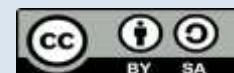




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# Mothers Looking Ahead

Module 2: Motivation and Career Strategies



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## Module Aim



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## Module 2: Motivation and Career Strategies


The aim of this module is to equip learners with the understanding, skills, and attitudes necessary to **enhance their personal and career development**. This involves recognizing and leveraging both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, building resilience, self-confidence, and fostering a growth mindset, recognizing the importance of their mental health. Additionally, it aims to support learners in developing strategies for career success through personal reflection, the cultivation of a positive mindset, and the creation of a tailored career plan.




## Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, you will have gained the following **knowledge, skills and attitudes**:

### Knowledge

- 
1. Understand **personal motivators** (intrinsic and extrinsic) and their barriers.
  2. Understand the existing strategies to cultivate a **positive and resilient mindset**.
  3. Develop factual knowledge of the benefits and importance of building **confidence and self-efficacy**.
  4. Develop practical knowledge of existing **career development strategies** and the connection between motivation and career success.

### Skills

- 
1. Identify **intrinsic and extrinsic motivators** to pursue education, training, and career opportunities.
  2. Build **resilience and perseverance** by applying strategies to develop a positive and resilient mindset.
  3. Evaluate and expand their current **self-confidence and belief**.
  4. Create a **personalised career plan**.

### Attitudes



1. Willingness to honestly analyse one's **motivation, self-confidence and belief** concerning career planning.
2. Appreciation of the **positive and resilient mindset**.
3. Openness to consider **alternative career and training options** while developing their career plan.
4. Foster a **growth mindset**.

## Motivating Case Story

Video: The inspirational career story of Ex Pepsico CEO, Indra Nooyi



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K8AqS--80tM>

Indra Nooyi is rated as one of the most powerful women executives of leading corporations around the world. She was the CEO of PepsiCo and **is considered an example of how one can combine work and family while managing large corporations.** Her story is an inspiration for many mothers who balance their careers with their family responsibilities.



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## Motivating Case Story

### Early Career and Motherhood

Indra Nooyi was born in India, where she attended school until coming to the United States to attend Yale School of Management. Following her MBA, she began her career at Boston Consulting Group before joining PepsiCo in 1994. By the time she became CEO in 2006, she had two daughters and faced **enormous pressures of responsibility in running a global corporation and tending to her family obligations**. It had now reached the level of a balancing act, right in the middle of her daily life, with her demanding job balancing itself alongside the needs of her family.

### Work-Life Balance Struggles

Nooyi has spoken very publicly in interviews about the personal challenges she has faced in juggling her role as a mom with that of an executive. Despite all of her seniority, she has shared many of the same issues that other working mothers have: **missing key family moments, managing school pickups, and feeling guilt about time spent away from kids**. One of her famous stories is when she would come home working after her promotion to President of PepsiCo. She shared how her mother ordered her to go buy milk for the family. Such a humble reminder that no matter how high her career soared, her responsibilities as a mother are just as important. As Nooyi once put it, **"Women can have it all, but not all at the same time."** She had to make some sacrifices and trade-offs; still, she found a way to be fully present at work and with her family, though certainly not without difficulty.





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## Motivating Case Story

### Support System and Prioritization

Much of Nooyi's work-life balance came from a **huge support system**, most importantly her husband and her mother, who helped take care of the children when she couldn't be home. She also identifies that one of the cornerstones is **setting boundaries and being intentional about time with family**. She once said that while being CEO, she couldn't be present at each and every school event or at parent-teacher meetings, but she always made sure she was there during each and every moment that was of priority with her kids. That intentionality has been a means for her to be there with her family while successfully continuing with her professional duties.

### Reflection and Legacy

Nooyi is now retired from PepsiCo, and upon reflection, she realizes the balance between work and family was never ideal. Though she missed moments, she gave the best to both her work and family.

Today, she speaks out for **more support for working mothers**: better family-leave policies and childcare options. The story of Indra Nooyi relates to real-life complications in balancing a mother with high-powered careers. Her experience just goes to prove that as difficult as the road is, with a strong support system, careful prioritizing, and an acceptance of imperfections, it indeed is achievable in both areas.

## Reflection Activity

### Motivating Case Story: The inspirational career story of Ex Pepsico CEO, Indra Nooyi

Taking Nooyi's life story into account, reflect on the following aspects:

**Balancing Roles:** Reflect on the difficulties Nooyi had to face in balancing her role as a CEO with her duties of being a mother. Consider how common this duality is among so many working parents today. How do you think this balance will play out in your life, or perhaps does already in the life of someone close to you?

