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## A Work Journal

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### ABSTRACT

KEEPING A WORK JOURNAL can be useful in exploring one's thoughts and feelings about work challenges and work decisions. It can help bring about greater fulfillment in one's work life by facilitating self-renewal, change, the search for new meaning, and job satisfaction. Following is one example of a work journal which I kept in 1998. It touches on several issues of potential interest to midlife career librarians including the challenge of technology, returning to work at midlife after raising a family, further education, professional writing, and job exchange. The questions addressed are listed at the end of the article.

### SAMPLE WORK JOURNAL, 1998

*I.*

When the alarm clock goes off in the morning and I realize that I have to get up and go to work, I wonder if I'm going to be able to make it. To some extent it is this way every morning, no matter what the day has in store for me. I do not think it is a measure of how much I like or dislike my job. I think it is just me and the process I go through waking up and giving birth to the day. As I struggle out of bed in the morning, I have doubt about my ability to shower, decide what I'm going to wear, make breakfast, remember to bring with me what I have decided I need to take, and get my act all together so that I am driving out of the driveway to get to work on time. Although I have gotten up and out millions of mornings, it never seems routine. It is always a hurdle. My confidence increases the closer I get to my goal of arriving at work on time.

I love my physical surroundings at work. The Nimitz Library is a beauti-

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ful building with large plate glass windows which look out on the Severn River and the Chesapeake Bay. My desk is by a window that overlooks the Severn River. I am incredibly lucky and whenever I see where some people work, I am freshly reminded how lucky I am. I love water and yearn for it whenever I am away from it for any length of time. Water makes me feel connected to nature and to the eternal. It is also fascinating to look at because the light is always different depending on the time of day and the season.

I think I interact well with my coworkers. There are ten reference librarians in one office, and we make an effort to be considerate of each other. In the group, I am the oldest and also one of the quieter and more reserved persons. My interactions are collegial and friendly.

What kinds of feedback/help do I need and get at work? Successful reference work depends on communication and sharing information and instant feedback. I feel that I get this kind of feedback from my colleagues and my supervisors. The kind of help that I need at work relates primarily to computers. Some demonstrations and training are provided, but I never feel they are sufficient for me. Also, I never find or make adequate time to practice and really get to know new systems so that they are second nature. I find it extremely difficult to keep up to date with the Internet, for instance. It is a problem both of creating time and also knowing what it is I do not know.

Usually while I am doing my work I feel quite good. This is particularly true when I answer reference questions. Faculty, midshipmen, and staff at the Naval Academy are usually very grateful for assistance and this adds to my feelings of satisfaction at being able to provide the required assistance. I also feel needed and appreciated when I work with faculty to add books or journals to the collection or to develop library instruction for a class. But there are times—when I have to prepare reports and internal memos—that I feel rushed making or having actually passed a deadline. At these times I feel the pressure of too much work to do in a given space of time. Often at these times I feel as though I am just going through the motions and grinding things out to meet a requirement. What do I do all day at my job as a reference librarian at the Naval Academy? I serve as reference bibliographer for the English and language studies departments. My time is divided almost equally among four main areas: reference duties, collection development, library instruction coordination, and midshipmen/faculty contact. Reference duties consist of providing reference assistance at the reference desk. Collection development duties require that I develop and maintain the book and periodical collections to support the English and language studies curricula. As library instruction coordinator I plan, implement, and evaluate the library instruction program at the academy. Finally, I develop faculty and midshipmen contact to the extent necessary to carry out these activities. This contact is necessary to develop the collection and the instruction to support the teaching curriculum and faculty research at the academy.

My energy is always highest in the morning and gradually diminishes with the day. Contact with people, either library patrons or staff, and also contact with a subject of particular interest, such as poetry, gives me energy. What saps my energy are interruptions that keep me from getting to something on which I need to work. At the end of the working day I feel tired, my body feels tired, and I think that I only wish I could feel the way I do in the morning. And why can't I? My characteristic end-of-day feeling is that now I am free to do what I want, but I am too tired to enjoy doing it.

