

# 17 Tips for Working Moms by Working Moms

BY KELLY HEITZ

Work is hard. Being a mom is hard. Doing both? That's nearly impossible.

There's good news though. According to a recent study entitled "Gender Initiative" by the Harvard Business School, daughters of working moms are more likely to have jobs themselves, are more likely to hold supervisory responsibility at those jobs, and earn higher wages than women whose mothers stayed at home. In fact, according to the research, women raised by working mothers earn 23 percent more than daughters of stay-at-home moms in the U.S. The study, which surveyed nearly 50,000 adults in more than 24 countries, also shows that men raised by working mothers are more likely to contribute to household chores and spend more time caring for family members.

You see? There is no reason to feel guilty. You're actually doing your children a service by working your tail off. However, those statistics don't make it any easier to simultaneously raise your kids and thrive in the industry. There are several female leaders in the spa industry who have seemingly mastered the art of doing it all. Here are their tips on attempting to juggle work and motherhood.





## 1. HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS.

"Up until the day of delivery I was hauling boxes and running around the country on business while telling myself, 'a newborn sleeps all the time, I will have all kinds of time to work on the business and still be a good mom,'" remembers Kate Fish, founder of Katari Skin Care, a natural skin-care company that sources directly from the families of Mediterranean artisans. "I took three days off during hospital stay and was ready to jump back right in only to realize that the 17 hours of sleep pediatric books were promising were a complete hoax. I was lucky to have one hour to do anything at all."

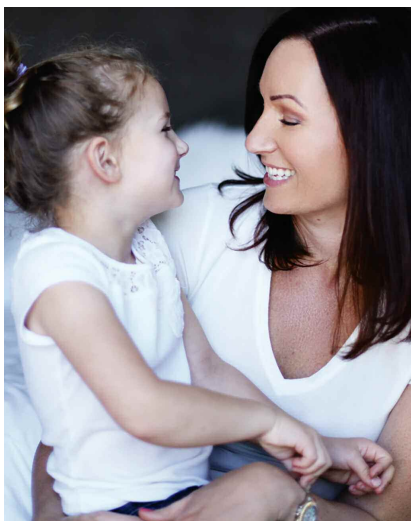
## 2. IGNORE THE WAR ON MOTHERHOOD.

"Work or stay home, breastfeed or bottle-feed, co-sleep or crib, there's criticism everywhere and other moms can be the biggest playground bullies," notes Diane Hibbard, vice president of treatments and developments at Burke Williams. "I believe every parent is doing the very best

they can for their children. I do not believe that working diminishes my ability to teach and foster amazing gifts in my own children."

## 3. DON'T BE AFRAID TO SWITCH UP THE ROLES.

"I started my company before I met my husband and he had a career of his own," recalls Noel Asmar, founder of the Noel Asmar Group of Companies. "Once we got married and decided to have children,



**Noel Asmar, founder and creative director of Noel Asmar Group of Companies, prioritizes family for both herself and her employees.**

he started working in the company, and when Hunter, our first born, arrived, we made the decision that he would be a stay-at-home daddy so that our children felt the stability of a parent at home at all times, and I could be mommy and continue to grow the businesses. I am so proud that our children get to live in a household where dad is the stay-at-home dad and mom is running her own company. The children only know equality, and they have a huge respect for the way we work together as a family."

## 4. DON'T FEEL GUILTY.

"Do not feel guilty for wanting to work, be successful and have a family, it's completely manageable," says Kim DeOrsey, spa director at the Salamander Spa at the Henderson Beach Resort in Destin, Florida. "If you are happy and successful, it will show in your kids."

## 5. FIND YOUR OWN FORM OF BALANCE.

"Finding balance between work and home was very difficult in the beginning," remembers Morgan Farrah, owner of Spa Revolution of Ocala, a full-service day spa in Ocala, Florida. "I felt like I was stretching myself too thin and I was either neglecting the spa when I wasn't there or neglecting my boys, Jax and Jett, when I wasn't at home. Still to this day I continue to remind myself that I am doing this, not only for myself, but for my husband and my babies. More than anything, I want my kids and my husband to be proud of me; be proud of the strong, motivated, independent woman that I am and strive to be."

As for Asmar, she has always felt very passionate about the importance of a balanced lifestyle, even before she had children. "I want my team to engage with the work they do at the office and value



**Diane Hibbard, vice president of treatments and developments at Burke Williams with her husband Dave and sons Hudson and Vonn.**



**Kate Fish's little girl wants you to know her mother can do it all!**

their home life. I lead by example, both at home and in the office and believe that finding balance, fulfillment and satisfaction is important to success," she says.