**Support Systems:** Nooyi made it a point to attribute her success to a great support structure, namely her family and mentors. Consider the people in your life who serve as supports. How do their contributions help you juggle your responsibilities?

**The Concept of "Having It All":** Nooyi has famously said that women can "have it all," but not all at the same time. Consider this concept. Do you feel as though it would be possible to have a perfect balance? Why or why not?

**Trade-offs and Sacrifices:** Consider the sacrifices Nooyi made in her career. Now reflect upon the trade-offs you've made in your life. How do you cope with any feelings of guilt or regret associated with these trade-offs?

**Intentionality in Relationships:** Nooyi made sure she was present when she had rare moments with her family. Reflect on a time when you were intentional in one of your relationships. How do you make sure you are all there for your loved ones?

**Lessons Learned:** Nooyi's experiences hold valuable lessons on resiliency, prioritizing, and adaptability. What can you learn from her story to apply in your life?



## List of Topics – Motivation and Career Strategies

### Understanding Personal Motivation



The distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors bears great importance for career success. While intrinsic motivation refers to personal satisfaction or passion derived from work, extrinsic motivations result from salaries, promotion opportunities, or recognition (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Successful careers often strike a balance between the two by aligning personal values with professional goals and external rewards.

### Building Confidence and Self-Efficacy



Positive affirmations and visualizing success enhance the self to believe in their abilities and eradicate anxiety. Challenges are to be acknowledged as an opportunity towards gaining and growing. Resilience is enhanced by lessons derived through the analysis of setbacks (Dweck, 2017). Gaining knowledge and skills through practice enhance confidence. Preparation beforehand about a situation (e.g., presentation or an interview) enhances self-efficacy.

### Developing a Positive Mindset

A growth mindset - the belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work - is one of the most essential states necessary for professional development (Dweck, 2006). A growth mindset will then promote resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Where an industry is undergoing fast changes, career strategy should focus on continuous acquisition of skills and learning.



### Developing a Career Plan

Career planning demands flexibility toward industry trends, skilling, and personal development (Locke & Latham, 2002). The most basic elements of career development are networking and personal branding. Networking allows opportunities, mentors, and valuable connections to emerge, while personal branding entails creating a professional identity that sets you apart in the market.





## Activity 1

### The Mental Wellness Check-In

This activity will help you assess your mental health and develop self-care strategies to manage stress while balancing career and motherhood.

*What will you need?*

- Blank paper/pens or a digital note-taking device.
- Quiet space for reflection.



**Follow the hearts of this activity (and your own heart) until the end!**



## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In

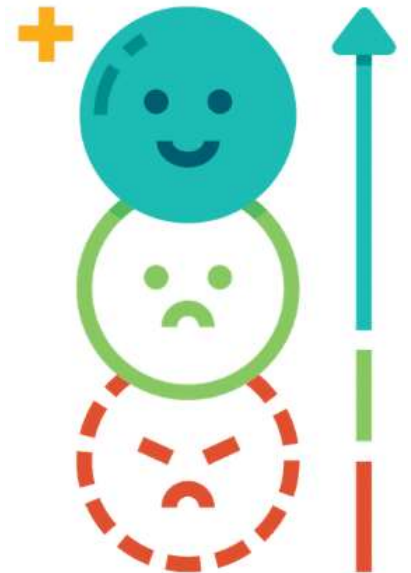


### Understand your mental health

On a scale of 1 (lowest level) and 10 (higher level), rate how you've been feeling over the **past week** in the following areas:

- Stress level
- Energy level
- Mood Stability
- Sleep Quality
- Emotional Exhaustion

Briefly write down any observations. For example, if you rated your stress level as an 8, note what might be contributing to that stress.



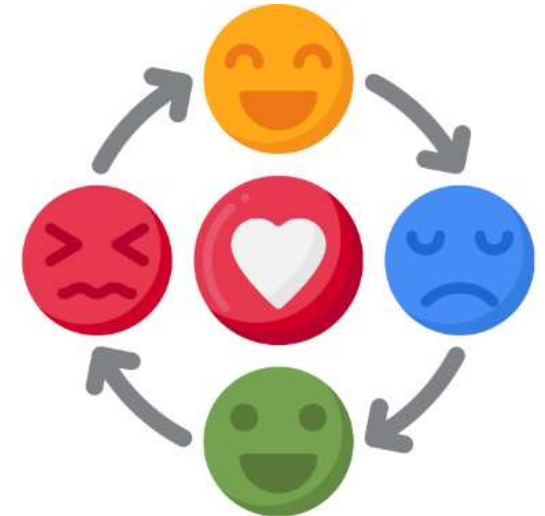
## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In



### Understand your stressors and energizers

Make two lists:

- **Stressors:** Write down any specific factors related to your career, motherhood, or personal life that have been causing you stress.
- **Energizers:** Write down what activities or moments in your day give you energy, joy, or a sense of calm.



## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In

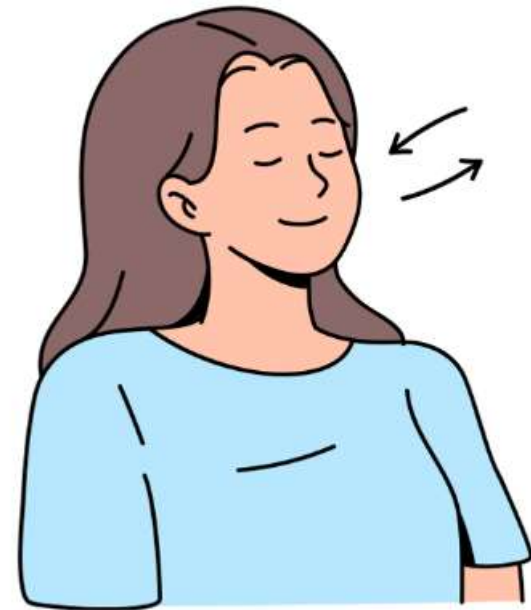


### Breath to calm down!

Reset and recharge with deep breathing:

- Take a 5-minute break to focus on mindful breathing.
- Sit comfortably, close your eyes, and take slow, deep breaths.
- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, exhale for 4 seconds.

This will help you center yourself and reduce immediate stress.  
You can repeat it whenever you need it!



## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In



### Plan your self-care

Develop a realistic self-care plan based on your needs:

- Considering your **stressors**, reflect on what you can do, practically, to reduce them.

*Example: If one stressor is "feeling overwhelmed by work emails," a possible solution could be "set boundaries by only checking work emails twice per day."*

- Review your **energizers** and select how you can add more of these positive activities into your daily or weekly schedule.

*Example: If an energizer is "listening to music," schedule 10 minutes of music time during your work breaks.*





## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In



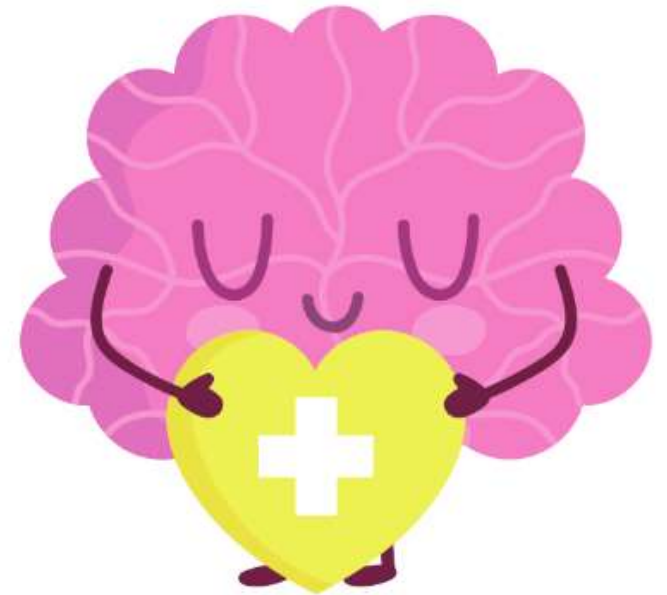
### Set goals for your mental health

Choose one or two mental health goals that you can work on over the next week. These could include:

- Increasing your self-care time.
- Reducing a specific stressor.
- Practicing mindfulness or meditation regularly.

Write down your goals and how you will hold yourself responsible.


*Example: Putting reminders or tracking your progress in a journal.*



## Activity 1: The Mental Wellness Check-In



### Check-in on your mental health regularly

After a week, reassess your mental health using the same inventory from 1

How different is your stress level, energy, or mood?

Change your plan if necessary.



