

## WCBA MEMBERSHIP PROJECT

### Finding Work/Home Balance During the Pandemic

*Insights From a Formerly Commuting NYC Finance Attorney\**



I was “lucky” when the pandemic hit and we were all forced into remote work. I had my own firm for a number of years based out of my studio apartment and, in my current job, I was already working from home three days per week so I understood how to make working from home work.

I had my office set up, had just ordered a new, more comfortable desk chair, and had recently upgraded my work computer. The only thing I did not get to do was to go back to my office and pick up a few notebooks, extra charging cord for my phone and the pictures from my desk- each would have been great to have but not having them is a small “price” to pay.

That said, my husband had not been working from home, so, we had to turn the guest room into a second office, get a larger computer screen as well as something other than a folding chair for him to sit on. At the time, Best Buy was still open so he made a quick

run to get what he needed.

As much of a challenge as it is to conduct conference calls while making sure a very busy kid under age 2 is safe and appropriately engaged, his daycare closing was the best thing that happened. We are getting the opportunity to see milestones that we would have gotten a video, picture or just a text about. His first use of the potty, hearing him sing ABCs and E-I-E-I-O and to count to 13. His excitement and awe every time the garbage truck comes by (the guys on the truck have been amazing, waiving at him and calling him “buddy”, honking the horn, asking him if he wants to drive—we have emailed the town to let them know how awesome they have been, making our son smile)- and we have had to get him a toy garbage truck—now his favorite toy. His climbing on small rocks- now boulders. His first bout with poison ivy, his first deep splinter (“boo boo!”). We would never have gotten this kind of experience with him otherwise.

And the daily wonder and amazement makes the seclusion not only bearable but wonderful. It’s the platinum and diamond lining to this cloud of COVID.

It is a toss-up of 1) balancing being an effective employee and effective mommy and 2) being an extrovert living the life of an introvert.

As for balancing, it is a juggling act, constantly comparing calendars to make sure one of us is always available to watch the baby, coveting his 2 hour nap time as time to focus on work, leaning on “Mima” whenever we can without taking advantage, taking calls on my phone (on speaker and on mute) while chasing after the little one, hoping that folks on the calls with me are not offended by hearing Elmo sing in the background.

Harder, almost, is managing through this new world as an extrovert. I’m only a “borderline extrovert” so, before COVID, generally I was OK for a few days with only briefly engaging with others when I dropped off and picked

up my son at daycare, when I ran to the supermarket, etc. but, by the end of the week, I needed to know that there are others in the world, even if just by going to a restaurant with my husband and engaging just with the staff. Not having that outlet is hard. Zoom helps but not enough.

I hope that the new found respect for needs of the family, the understanding of personal interruptions in work meetings and the flexibility of employers sticks around. As a professional, effective, productive and meeting deadlines, this new normal has shown that there is not always a need for the structure and formality of face time in the office.

I, personally, also love not commuting. That extra 3 hours (1.5 each way) allows me to be so much more productive but still end my day a bit earlier and, therefore, have more time with my husband and son. And it eliminates a huge stressor—my shoulders

would rise as I pulled into Grand Central and did not relax again until I took my seat on the train home at the end of the day.

That said, I do miss seeing people each day. There is benefit to connecting with colleagues in person, if only over lunch. I most miss my quick lunches at the diner or glass of wine in the evening with colleagues from the WCBA and otherwise, friends from the legal world and outside and family—those times are the most welcomed breaks in my day every time.

I learned that I am more effective and efficient working at home than in the office, even with all the interruptions and that I need time with people more than I thought I did.

I learned that I need to force myself to get outside and get fresh air, if only to walk to the mailbox and back, or I would not leave the house and would then end up feeling down.

I learned that what is going on in this world scares me more than I realized—between COVID and the unrest. It sneaks up and bites me as I try and fall asleep, wakes me in the middle of the night. For a person who likes control, this is the epitome of not being in control.

I learned that I really find it relaxing to sit with a jigsaw puzzle, some low key music and a glass of wine.

I learned that my son is fast! He may be the fastest almost-2-year-old I know. He can get on top of tables, rocks and the piano in the time it takes for me simply to turn my head to stir the mac n' cheese.

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*\*Due to the personal nature of this project we have offered authors the opportunity to remain anonymous. If interested in participating in the Membership Project please contact editor@wcbany.org.*



## OCTOBER 16, 2020 DEADLINE

# Honoring Our Veterans on Veterans Day

**Let us know if you are a Veteran. Be recognized in the November *Westchester Lawyer* magazine**

**Each year, to honor our WCBA members who are veterans** and show our appreciation for the sacrifices they have made, we feature a list of the names of all the veteran members of the WCBA in the November *Westchester Lawyer* magazine.

*Thank you for your service!*

### ***Yes, I am a Veteran.***

Veteran's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch of Service: \_\_\_\_\_ Rank: \_\_\_\_\_

Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

When and Where Served: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** If you have already been listed in the *Magazine* in previous years you do not need to contact us again, your name and service information will be included.

**To Join the List:** please fill out the form below, scan and return by October 16, 2020 to: editor@wcbany.org.