## 6. STOP COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHER MOMS.

"Never compare your 'all' to someone else's," reminds Asmar, who is also a mother of three children under 12. "Everyone's story is different. Never assume that someone has it all, or has it all figured out. You can't be perfect, and everyone, mothers and non-mothers alike, have their own struggles and we are all doing our best."

## 7. TIME MANAGEMENT AND SCHEDULING ARE CRITICAL.

"I prefer the paper version, things in my life change on a dime and nothing is faster than the vintage pencil eraser," says Hibbard. "Arranging my meetings and work schedule to be home when the babysitter leaves can be overwhelming for me, it can be a challenge to fit all the tasks in. I am always mindful of how much time I am devoting to the tasks and meetings I

"I always remind my fellow working mothers to breathe and tackle each day at a time. Working mothers are stronger than they think and sometimes they just need to be reminded of that."

— KIM DeORSEY Spa director, Salamander Spa, Henderson Beach Resort, Destin, Florida.

have, and how that tight schedule may feel for others I'm working with."

## 8. JUGGLE STRATEGICALLY.

"I can work from home, the soccer field and dance recitals," notes DeOrsey, who is also a busy mother of three. "As most people can relate, there is definitely not enough time in a day; therefore, prioritizing each day is crucial in order to make time for the kids, staff, work projects and myself."

As for Fish, a new mother, the world's view on running a business has changed. "Businesses are no longer run out of boardrooms. They are run out of cars, nurseries and while on a stroll in the park. I think most people understand that and can relate and appreciate the effort that it takes to do it all," she says.

## 9. SLOW DOWN.

"I always remind fellow working mothers to breathe and tackle each day at a time. Working mothers are stronger than they think and sometimes they just need to be reminded of that," notes DeOrsey.

## 10. IT SERIOUSLY TAKES A VILLIAGE.

"I think we are aware we cannot always do it all, and we should take it easy on

ourselves when we can't," says Hibbard. "Remember that it really does take a village and asking for help is important. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, it is a sign of strength."

For Farrah, who has two boys under the age of two, it's all about delegation. "I am learning to delegate—this is not an easy task for me. I would try to take on the world if it were possible, but I am learning that I need help. We all do. My strengths are someone else's weaknesses, and my weaknesses are their strengths."



**Morgan Farrah, owner of Spa Revolution, opened her day spa just weeks before giving birth to her second child, but she always makes sure to strike a balance between work and family.**



Fish agrees. “Delegating is a huge part of my new life,” she says. “I found a couple of girls who are helping me with orders and had to get a nanny for a couple of days a week. No, I cannot afford it, but I must.”

## 11. SHOW SELF-COMPASSION.

“It is easy for me to show compassion and empathy to others, but as a mother and leader, I often feel like I let someone down every day,” shares Hibbard. “I have

to remind myself that I am enough, and surround myself with other leaders who share the same struggles.”

## 12. MAKE YOUR KIDS LITTLE INTERNS.

“I involve my kids with my work and take them when I need to run errands so I can spend more quality time with them,” says DeOrsey. “Being a working mother helps my kids see the importance of working and how hard work

pays off. They will learn and grow from good work ethic and also learn to be more independent at a younger age.”

## 13. TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.

“You can only help others if you yourself are in a good place mentally, physically and spiritually,” Farrah reminds us. “Self-care is a must when trying to find balance between work and family.”

# DADS JUGGLE TOO

Working dads have just as much responsibility to be present for their children as moms do and these spa dads are doing their best to balance work and home life with their families.



### SHANE BIRD

Director of Spa Operations,  
Turning Stone Resort

**Children:** Baylie (15), Ethan (13),  
and Abby (11)

“I am a better leader because of the attention I have paid on being an effective father and husband. My family has certain basic needs and those needs are often echoed by the staff and guests I see at work. I can have a conversation with my 13-year-old son one night about his desires and complaints and turn around the next day to have that same conversation with a staff member at work. It comes down to relationships, happiness, and meeting human needs.”



### GARRETT MERSBERGER

Director, Kohler Waters Spas  
& Development, Kohler Co.

**Children:** Haley (13), Carson (10),  
and Taylor (7)

“I think as a male, there is in an instinct that you must be the ‘provider,’ so that means you must work all the time. However, I think it is more important to stay present with your children. Take a digital detox when you walk in your home and turn off the phone. Balancing work and life is definitely the biggest daily struggle; however, I find that when I balance the two, I am not only more productive at work, but I am also more present at home.”