**Self-care for mothers is not a luxury. Rather, it is an integral way of sustaining mental health, maintaining relationships, and thriving in both personal and family roles.  
By taking care of your well-being, you will ensure these benefits for you, your children, and your family!**





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## Activity 2

### My Career Challenge Roadmap

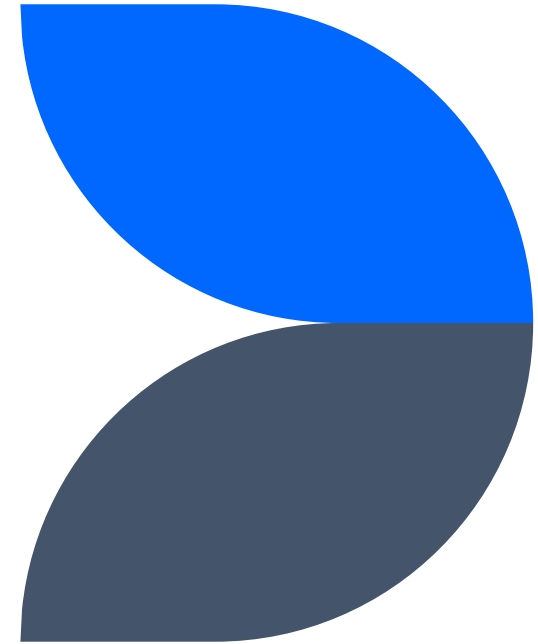
This activity will help you identify career challenges you've faced or are currently facing and develop strategies to overcome them.

*What will you need?*

- Blank paper/pens or a digital note-taking device.
- Quiet space for reflection.

This activity includes useful resources that can help you in your reflection process!


**Follow the steps of the road until the end! 😊**



## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 1: Identify your career challenges

Take a moment to reflect on the challenges you've faced in your career as a mother. Write down 1-3 challenges that have impacted your career progression or day-to-day work.

A red location pin icon is positioned on the left side of the road, marking the starting point for the reflection exercise.

*"What career challenges have I faced that are unique to my experience as a mother?"*



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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 1: Identify your career challenges

#### Some Examples of Challenges for Mothers:

**Work-Life Balance:** The inability to balance the responsibilities of motherhood with the demands of work is perhaps the most vital of all issues, as mothers have to arrange everything concerning their children, the household, and work; this leads to stress, burnout, and an overwhelmed feeling.

**Inflexible Schedules:** Most organizations are not very considerate towards working from home, flexible hours, or part-time positions. This often puts mothers in an extremely difficult position regarding balancing professional and personal responsibilities, especially in the case of childcare.

**Career Breaks & Gaps in Employment:** Mothers throughout their lifetime are bound to experience breaks in their resume due to taking time off to raise the children. Such gaps carry a negative connotation for potential employers, often creating an obstacle in getting back into employment or career advancement.





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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 1: Identify your career challenges

**Limited Advancement Opportunities:** Mothers often have the sense that they must be passing up promotion or career enhancement opportunities because they are perceived as less available or less committed to the workplace, especially when the need for flexible work arrangements is in emphasis.

**Emotional Stress and Burnout:** The demands of being a good mother and dedicated professional often tend to result in emotional stress, feelings of guilt, and a general feeling of burnout. One is often overcome with the urge to "do it all," which can be mentally and physically overwhelming.

**Childcare Challenges:** The challenge of available, affordable childcare ranks as one of the major impediments to working mothers. Without available childcare, it is often difficult to work regular hours or give full attention to a job.

**Gender Pay Gap:** Mothers, mainly those who take time off from work and/or prefer part-time jobs, may get paid less than their male counterparts or other non-parent individuals. This can create problems of long-term undermining and burdens for these mothers.

## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 2: Reflect on the Impact

Reflect on the impact these challenges have had on your professional and personal life.



*How did this challenge make you feel?*  
*How did it affect your career growth?*  
*Did it influence your work-life balance or mental health?*



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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 2: Reflect on the Impact

**In this video you can watch the testimony of a woman and the influence that her mother had on her life.**

**Irene Mora (2017). For women in pursuit of motherhood and a career.**

Irene Mora credits her own ambition and drive to her mother, the successful CEO of a multinational company. From her unique childhood -- hopping around the world and being exposed to new environments -- Mora learned valuable skills that later informed and helped her excel in business, including adaptability, authenticity and independence. Mora encourages mothers to pursue a family and a career -- their kids may just thank them for it.

