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Moms. . . How Do You Do It?

To all women staff in the DMHAS state operated or private non profit sector who are mothers, stepmothers, grandmothers, foster mothers and those who are caring for their mothers...how do you do it?

At the risk of stepping into shaky territory ("he just doesn't get it"), I am asking the question and writing this message, first, to simply voice a hearty "Happy Mother's Day and Thank You!" Before and after each work day you handle all of the challenges of being a mother and, when special circumstances require, during the work day as well. Yet, you manage to shift your focus and spirit to direct care or provide administrative services that impact the thousands of people annually in the DMHAS healthcare system. Peoples' lives are helped, are changed because of what you do each day in DMHAS.

So I ask the question again...how do you do it? How do you handle the home life and the work life at the same time? What is the key ingredient?

My perspective is as an observer, a father who has a 25 year old daughter and as one who has seen the relationship of my wife and daughter evolving over all these years.

It struck me today, as my wife opened a card from our daughter, that there are stages to motherhood. In our family, we tend toward funny yet nice greeting cards. I would not call them "lovely cards." Today's card from my daughter was truly lovely. It said:

"I love you as my mother. I respect you as a woman. I trust you as my friend."

I think these words reflect stages of being a mother. They imply the maturing of a relationship. My daughter's relationship with her Mom, and vice versa, has taken work...ups and downs... sometimes very tough work. I am sure it will change and grow over the years, even more satisfying than it is now.

I expect that something similar to this happens in your family with your child(ren), boy or girl. And it happens in stages. You may have an 8 year old and a 15 year old...different ages requiring dissimilar approaches to developing a relationship. I presume these relationships seem tumultuous at times.

Yet in addition to handling the challenges of fostering relationships with your child(ren), you come to work each day and do your job. Some of you interact with patients/clients/consumers to form a therapeutic relationship that reflects to the person that you respect and care for them and that they should trust you as a skilled, caring individual. Others of you relate to co-workers, or other DMHAS "customers" to carry out the important mission of our agency.

Caring, respectful and trusting relationships...it works at home and at work. I do not presume to know how you do both so well. I am just thankful that you do.