What do I want to change in my work? There are no major changes I would make now in the present arrangement and organization. Four years ago our department head retired. I suggested that we adopt the academic department paradigm where the position of department head rotates among department members, as opposed to the department head being a permanent position for one person. It seemed that ten reference librarians could successfully rotate the reference head or chair position and thus over time contribute their administrative skills to the department. My suggestion was rejected, and since then I have not felt a need for any major changes in my work. What feels right is the very high level of reference service our department provides. This is our product, and it is an excellent one, in my opinion. I feel that I am in the right type of work—academic reference work—and in the right job. I feel privileged to be part of the information age at a time of such great technological change. Although I do not feel a need to make any major changes, I do feel I need to make minor changes in my job. When I list my priorities for the day, I need somehow not to feel pressured by what is not being done. As I get older, time goes faster, and I do everything slowly. So it always seems that it takes me longer and longer to do less and less. The trouble with this is that I always feel stress to do more in less time. The change I would like to make is to be able to focus on my priorities and not to worry so much about everything else. If I could do this more consistently than I do, I would reduce stress. Perhaps the best way to do this is to be more conscious of what I am trying to do—and to take the time to stand back and be more aware and conscious.

## *II.*

The blocks to my satisfaction in work are both external and internal. I think that the external blocks have to do with the nature of the profession of librarianship. The primary block is that librarianship in the years of the twentieth century when I have been a librarian has been a female-intensive profession along with elementary school teaching, nursing, and social work. These are four professions where most of the practitioners are female, that have very low social status compared with medicine or law, for instance, and that are frequently referred to as semiprofessions. Like the other female-intensive professions, librarianship has been low paying. Up to the present time, librarianship is a dead-end career for most women. Traditionally men

obtain higher-paying administrative jobs. The other primary external block has to do with the fact that the profession seems to reward administration over all other kinds of library work.

The profession has assigned administration a higher status than, for example, cataloging or children's librarianship. In fact it could be said that in librarianship, social work, elementary school teaching, and nursing, the further away from the primary task, the higher the reward. This is not the case in other professions such as law or medicine. The primary internal block to my satisfaction is that, except for my first position, I have never gone all out for my profession. By that I mean, I have never made choices solely for my career advancement. My career choices have always been tempered by other life choices. Because I have not gone all out for my career, I have not achieved the highest status or reward. I am not a library director or administrator. I have not gone all out for those areas of the profession rewarded most highly. I have chosen areas that give me the most personal satisfaction but that I also think should be both rewarded and regarded as highly as or more highly than administration. I know that this must be at some level an internal block to my job satisfaction.

My other primary internal block has to do with my inability to handle paper as well as I can handle people or ideas. The result is that I always feel behind and never caught up with the mountains of paper that clutter my desk and work area. It would be a great satisfaction to me to feel that I could easily and quickly read, make decisions on, sort, and file my paper work on a daily basis. Then I could feel on top and free. Instead, I feel inundated by white paper that waits for me, and this is a constant internal block to my satisfaction at work. As far as I am aware, there are no unexplored feelings, wishes, or dreams that are standing in the way of satisfaction.

When I explore these blocks, I feel that one must understand the history, sociology, and anthropology of librarianship and especially the status of women within the profession. Success and satisfaction must also be explored in terms of the availability of jobs and the status of the job market. Are there other people involved? Yes, anyone who shares or with whom I exchange my point of view is involved. Broadening this dialog to the wider community, that is, anyone who publishes on the subject of any of these blocks is involved. Probably the best thing to do about a block is to write about it and hopefully involve more people. So often the feminist maxim is true: *the personal is political*.

### III.

When I explore the shadow side of work, I think of my disappointments and anger. One negative aspect of my job is having to work forty hours per week. Since I have worked at jobs thirty-five hours per week, I find forty hours difficult, and I feel as though I am endlessly at work and sometimes just going through the motions because I am too tired to do otherwise.

Another negative aspect is that staff members are not treated as a precious resource. Little is done to keep good people or to encourage staff professional development. The administration neither includes librarians in the competition for funds granted to faculty for research nor makes any effort to upgrade librarian positions in departments such as reference. Our positions were upgraded from GS-9 to GS-11 in 1985 when reference librarians themselves rewrote their job specifications and asked for job audits. There was no indication that the library administration supported this grass roots endeavor in any but a lukewarm way. Since then reference self-studies have requested career ladders to represent promotions for greater levels of experience, but nothing has been done. In addition, there is no reward system so that all this adds up to a feeling that the staff is not really a highly valued resource.