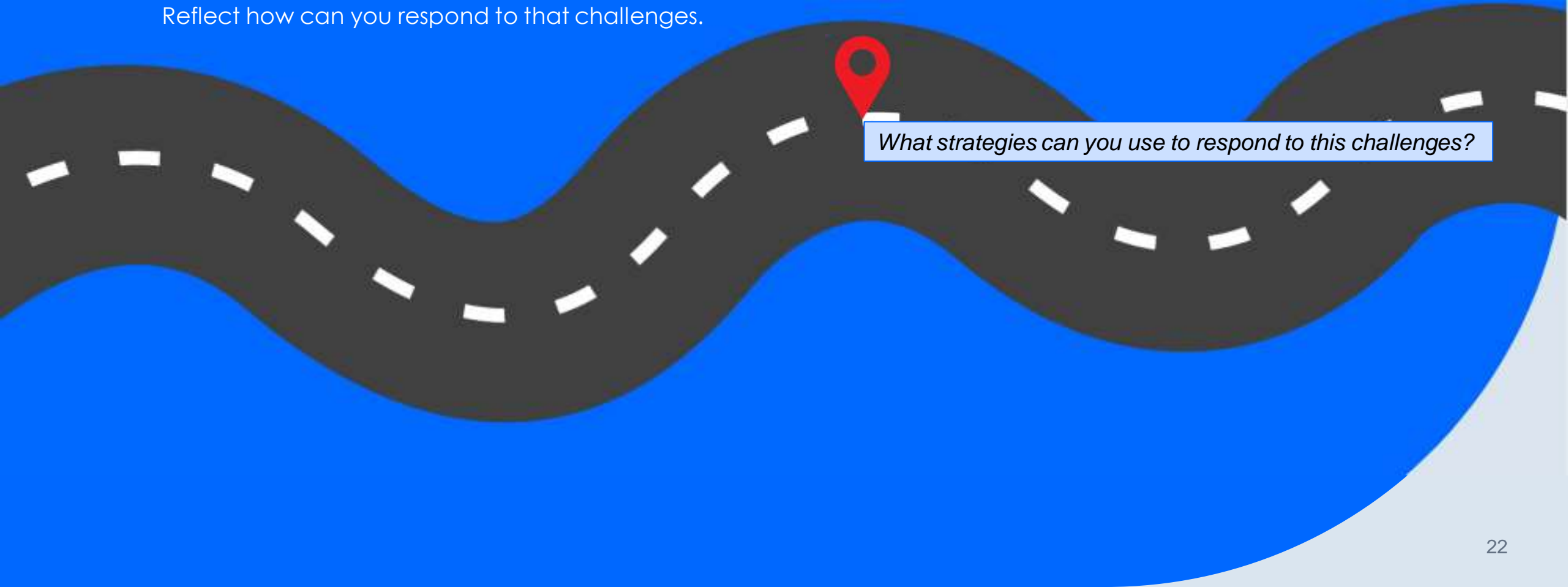


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZJSFQjMQak>

## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 3: Strategy Brainstorm

Reflect how can you respond to that challenges.



*What strategies can you use to respond to this challenges?*



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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 3: Strategy Brainstorm

#### Work-Life Balance:

- Time Management: This is prioritization and realistic goal-setting to help balance important work and home activities.
- Set boundaries: Clearly establish a cut-off point between work time and family time. An example would be not checking business emails during family time.
- Delegate: Let your support network-partner, family, and friends-help you out. Hire services when possible, to assist with cleaning or meal preparation.
- Self-care: The act of taking time for oneself in order to restore energy-even if small portions throughout the day.

#### Inflexible Schedules:

- Ask for flexibility: Discuss your needs openly with your employer, asking about the feasibility of flexible conditions of work. You must underpin positive consequences in terms of productivity and better balance between work and family life.
- Consider freelancing or contract work: Freelancing/remote work can offer flexibility and more control over your schedule.
- Research family-friendly employers: Know of companies that make flexibility/work-life balance part of their culture.

#### Career Breaks & Gaps in Employment

- Reframe the gap: Explain in detail the skills you learned during your time away from work with a focus on organization, multitasking, and problem-solving. Convey your eagerness to return to work.
- Upskill during the break: Online courses, attend workshops, or take your field-related certifications to stay relevant.
- Networking: Keep in contact with people in the industry, networking events, and engage with them on LinkedIn.





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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 3: Strategy Brainstorm

#### **Limited Advancement Opportunities:**

- Communicate Your Aspirations: You may need to make clear to an employer that you are committed and interested in career growth despite needing flexible work arrangements.
- Mentoring: Identify mentors and sponsors who will speak on your behalf, advise, and open the right doors.
- Results orientation: Be results-oriented; demonstrate value through concrete deliverables and results to prove flexible arrangements or part-time work will not inhibit performance.

