

Left work to be a stay at home mom . . .So why do you feel like you are missing out?

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By Pat Choinski

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If this sounds like you read on. If this sounds like someone you know, share it.

I, like many stay at home moms, often wonder if I did the right thing. Yes, I know, staying at home to raise my family could never have been the wrong choice, but I often wonder what would happen if I'd be forced back into the working world, due to some unforeseen tragedy.

I left a very well paying position as a manager with a highly respected retirement investment firm three years ago. This was a decision my husband and I had made eight years prior with the birth of our son. We had already been raising a daughter and she was eleven at the time. Never needing to take significant amounts of time to travel back and forth from work, and having decent day care was what got us through those years. But, having moved into a country setting and having available resources few and far between, not to mention the two hour commute each day for both of us, the decision was made to put our resources into making a stay at home opportunity feasible.

Well, needless to say, it took eight years to make that happen. With my husband starting a new company and my ability to make a decent salary providing the jumping off point, all that was left was to take the plunge. At that point, I couldn't have been happier, but with each passing season, I began to see myself as less and less valuable . . . Can you imagine?

Here's where I realized that, by depending solely on my husband, and staying out of the work force I was losing control of my life. I was missing something or missing out somehow. But, in making this frightening assessment, I also came to understand who I really was and what I really wanted. I love being home and taking care of my family, I never wish to go back to working 50+ hours a week and I certainly do not want to work in an office environment again. So how did I go about making some positive changes?

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First, I took a look around me and at the people and relationships I most admired. It turned out that I had lost contact with many of those people, and began to make a conscious effort to make time for them and include them in my life again as well.

Then, I looked at my friendships that had stood up over time, and realized that I really didn't have many friends who I would call close, but still had those who were a pleasure to spend time with. I also realized that I'm not a "girlfriend to go shopping with" kind of gal, so I wasn't missing out there but I still felt that I was a bit more introverted than I'd like to be, so I became more involved with school functions, field trips etc. Worked on developing more that a nodding relationship with the parents of my sons friends and eventually actually had something to talk about with them each time we ran into each other, and I actually knew them by name. That went a long way to getting me out of my introverted self and outwardly I felt people were much more responsive to me as well.

Lastly, I decided that it was time to try and start a business of my own. As I said, I did not want to work in an office, I really liked my freedom and my new found creativity that I hadn't known existed (or hadn't allowed to exist) before my latest revelation. I began by talking with friends who were entrepreneurial in spirit. Some took the odd job/ handyman approach, some were contractors and one is even a published author! (You can visit her web site at the address below, but be sure to come back and see me.) All were getting by and staying active in the working world on their own terms. I looked into sales such as party goods and home decorations and found that I just wasn't passionate about those items and that just wasn't for me.

However, sometimes the best things come out of the blue and that's what happened to me.

I was speaking with my mother about making rootbeer. She made it when we were kids, by actually digging the root from a tree (or bush) . . . not sure. Well anyway, she couldn't remember what kind of root it was and I entered a search for root beer and stumbled onto Watkins Online. I was intrigued with the products. When I realized it was a work-at-home opportunity, I was doubly surprised, since I had just recently decided to try and get something started.

As I dug deeper into the Watkins story and the company background, (bb reports, message boards, Winona local news, etc.), I realized that this looked like a solid company, with good community ties, good ethical background and management, and a great product line to boot!

Well, I got off track and never found the answer to my rootbeer question, needless to say. But I've found a way to incorporate my desire to rekindle relationships, make new and lasting friendships and feel productive without taking time away from my family. These things are the most important aspects of my life and I'm glad that I've been given the opportunity to gain some insight into my own needs and actually do something about satisfying them. Hopefully, sharing my experience will help others to find out what exactly it is that they are missing in their lives and make some positive changes.

Pat Choinski is a 40 something baby boomer, married with two children, and lives in the Northeast. She's an independent distributor for Watkins products and looks forward to making her business a success. Watkins Associate id#342155 – <http://www.watkinsonline.com/patchoinski>

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My Mother, the Person

By Heidi B. Lapin

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I left home at 17 and got my own apartment. I was very rebellious and independent. The first few months away from home, I was excited, but deep down I felt the insecurity of not having my mom, my safety net, to take care of me if and when I may be in need. As I grew up, I realized how she must have felt when I left home. (It was just the two of us for a long time because my dad left when I was 10 and my brother was off at college.) My mom had so much stress on her; especially around the time I was between 14 and 17 years old. We had no money, her mom died, she had a rough job, and all this was happening when she was going through her own reassessment of life; as was I.

As an adult, I understand her anger and resentment regarding my leaving home. I left her...alone. I realize now that when I was feeling insecure being newly on my own, my mother must have been feeling the same way. She wasn't just feeling the effects as MY mom. She was feeling the effects of being a woman on HER own for her first time, too. She was feeling the effects of being a divorced woman, overdue bills, the loss of her mom, an independent son far away at college, and the daughter whom she pushed away due to misdirected anger while her daughter did the same to her.

A few years later, Mom and I began working out our kinks. We both realize now, that we both had our own demons as individual people. It was 2 hormonally changing females who both got the short end of The Stick of Life, together, against the world. What's the lesson we both learned in time? Those two words I just said...Together. Together we are mother and daughter, sometimes against the world still, but not against one another.

I know now that my mom was more than MY MOM, she was a woman, a wife, an ex-wife, a working woman, a daughter, a sister, and more. At age 32, I still believe the world revolves around me, but now I know that it's not my mother's life-purpose to keep that world moving. I think now I have earned her respect as her daughter, and as a person. I know she sure earned mine. If she wasn't my mom, I would be so lucky just to know her.

A 9 time published author of poetry, a long-time practicing witch, and day career of a 14 year manager of a veterinary hospital, I am hoping to publish my own first non-fiction book of writings and poetry in the near future. I have been writing and creating my own "greeting cards" since approximately age of 7 and still continue to date.

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