There are also the usual conflicts over everyday policies and procedures with other staff. When forty people work together it is unrealistic to assume that everything will always run smoothly and without conflict. Another aspect of the shadow side of work is more personal and in the realm of griping, gossip, and/or backbiting: who is in trouble, who is late, who is falling below the mark, etc. I try to steer clear of this as much as possible and put my energy into actively doing something where I can make a difference. But I am aware that things are said behind my back just as they are said behind the backs of other people. At work I try to find happiness and satisfaction where I can and ignore or sidestep where I cannot.

My natural tendency is to wait until my back is up against the wall before I strike out. I try to compensate for this by dealing as directly as I can with those situations which I deem important or worthy enough for direct intervention. For example, some time ago it was brought to my attention that my colleagues were criticizing my book selection behind my back. I knew that I could not sidestep this issue, but instead had to deal with it directly and immediately. I feel proud of having dealt with this unpleasant situation directly and out in the open.

#### *IV.*

When I fantasize about the perfect job, I see a job that matches my current job very closely. When I fantasize about the perfect day, I see my current job with just a few changes or additions. I close my eyes and imagine my current job. I imagine arriving at work with something interesting to say to my colleagues. I imagine a somewhat more congenial and supportive atmosphere. I imagine myself more emotionally free and laughing more easily. I imagine my colleagues listening to what I say and commenting with great interest.

The perfect day includes my current job with a few additions that are not really part of the job itself but that would create the perfect day. One thing we should have, but do not have, is an on-site fitness program. I would

like to participate every morning for thirty minutes in the program. Then at lunch I would like to be able to walk outside for forty-five or fifty minutes. My perfect day would also include time for professional writing. Actually at the present time, the library director will authorize up to three hours per week for professional publication writing. I have been able to take advantage of this a couple of times in the past, but most of the time I am so busy and rushed dealing with whatever is at hand, that I have not even taken the time to request the time to use. My fantasy about the perfect day includes a colleague who is also a close friend. This is someone with whom I can share my interests and whom I look forward to seeing every day. The high point of my fantasy perfect day includes the seminar on journal writing that I coordinate in the English department and that is open to midshipmen for credit, and faculty and staff for noncredit.

How does my fantasy compare with my job? Last year there was a one-semester fitness program in the field house. And I do have an opportunity to walk every day on my lunch hour if I choose to do so. I do have time for professional writing, at least in an embryonic form. There is no colleague at present who is also a close friend. This is the exception to every other position where I developed at least one close friendship. And there is no journal seminar. I could probably bring about my fantasy of a perfect day if I put the time and energy into it, at least to certain levels of fulfillment.

## V.

Sayings, quotations, and/or conversations often spark my ideas about work. When I was hired for my present position, the reference department head at the time told me that when he showed the library director my credentials, the director responded with, "Why would someone getting a Ph.D. want a desk job?" When I heard the director's comment, it emphasized again for me the fact that successful people in the library world think that administration is where it is at and everything else is minor in comparison. Certainly status and financial rewards are in administration. But that is one of the unfortunate characteristics of the profession at this point in its history. Another conversation that comes to mind is when I was interviewed by the dean of the School of Architecture and Planning for the position of architecture and planning librarian at MIT. At the time, I was thirty years old and reference librarian at MIT. The Dean looked at me and asked "You don't have any plans to get married do you?" I never forgot this question. It reverberated in my head for days. Why was marriage the price to pay for a career for a woman? Men did not have to make an either/or choice. Two years later civil rights legislation made it illegal for an employer to ask such a question. But this question underscored for me the fact that I had grown up with two categories of women: those who had careers, on the one hand, and those who had husbands and children, on the other hand. I never knew women who had both.

## VI.

Be a child again. When I explore how to bring more playfulness and creativity and humor to my work life I conclude that I am not really sure how to do this. These are certainly the areas that get eliminated in the seriousness of meeting deadlines: I have always worked more slowly than my coworkers. By nature I am a slow person or at least that is how I perceive myself. My colleagues usually get things done faster with more conversation and humor. They are more extroverted, expansive, and faster than I am. And I am always compensating for this by pushing myself to go faster and by cutting out conversation, playfulness, and humor. I should try to not only see the humor in situations, but to take time to share it with my colleagues. When I think about aspects of my leisure activities that I could transfer to work, there is one thing in particular that I would like to try: to go at my own pace. It would be fun to try although I realize that I run the risk of being the butt of others' humor because people have often told me that I seem deep in thought or preoccupied. I do not want to appear so deep in thought and slow that others wonder if I have come to a grinding halt. But one of the things about journaling that makes me feel good is that time stands still, and I go at my own pace. This is a wonderful feeling. The little figure on my left shoulder who keeps whispering in my ear, "Hurry up! Why are you so slow?" disappears for awhile. It would be fun for me to try to transfer to work the sense of timelessness and going at my own pace that I have when I journal in my leisure time.