#### **Emotional Stress and Burnout:**

- Self-compassion: Allow yourself to make mistakes and understand that you cannot do everything perfectly. Give yourself permission to invest in what feels most important.
- Set Realistic Expectations: This might be difficult, but do not overcommit to work or at home. You must say no sometimes when you need to.
- Find Support: Locate and join an online network of working mothers locally in your community for shared experiences, advice, and words of encouragement.
- Mindfulness and Relaxation: Engage yourself often in activities such as meditation, yoga, or merely reconnecting through breaks that reduce stress.



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## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 3: Strategy Brainstorm

#### Childcare Challenges:

- Research Childcare: investigate different child care solutions such as daycare, nannies, or shared childcare with other parents
- Childcare Subsidies and Employer Benefits: investigate government programs or employer-provided benefits for childcare.
- Have a back-up plan: Create contingency plans for unforeseen eventualities, like a sick child, through the development of trusted babysitter resources or flexible arrangements with your employer.

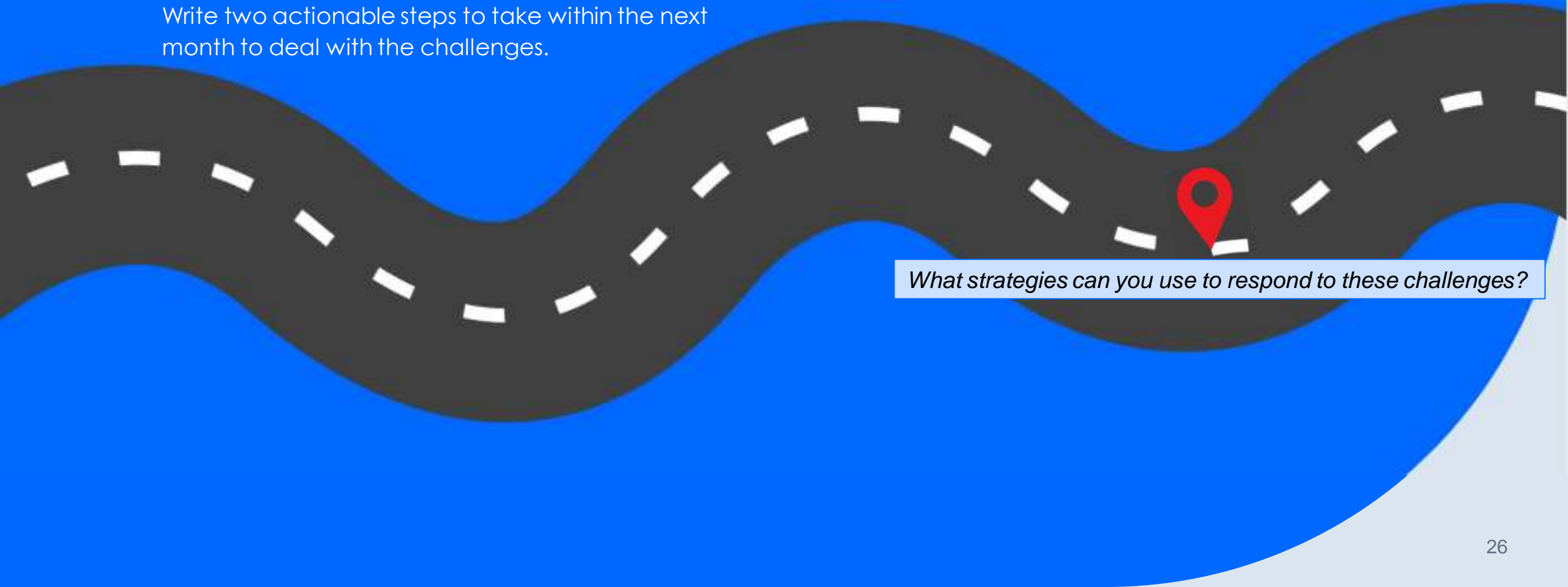
#### Gender Pay Gap:

- Salary negotiation: Not holding back or being reluctant to negotiate pay and benefits. Knowing the average pay for the job and industry can also help in assessing whether full compensation is being provided.
- Stay informed. Keep pace with the evolving nature of your industry, and be receptive to acquiring new skills for continued competitiveness.
- Maximize the job flexibility. You can consider entrepreneurship, freelance work, or jobs with performance-based pay.

## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 4: Personal Action Plan

Write two actionable steps to take within the next month to deal with the challenges.



