

Women Can't Have It All

Oct. 11 marks the International Day of the Girl.

An initiative by the United Nations, the Day of the Girl [aims](#) “to help galvanize worldwide enthusiasm for goals to better girls’ lives, providing an opportunity for them to show leadership and reach their full potential.” Day of the Girl celebrations in the U.S. seek to “dismantle the patriarchy and fight for social justice.”

Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle celebrated the day with a video encouraging girls to “keep asking questions, keep pushing forward, keep shining brightly. Know your work and know that we are behind you every step of the way.”



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[Sound On ??] Today is International #DayoftheGirl, a day observed globally and created by the United Nations to acknowledge the gender inequality that exists worldwide. Be it lack of access to education, stigma surrounding MHM, forced child marriage, legal or medical inequality, or gender-based violence, there is a pressing need to support young women in their path to excellence. It is also a day to celebrate and encourage girls to know their value and to support them in taking action to grow into the women they wish to be. The Duchess of Sussex has been a long time advocate for women's and girls rights and at the age of eleven campaigned against a sexist advertisement, which was then changed. No matter what age, or what background you have the power to make an impact. HRH recently shared a quote during a speech in Cape Town: "Visualize your highest self, and show up as her." • To all of the young girls reading this today on International Day of the Girl, that quote is for you. Video©?SussexRoyal (Images used are from accounts we have followed and PA images)

A post shared by [The Duke and Duchess of Sussex \(@sussexroyal\)](#) on Oct 11, 2019 at 3:37am PDT

Worthy and well-meant words on all sides, undoubtedly. In

fact, we've been hearing similar phrases for the last generation or so.

I should know. Although female empowerment has been making progress for roughly a century, it seems that women, especially in the U.S., really began to achieve parity with men during my lifetime. They have narrowed [the gender pay gap](#) significantly, soared past men in [college attendance](#), and are working their way into more [positions of political influence](#) – all indicators that women are indeed making headway in dismantling the patriarchy.

But are all these advances really good for women?

I'm not so sure.

Before you stone me for committing feminist blasphemy or claim I suffer from internalized misogyny, take a step back and look at the women in my generation. From what I've observed, many of my fellow females enjoy these accomplishments. It's thrilling to be climbing the career ladder and making a difference in the world. It's a delight to fulfill the definition of success put forth in high school and college.

But I also know how a normal female thinks. Despite all these successes, many women are genuinely interested in marriage and family, although that's sometimes verboten to admit.

Marriage and family aren't happening as easily as they once did. As a result, women keep going with their careers, doing their best to be good employees or important CEOs, all while enjoying life. As they go along, their worry grows.

Nowhere is this worry more evident than in the surging number of [stories](#) about freezing eggs or closely monitoring fertility. Women are worried. Those who went full throttle on career – whether through their own choice or not – realize that it may be too late to have a family of their own. Those who have a family, but are trying to juggle children with a

career, find that they're worn out and exhausted and have difficulty giving 100 percent to both.

And all because they were told they could have it all.

The fact is, women are not superhumans. We would love it if we could be – which is why the message of International Day of the Girl is so appealing – but we can't.

So, on this International Day of the Girl, perhaps it's time we change our tune. Yes, we can tell girls they can shoot for the stars, go to college, be successful careerists, and make a difference in the world.

But we should also tell them that this option will likely come at the expense of the other, often secret hope many of them carry in their hearts: being a wife and mother.

Girls need to know that they have a choice when they stand on the threshold of adulthood, and that it's perfectly acceptable to solely choose the so-called old-fashioned, unpopular way. They may even make more of a difference in the world through motherhood than they would through a career. Last I checked, a devoted hand rocking the cradle still rules the world.

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