

A New Psychology Today Column Links Anxiety and Burnout to the Burdens of Invisible Work

Drs. Wells and MacAulay warn that managing a family and a profession is often too heavy for people to handle and can cause anxiety and burnout.

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****Drs. Wells and MacAulay Discuss the Burnout Effect that Invisible Work Can Have on Those Balancing Work and Managing Their Households. Their Highly Anticipated New Book, *Our (In)visible Work*, Will Enlighten Readers upon Publication in Late August 2024. The Book Delves into the Psychological and Societal Implications of Invisible Work, Offering Practical Solutions and Insights for Those Affected.****



Dr. Janelle Wells and Dr. Doreen MacAulay

A new Psychology Today column by authors, academics, and workplace experts Janelle E. Wells, Ph.D., and Doreen MacAulay, Ph.D., links invisible work to anxiety and burnout suffered by those, especially women,

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From the home to the workplace, burnout is a reality exacerbated by the burden of invisible work. To create a healthier society, we have to value invisible work...”

*Janelle E. Wells, Ph.D., and
Doreen MacAulay, Ph.D*

who must juggle the demands of their duties in the workplace with managing their households. Dr. Wells and Dr. MacAulay publish their new book, *Our (In)visible Work*, next month and have shared their insights on the contemporary personal and professional application of unpaid labor in a series of columns for Psychology Today. Their writings shed light on the emotional, professional, and family consequences of invisible work in the workplace and at home.

In their new Psychology Today column, they write: “Invisible work is everywhere and essential for

our society to function. Our society has given little economic value to household management, 'life admin,' or unpaid work on the job. Whether it is organizing the family schedule with everything from extracurricular activities to medical appointments and birthdays or mentoring new employees, people are often asked to do important tasks for which they are not recognized – or paid. Fulfilling these often-essential components of a functioning society cause new levels of anxiety and burnout, and we'd be better served as a society by recognizing that reality rather than ignoring it."

Further, in the column, they warn that managing a family and a profession is often too heavy for people to handle and stay mentally healthy.

"This disproportionately falls on the shoulders of women, with University of Melbourne researchers recently analyzing the data from over 70,000 people surveyed worldwide in 19 studies and finding that women spend an estimated 4.5 hours caring for their families and homes daily versus 2.8 hours for men," they write. "According to Harvard Business Review this accounts for women doing 75% of the total unpaid care work inclusive of cooking, cleaning, organizing, scheduling, childcare, and elder care."

Dr. Wells and Dr. MacAulay passionately insist that our society must have conversations that can bring value to these tasks and drive societal change.

"In Canada, several groups recently called upon the Quebec government to make an official 'National Invisible Work Day' to educate people on the significant impact the invisible work," they write in Psychology today. "Marianne Pertuiset-Ferland, executive director of Association féministe d'éducation et d'action sociale, told a local TV reporter, 'We should open discussions about it with our employers, with our friends, family and also to open a dialogue, educate ourselves around this issue, and try to work towards better equality our families.'"

Moreover, they cite the role that corporations must play in relieving burnout from invisible work. "For years, the importance of a workplace's culture has been linked to improved employee engagement, happiness, productivity, and the overall success of the organization," the authors write in the column. "The activities to help people feel a sense of connectedness include mentoring, sponsorship, birthday celebrations, training and development, employee resource groups, culture committees, and people are increasingly asked to engage in these tasks as a volunteer activity with no direct tie to measured performance. This leads to a burden of invisible work that falls on individuals required to go above and beyond in the workplace."

In conclusion, the researchers write in the column, "From the home to the workplace, burnout is a reality exacerbated by the burden of invisible work. To create a healthier society, we have to value invisible work and remove gender inequities in delivering that work."

[For the full column, click HERE](#) To pre-order the consequential new book, [Our \(In\)visible Work, click HERE](#). The authors have a groundbreaking interactive web space at

<https://wellsquest.com/ourinvisiblework>, a platform designed with empathy to foster a sense of community and understanding among those who endure invisible work.

For broadcast or print interviews with Dr. Wells and Dr. MacAulay regarding uncompensated work or their upcoming new book, Our (In)visible Work, please contact Michael Frisby at Mike@frisbyassociates.com or 202-625-4328. Mr. Frisby can also supply digital copies of the book for reviews.

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