*What strategies can you use to respond to these challenges?*

## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 4: Personal Action Plan

#### Importance of Mental Health in your Action Plan

The state of mind or the mental health condition plays a critical role in the career choice decision that one makes in life, especially for mothers who have to juggle many balls to keep their life going.

Some exercises and practices that you can do in stressful times:

##### Mindful Breathing

A simple yet effective technique, mindful breathing involves the centering of one's attention on the breath as a way to calm both mind and body. Reduces anxiety, which can help one improve his focus and bring calm. Take slow, deep breaths in for 4 counts, hold for 4, and out for 4. This can be done anywhere at any time, but it should be particularly used when the stress levels are especially high, such as when one of the children has a tantrum (Brown & Ryan, 2003).

##### Grounding Techniques

Practices that help you stay anchored in the present moment, minimizing feelings of overwhelm. Reduces anxiety, racing thoughts, and emotional instability. The "5-4-3-2-1 technique" is a good grounding exercise. Notice 5 things you can see, 4 things you can feel, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste (Biegel et al., 2009).



## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Step 4: Personal Action Plan

#### Importance of Mental Health in your Action Plan

##### Gratitude Practice

Paying attention to, and appreciating, the good things in life on a regular basis, even when life becomes stressful. It shifts the focus from stress to appreciation, hence welcoming a more positive mind and wellbeing. Make entries into a gratitude journal about three things that you're thankful for on a daily basis. These can be tiny moments, the smile from your child, or personal achievements (Emmons & McCullough, 2003)..

##### Mindful Parenting

It's being with your children undistracted, not multitasking, and observing and responding calmly to their needs. Strengthens the relationship between parent and child, puts less stress on parents, and provides modeling for children regarding emotional regulation. Give your child specific times when you can give all your attention and listen to them attentively, without having in mind other chores (Duncan et al., 2009).

##### Body Scan Meditation

This is a mindfulness technique where one pays attention to various parts of the body, observing any sensations without judgment. Relaxes physical tension, while developing body awareness. Lie down or sit comfortably. Mentally scan your body from head to toe, focusing on any tension, and release it with each breath (Carmody & Baer, 2008).





## My Career Challenge Roadmap

### Well done!

You found the end of the road!  
But it is only the beginning! 😊



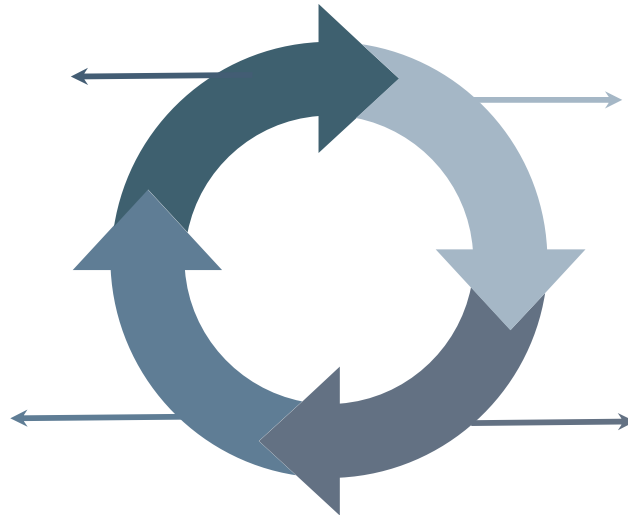
## Top Tips

### Tip 1: Set Personal Goals

Divide bigger career goals into smaller, reachable objectives, which can give way to crediting each of these small victories with fuelling a feeling of success and progress.

### Tip 2: Build a Support System

Surround yourself with like-minded professionals, friends, or mentors, and the fact that this encouragement and advice come from others who understand your struggles can be a strong motivator when things get tough.



### Tip 3: Practice Self-Care

Take time for yourself whenever that is needed. Whether it's a hobby, reading, meditation, or exercise, make accommodations for those activities that will restore your energy and make you feel good. A no-brainer, you cannot pour from an empty cup.

### Tip 4: Set Boundaries

It is extremely important for one's mental health to clearly set boundaries between personal and professional life. Avoid being overcommitted; learning to say no without feeling guilty when necessary is healthy.





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## Additional Resources

### Apps for Mindset, Resilience, and Career Coaching



#### Headspace App

A meditation app that also includes guided content on building resilience and managing stress through mindfulness.



#### Calm App

Calm offers meditation and mindfulness practices that help in improving mental well-being and resilience.



#### BetterUp App

An app that provides personalized career coaching, offering access to certified coaches to help you work on leadership, growth mindset, and career resilience.



