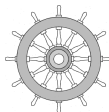


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Past President (99/00)  
Newsletter/Sponsorship  
Producer's Workbook III

**Clare Hodge**

Operations Manager



**Advisory Board Members**

**Joanne Fraser**

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Pacific Motion Pictures  
Corporation

**Liz Shorten**

British Columbia Film

# Keep the Oxygen Flowing



Last winter we received a members' news item that included "On March 13, 1999 I gave birth to an 8 pound, 4 ounce baby boy...three weeks later I was on the set (in the middle of the night in a blizzard atop Mount Seymour no less)...producing an EPK." As the newsletter committee proofed that issue, everyone was in awe of our colleague — everyone, that is, except me. "I think she's nuts," I said. "Why on earth would anyone want to do that to themselves?"

Joyce informed the member of her superwoman status, and her response surprised Joyce in echoing mine: "Tell your pals I am no superbeing, I was a complete fool. I think I was trying to break the Guinness Book of Records on what stupid things women will do to prove that we can do everything even if it means killing yourself in the process. At the time I was terribly impressive and bragged to people about all the work when in retrospect I wished I had spent more time with my baby."

Yet even when working moms do spend considerable time with their families, it *never* seems to be enough. I see friends so obsessed with providing *everything* for their children that they sacrifice their own needs, even though they know intellectually this is

detrimental to any healthy relationship. It's ironic that we women have put so much effort into reforming the men in our culture so they stop treating us like servants, yet we regress totally when it comes to our children.

Whenever I talk with a cousin of mine she tells me she finds great satisfaction both in her work and her children — but when pressed she will admit to a certain resentment for having to be all things at all times for all people. She's banking on relaxing when the kids are grown but in the meantime she's not very happy. Are mothers not allowed to be happy?

And it seems money doesn't make any difference. In *TV Week*, Michelle Pfeiffer remarks that "It doesn't matter about the money or the help you have, being a working mother wears you down...mentally and physically, it's not possible to go all-out all the time. Women around the world are constantly being told it can be done, but it can't. It's a totally wrong message, and that's what causes the problems."

Okay, you can argue I'm not a mother — what the hell do I know? I know I have these remarkable women in my life who won't give themselves a break, no matter the cost. But it's like they tell you on the plane: if those oxygen masks fall you *always* put your own on first and *then* you take care of others. It's a simple, logical fact that if you don't put yourself first and pass out in the process, everyone winds up dead.

*Michelle Demers*