepted to the Sunset Elementary magnet program for Spanish.

Yes, fathers today are pulling the double duty that mothers did for decades -- and while it's a tough, they are reaping the rewards in the close relationships they are forming with their children.

Keep up the good work fathers, and enjoy your special day. Happy Father's Day to all the super dads out there!



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