### JEREMY McCARTHY

Group Director of Spa & Wellness,  
Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group

**Children:** Dylan (6) and Max (5)

“We try to practice mindful presence with our kids. I find that if I spend some time being 100 percent engaged with my kids, giving them my full attention, they don’t mind if later I’m busy and I need some time to myself. I call this mindfulness exercise ‘just be a parent’ and I try to practice it every day.”

## 14. **INSTILL SOME RITUALS.**

"We have a tradition that we eat dinner together at the kitchen table nearly every night. This is part of our family 'touching base' time and I really treasure that time with my hubby and children," says Asmar. "My second favorite daily ritual is bedtime. I lay down with each child on their own and we talk about the day with the lights off, then share a little cuddle. My boys love this as much as our little girl. I find this time very grounding and I go to bed feeling very grateful."

## 15. **KEEP PUSHING FORWARD NO MATTER WHAT.**

"Being a mother is my most important job. It's very challenging on a good day. It became even more so in 2008 when my beloved husband passed away suddenly when I was eight months pregnant with my third child," remembers DeOrsey. "I had no other choice than show my kids how to pick up the pieces and move forward no matter what life curveballs come your way."

## 16. **KNOW THAT MISTAKES CAN BE A LEARNING EXPERIENCE.**

"The most important lesson I've learned

is that mistakes can make you better. As much as we hate admitting when we have made a mistake, the lessons we learn from them are life changing," reflects Farrah. "There is so much power and knowledge in mistakes, and for me, this is the best way to learn. If I did everything right all the time, I could not grow as a mother or an entrepreneur."

## 17. **DON'T LOSE YOUR DETERMINATION.**

"I know other people did it, so I can do it too," says Fish. "It is not easy; however, it is a choice I made—to be a mother for my kid and for my business. And I am determined to succeed at both." ■

### MEET THE MAMAS



**KATE FISH** is the founder of **Katari Skin Care**. She was born in Russia, grew up in Belarus, and moved to the United States when she was 20 in pursuit of the American dream. She started Katari Skin Care in 2010 out of her desire to keep beauty simple and make a positive impact in the lives of people she encountered during her world travels. As a new mother, Fish is constantly learning to balance being both a mother and an entrepreneur.



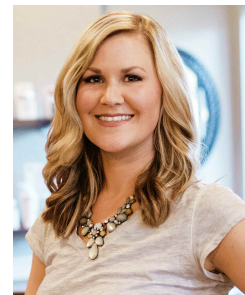
**DIANE HIBBARD** is the vice president of treatments and developments at **Burke Williams**, an urban day spa brand with 10 locations across California. Her history with Burke Williams spans 15 years, starting as an esthetician and moving to executive and developmental roles. Hibbard has pioneered nearly 20 product launches for Burke Williams' exclusive H2V skin-care line and has helped cultivate the spa's new Ayurvedic services. Born and raised in Orange County, California, she finds inspiration and unending support from her husband, Dave, and two children, Hudson and Vonn.



**NOEL ASMAR** is founder and creative director of **Noel Asmar Group of Companies**, which she started in 2002 as a spa uniforms company. In 14 years, she has grown her international business to include uniforms for spas, medical facilities and hospitality companies. She has also successfully branched out to include an equestrian brand, a pedicure bowls and accessories line, and, new this year, a contemporary women's fashion label. She managed all this while raising three beautiful children, Hunter (11), Taylor (9) and Coco (5) with the help of her husband.



**KIM DEORSEY** is the spa director at the **Salamander Spa** at the Henderson Beach Resort in Destin, Florida. She began her career in the wellness field over 30 years ago as a racket club locker room attendant. During the span of her two-decade career as a spa and wellness executive, DeOrsey has held leadership roles at many premier resort spas. In addition to her career in the spa industry, her most important passion is raising her three children: Tyler (20), Elle (10), and Remington (8).



**MORGAN FARRAH** is the owner/operator of **Spa Revolution** of Ocala, a full-service day spa with a resort feel. Farrah began dreaming the concept for Spa Revolution in 2015, after noticing a gap in the market for spas in Ocala. Spa Revolution opened its doors in August of 2016, just weeks before Farrah gave birth to her second son. With two children under the age of two, plus a new business, Farrah is constantly learning the art of balance.