

Resilience Will Bring Women Back to Work — Realism Will Help Them Thrive

July 28, 2021

For the past year and half, I, like so many Americans, have looked forward to the return of many of the activities the pandemic put restrictions on: seeing extended family and friends, travel, going out to eat, and most especially seeing all my students on campus again. But despite the “Great Reopening” being finally here, many Americans are feeling anxious about the transition — especially women, who have been the most dramatically impacted by the blending of home and work life during pandemic shut downs.

[A recent American Psychological Association poll](#) found that half of people say they feel uneasy about adjusting to in-person interaction post pandemic. And this makes sense. We as humans are hardwired to crave certainty, and studies show that [feelings of control](#) are likely a psychological and biological necessity. So just as the sudden shutdowns at the start of the pandemic threw our lives into flux, this new period of intense transition, coming out of over a year of relative isolation, seems unnatural.

And yet despite knowing this science, I can’t help but smile when I think about the irony of this moment. In many ways, transitions are one thing in life that are certain to occur. The media has paid a lot of attention to the unique hardships facing women right now, from [job loss](#) to workplace [burnout](#) to juggling [family responsibilities](#) while working from home. And while this attention should be paid, we should also consider the fact that women might just be primed to make it through this time stronger than before, thanks in large part to the way transition shapes their identity.

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