## VII.

When I think of my dreams, I remember two powerful dreams that relate to work. The first dream is set in the present and involves Simmons College in Boston where I received both my undergraduate and my library science education. In the dream I have returned for a visit and as I walk through a passageway I see some of the original large granite foundation blocks exposed and displayed very much the way a work of art might be displayed. These rough stones hold my attention in the dream. When I wake up I remember seeing a picture of these exposed foundation stones in a brochure from Simmons that had come in the mail. When I looked at the brochure, I remembered seeing these same foundation stones on an earlier visit to Simmons. These stones that had been recently exposed during renovations were not on view when I was a student. Until this dream, I had been accustomed in a rather unanalyzed way to think of my Simmons education as frosting on the cake, a finishing touch like finishing school, or like a hat on the top of my head: a frill rather than an essential. Seeing the exposed foundation stones in the dream corrected this barely conscious notion. I realized with the power of revelation that Simmons was the bedrock foundation of my whole professional life. It was not a frill. The image of those exposed rocks is still numinous. I expect that this is so because there is still meaning to extract from the image.

When I was a student at Simmons, the school had two janitors. They were brothers. They were about retirement age when I was an undergraduate. The older of the two brothers was slightly mentally disabled and was taken care of by the younger brother. The older brother's name was Tony and one day he told me that when he was a kid he used to play on the site where Simmons is now built and in fact played there while Simmons was being constructed. When I saw those large, exposed foundation stones, I thought of Tony, a living link to the foundation.

The second of my powerful work-related dreams I had shortly after I started working at my present job. In the dream my desk is on the footbridge over College Creek. I am there because my desk is there. I am not sure why my desk is on the bridge. I see a woman standing on the bridge, but we do not make eye contact. I never actually see her face. Later she jumps off the bridge and commits suicide by drowning. I watch her prone body float out from under the bridge. She is wearing a raincoat. The air in the pockets has given her water wings that keep her afloat. I notice that she is wearing a gray and tan plaid skirt exactly like one I own. When I am awake and thinking about the dream, I wonder why I made no effort to save this woman. I feel some guilt until I realize that this woman in my dream is me, the old me, or an aspect of me that has died. The dream made me feel that the old was dead and the new was born. I am the new me in my new job. It seemed to me that the aspect of myself that had died was the job-seeking, job-interviewing me because the skirt of the dead woman was identical to the skirt of my favorite job-interviewing suit.

Through active, imaginative dialog with the dead woman floating face down, I have come to accept that we must let the dead go, that this was meant to be, and that I should accept it as such and not feel guilty about not trying to save her. It was as it should be. In the time that has elapsed since this dream, I have come to realize that the image of the bridge as connector is probably the pivotal image in the dream. What does the bridge connect in the dream? I think it connects my present professional work with my premotherhood professional employment. This connection enabled me to remember my professional self as I was. I was able to connect myself in the present job with the professional academic reference librarian that I had been. This was problematic for me because in between were not only eight years of full-time motherhood when I was out of the workforce but also eight years when I never expected to return, having left my profession when our first child was born. I had very mixed feelings about returning to work because my husband's business was not doing well, and I felt financial necessity pushing me and not letting me do things in my own time. I felt it was too soon to return, since our youngest child was just beginning kindergarten. I knew in my heart that it was more important to be a full-time mother to our youngest child a little longer, but after a few false starts, I accepted my present position. I think the dream helped me to connect

my present job to what I remembered about myself as a professional librarian in the past. Because I never thought I would return to professional life, the connection was really a reconnection and, as such, strengthened me and reinforced my professional identity. The image of the bridge in the dream helped me to make a reconnection that fortified me in a time of outward change and inner uncertainty.