#### ThinkUp App

An app that helps you improve your mindset by focusing on positive affirmations and self-talk.

### Podcasts (in English)



#### WorkLife with Adam Grant

Hosted by organizational psychologist Adam Grant, this podcast dives into how we can make work more meaningful and productive, with a focus on mindset and professional growth.



#### Ambitious Mom with Katie Fleming

Aimed at ambitious mothers who want to succeed in their careers while being present for their families, this podcast features interviews with women balancing motherhood and career success.

### Useful Readings (in English)



#### Harvard Business Review

Interesting article that explains how to create a 5-year career plan.



#### Forbes Article

Interesting article that enhances the crucial role that networking plays in our careers.



# Ready to test your knowledge?

It's time to put your skills to the test...

[START NOW](#)



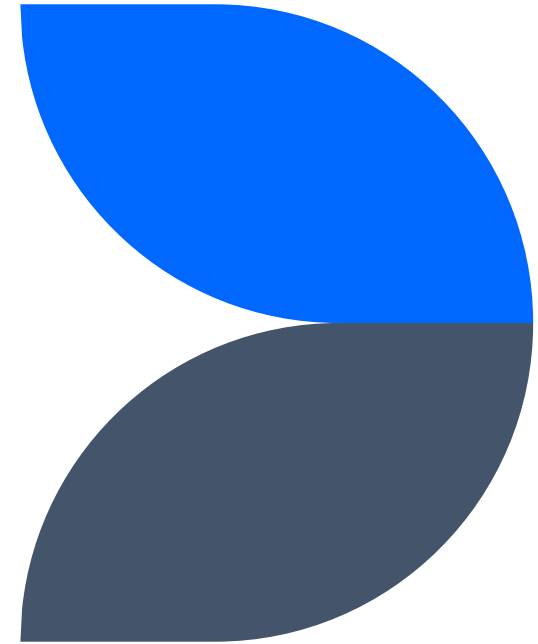
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## Self-Reflection Questions

- Q1:** What are my top priorities right now in my career and personal life, and how well do they align with my daily actions?
- Q2:** How do I currently handle stress, and are there any healthier strategies I could adopt to better manage it?
- Q3:** How do I speak to myself when I face a setback, and what can I do to cultivate a more compassionate and positive inner dialogue?





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## Conclusion

With this module we pretended that you reflected on your own experiences, both as a mother and a worker. Through awareness of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, and by building resilience, self-confidence, and a growth mindset, you can become actively engaged and in charge of your personal development and your career.

As a mother and a worker, you must reflect on personal and professional experiences and develop a prepared mind to overcome obstacles and continuously develop an individualized career plan that will help you achieve your goals and successfully act out desired career and personal success.

You must not forget to prioritize your self-care, which involves recognizing the boundaries that you set in your life. Giving yourself time to engage in personal interests will prevent feelings from becoming overwhelming. It may be appropriate to use external support-family, friends, professionals, and community groups-to provide you a different perspective on the situations and challenges. This is a very important time to lean on others and not to be afraid to ask for help.

**Do not forget: Every working mother is a superhero. You are raising the future while also contributing to society. That's incredible! 😊**



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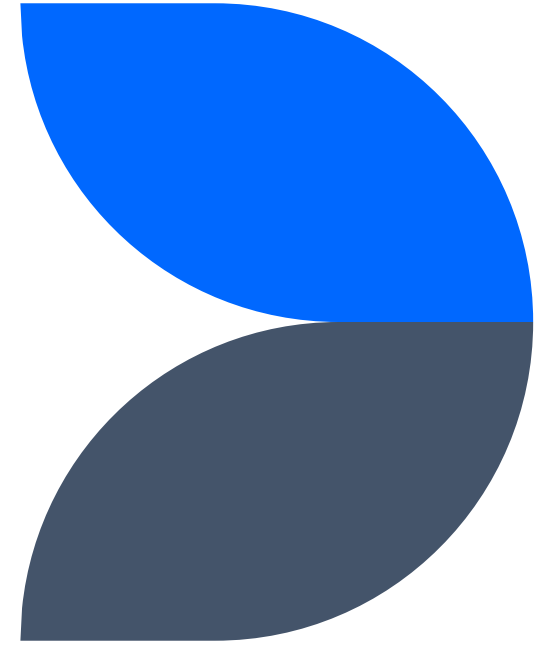
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**Congratulations on  
completing this Module!**





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# Mothers Looking Ahead



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