### *VIII.*

When I try to meditate on something related to work, I find that the same incident comes up over and over again. And at the same time, a slight reluctance to write about it also appears. My inner voice both wants to speak and is reluctant to speak about this incident. About two years ago, two of my supervisors at work told me that my colleagues were vociferously criticizing the kinds of books I was selecting to support courses taught by the English department. This criticism was completely behind my back. I was told by my supervisor that I should explain my book-selection policies at a departmental meeting to my colleagues. I prepared for the meeting in several ways. The first thing I did was review my book-collection policies, especially with an eye to what might be criticized among my choices. It was curious to me that I had become a scapegoat, and I looked at my book choices to see if they held an explanation as to why this should happen. I could find no explanation. I then made an individual appointment with each of my colleagues and asked each if he or she had criticized my work and if so to please describe the criticism to me. Then I asked each if he or she would please criticize my work to my face in the future so that I could deal with it appropriately. Several of my colleagues told me at our individual meetings that he or she did not criticize my book selection, while others admitted to what appeared to be minor criticisms.

When I reported what I had discovered in these individual meetings to my two supervisors, they told me that what several people said to my face was different from what these same colleagues said behind my back. I asked my two supervisors if there was anything further they would like me to do or could suggest I do. They both said "no" and that they had decided to ask each one of the reference librarians, rather than me alone, to describe his or her book-selection policies at a departmental meeting. Fortunately this incident turned out well. Or at least on the surface it turned out well for me for the time being. I say this because at the meeting each one described his or her book selection instead of me being the only one to have to do this. This allowed everyone to share in learning from each description rather than placing me in a defensive or potentially scapegoat position.

My reluctance to speak about this incident is, I believe, because I always feel reluctant to deal with or speak of something unpleasant. More importantly, when I meditate on this situation, I wonder what in me contributed to creating this situation in the first place. On reflection, I can see that it

came about because I did not sufficiently play at being “one of the boys.” I tended to remain too aloof from the office gripe and gossip sessions. This left me vulnerable to being cut off from the group and then scapegoated. I learned how necessary it is to be part of the group.

### *IX.*

The ambivalence I feel about work usually centers around the trip to work in the morning. As I drive to work, I begin to feel that it would be so wonderful to take the day off and have it to myself instead of going to work. Maybe I am rebelling against what I know I have to do. Maybe I just have to dialog with myself to give myself the illusion that I have free choice and free will and choose to go to work after considering other options. Maybe my unconscious sets up a pull in the opposite direction for balance, and I begin to have fantasies of escape as I drive along the country road. One of the first things I notice as I approach a farmhouse is that I am wondering what it would be like to write there—almost as though it were a studio for rent and it could be mine. There are five farmhouses that I pass that look like inviting places to write. When I say write, I mean write journal entries. On one level I know that I like my job and also that I must go to work. But what is this inner voice of ambivalence telling me? That I need more space and time to myself? That I need more of these than my present life affords? I do not take seriously my fantasy about playing truant and having a day to myself to write. It is a strong pull, but I know that I shall go to work. One side says go to work, the other says take the day to write. The former is what I shall do, the latter is what I would like to do.

Can there be a resolution of the conflict? One resolution would be to drive to work Saturday and Sunday mornings and then turn around and drive back home to write. This would be similar to leaving home weekend mornings and driving to a studio. I realize something happens in the process of getting ready to go to work. The persona is prepared. The persona is distanced from the self and the interface between the two is a very creative place. Or at least insights are more likely to appear then rather than at other times. I typically have an intuition about something and feel that I need to write it down and need more time to follow its lead. This never happens on a Saturday morning when I do not have to go to work. Again, I think the reason has something to do with the fact that on Saturday the persona does not have to get itself ready to face the world. Another resolution would be to pay more attention to my insights and to try to write them down at the time they appear. I should listen and record more carefully so that I can follow up in my leisure. If I take time and listen more carefully to this voice, some of the ambivalence might be resolved.

### *X.*

It is very easy to think of my work goals in terms of heroism because the mission of the library is to provide excellent library service on behalf

of learning, teaching, research, and other scholarly activities. The reference department realizes its mission, in part, by creating a reference environment which meets our users' information needs and encourages self-sufficiency, and at this basic level teaches information concepts and skills. I work in an institution that is very conscious of its goals and mission. I feel that my department within the library fulfills its mission at the highest level. It is exciting and very satisfying to work in a department which provides such impressive professional service. I feel that what we accomplish is what I would like us to accomplish. I work to provide excellent reference service to our library users. Although I have my own standards of reference service, I find it very helpful to work in an environment which fosters the fulfillment of these standards. Adequate budget for books, staff, and technology is an important factor in making it possible to accomplish such a mission. I work for personal goals of reference service, the mission of the institution, and the needs of library users. My goals in my previous jobs were the same as my goals in my present one. I only wish that all students could have the same library service available that is available to midshipmen and faculty at the Naval Academy. I am very aware that it is no coincidence that the academy is part of the Department of Defense and that the budget is more than adequate to provide the best reference service available.

#### *XI.*

The role work plays in my life. When I think of the role that work plays in my life, I can only conclude that work is everything in my life, or almost everything. I have been a professional librarian for forty years, minus eight years out to be a full-time mother. I have been a professional librarian longer than I have been either a wife or a mother. Consequently, being a librarian is a major part of my identity. Librarianship has also played an important economic role in my life. It has been the way I have earned my living since age twenty-two. My professional work has given me economic independence. Simmons College was founded to educate women sufficiently to enable them "to earn an independent livelihood" and it certainly made it possible for me to be economically independent. I am well aware that Simone de Beauvoir wrote in "The Second Sex" that under capitalism, the way out of subjection for women was economic independence. Feminist Charlotte Perkins Gilman, like de Beauvoir, also pointed out the link between autonomy for a woman and economic independence. Work has played that role in my life and has provided me with whatever financial security I enjoy.

Work has not only played the role of provider of economic independence and security, it has also been a primary source of social life and friendships. From having been out of the work force when my children were very young, I am aware how much work provides a stage on which social activities and friendships can be played out. I met three of my best friends

through work. In addition, I have enjoyed daily contact with colleagues in each job I have held through the years. Colleagues have a shared database of information or shared professional education. Working with colleagues has provided me with a deeper perspective and a deeper way to know and share with people on a daily basis. Work has not only had the role of providing me with friends and colleagues, but over my professional life I have had two mentors. Both mentors were women, reference librarians, and my bosses in my first and second jobs. My first mentor taught me how to do excellent reference work and what excellent reference service is. My second mentor taught me the importance and significance of reference work, especially in an academic setting. She also taught me to think about the future direction of the profession. Work has played the role of providing me with many human relationships. It has been a way to meet people and a stage on which I could watch the human procession. I have always liked librarians very much as a group, and I have always been proud to be a member of the profession. One of the spectacular roles that work has played for me has been that of providing me with a year in Europe which included travel in England, France, Italy, Spain, Denmark, Sweden, and Ireland. I was an exchange librarian for one year in England, and this was a very rich experience both professionally and personally. Working in another country provides a depth of perspective that being a tourist there does not usually provide. It was interesting to me to see that cataloging and classification were emphasized in England whereas in the United States, reader services, especially reference service is emphasized. I went on a tour of libraries in Denmark and Sweden with my British colleagues. During my year in England I was able to make a trip to County Cork, Ireland to visit the village of Ballindangan where my grandmother was born.

Work has supported my educational experiences: My master's degree in modern British literature from Columbia University made it possible for me to obtain New York State certification as a public librarian. Several years later when I obtained my Ph.D. from the University of Maryland, my profession provided me the subject matter for my dissertation. The ALA provided a goal award that underwrote the survey I conducted of reentering women librarians for my Ph.D. dissertation.

During my long career I have had the opportunity of working as a reference librarian at four impressive institutions: The New York Public Library, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Library of Congress, and the United States Naval Academy. These institutions, their roles, missions, book collections, and library services have been very interesting to experience in themselves. Each one is like a world within a world with its own distinct culture that is endlessly fascinating from a sociological or anthropological perspective. Each one of these institutions also provides a stimulating intellectual environment with lectures, art exhibits, movies, and other cultural events.

In a sense my job has also been my public library, because I have always

felt I had access to information any time on any subject I might need. One of the fringe benefits has been that work has always supplied me with reading matter. I always see books, especially new books, and then when I need a specific title not in my library, I can obtain it through interlibrary loan. When my children had homework, I was often able to obtain information for them not available in their school libraries. My journey to work has been in four interesting cities: New York, Boston, Washington, D.C., and Annapolis.

My work role is not compartmentalized in my life. While I do distinguish between my personal and professional lives, both lives feed into and nourish each other. Although my professional life and my personal life are not perfectly congruent, they are, in my opinion, integrated into one whole. Although I find my work very satisfying and do it to the best of my ability, I would like it to take less time and energy from me. When I get home after work many evenings I am so tired that my time is not quality time. Instead of being able to do intellectual work or writing, I feel I can only talk to my family, read my mail, and watch television news.

My role at work has changed somewhat over time, from that of potential leader to that of specialist. This is due partly to the passage of time when more of my career years are behind rather than before me, partly to the fact that the job market has varied by decade. I had more of a leadership role in the early years of my career than at present. This is because I was younger, my education was on the cutting edge, and there were many more opportunities for advancement then. It has been said that women are not taught to abstract themselves out of experience, and this is probably true for me. The result is that I am probably more task-oriented than advancement-oriented. Whatever leadership role I now have is leadership by example. Growing up, I had a leadership role in my family as the oldest of five children and the oldest daughter. As a school girl I had a leadership role in my immediate community as the preeminent baby-sitter there. In my young adult life, I discouraged this role in my life because I did not want to live out my "big sister" side of myself to the exclusion of other aspects of my personality. I did not want to nurture others at the expense of nurturing myself. The "big sister" role was given to me, and it did not feel as authentic to me as any role I might design myself, such as the role of college student.

Today, and throughout my professional life, there is some carryover from my family "big sister" role to my work role. For instance, I am concerned about the emotional and psychological welfare of my colleagues, particularly when an individual colleague has personal problems. I tend to be sympathetic with rather than critical of my colleagues and coworkers, and I attribute this to my role in the family as oldest child and "big sister."

### SUGGESTIONS FOR KEEPING A WORK JOURNAL

Following are some questions and suggestions for writing a work journal. Use them if they appeal to you, but do not be limited to them.

1. Keep an intensive journal for one day about work. How do you feel when you get up and think about work in the morning? How do the physical surroundings at work affect you? How do you interact with your coworkers? What kinds of feedback/help do you need and get at work? How do you feel when doing your work? Describe your job—what do you do all day? What times of day is your energy highest or lowest? Who or what gives you energy? Who or what saps it? Reflect on the end of the working day: how you feel, what you're thinking, how your body feels. Do you have a characteristic end-of-day feeling? After completing the intensive journal, look it over a while later and see what it tells you. What do you want to change in your work? What feels right as is? Are you in the right job? The right type of work? Do you need to make some minor or major changes? If so, how can you start doing that? Even if you do not decide to keep an intensive journal for a day, you can use any of these questions as topics to write about.
2. Explore the "blocks" to your satisfaction in work. Are they internal, external, or both? Are there unexplored feelings, wishes, or dreams that are standing in the way of satisfaction? Explore the blocks and what you can do about them. Are there other people involved?
3. Explore the shadow side of work. Write down all the negatives you can think of—your disappointments, anger, etc. This can lead to catharsis and greater insight. Can you use any of the negative energy in a positive way? Are there ways you resist satisfaction or happiness in work? Explore your resistance.
4. Fantasize about "the perfect job." What would a perfect day be like? Close your eyes and imagine . . . then write about what you saw. How does your fantasy compare to your present work? What can you do to bring about your fantasy?
5. Write about interesting quotations, sayings, pieces of overheard conversations, etc. that spark your ideas about work.
6. Be a child again. Explore how you could bring more playfulness and creativity and humor to your work life. Are there aspects of your leisure activities that you could transfer to work?
7. Pay attention to your dreams. You may want to record what you remember. The more you write about them, the more you will remember of your dreams. Look for images, feelings, and situations that relate to work. Do not try too hard to analyze; rather, try to put yourself back in the mood of the dream and see what feeling it evokes. Try freewriting about an element in the dream.
8. Try meditating on something related to work and write about what comes up. The "inner voice" can tell us a lot. Assume that what you need to know is already present in your unconscious mind—you just need to listen to it.

9. Write a dialog to explore your ambivalence about work. See what the two sides have to say to each other. Can there be a resolution of the conflict?
10. Think about your work goals in terms of "heroism": what mission are you accomplishing through your work? What mission would you like to accomplish? For whom or what are you working? Are you working for things/people/goals you do not want to be working for?
11. Think about the role work plays in your life. Is it compartmentalized or does it flow into the rest of your life? Do you want it to be integrated or separate? Is work taking up the right amount of time and energy in your life? Too much or too little? A related issue is what roles you play at work. How do they relate to the roles you played in your family as child? To the roles you play now with your "significant others"?