

NURTURING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME AND WORK

8&9
JULY 2024

**AT IESE BUSINESS SCHOOL
BARCELONA**



International
Center for Work
and Family



fostering
understanding

NURTURING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS AT HOME AND WORK

Expert Meeting held 8-9 July 2024, IESE, Barcelona

Introduction

This gathering of experts had several prompts. The first and guiding one was the academic partnership between the International Center for Work and Family (ICWF) at IESE Business School, Barcelona and the Home Renaissance Foundation (HRF) UK. The partnership allowed for a strand of research based on the role and value of the home to be added to the work and family strands at the heart of ICWF's remit and vision. To support and enhance this work, the meeting was designed to present current research by the ICWF team, and to widen and enrich this new field by inviting academics from other specialties and institutions to engage with the topic.

The purpose of the meeting derives from the growing emphasis on well-being, and especially on the health implications of our primary relationships both at home and in the workplace. Post-Covid, working from home has highlighted the role the home plays in our professional working lives and relationships. The older conversation about "Work-Life Balance" has developed into deeper examination of the well-being and health benefits of good relationships across our whole life spheres.

Though much of the media coverage of these benefits is anecdotal, its message is underpinned by research evidence. Perhaps most clearly and now famously articulated by Robert Waldinger, reflecting on the decades-long [Harvard Study of Adult Development](#): the quality of our relationships has a direct correlation with our well-being and health outcomes.

As this was an area HRF explored in the context of home in its 2022 publication [Happiness and Domestic Life](#), looking with an expert gaze at home/workplace interaction was a natural extension to this study. By the same token ICWF's extensive work on Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviours, Servant Leadership and the wider and deeper context of family supportive initiatives made this further exploration a focused and meaningful one here too.

The connection between the quality of relationships and quality of life represents a significant social trend still in the early stages of full investigation and evaluated application. For this reason the support of the Social Trends Institute (STI) was sought and gained approval. The major role of STI in both funding and facilitating the meeting is recorded here with thanks from all concerned at ICWF and HRF.

Expectations

The expectation of the Expert Meeting was to identify and discern the best ways to support and foster mutually beneficial relationships at home and at work.

Key questions:

- How does the home play a distinctive positive role in equipping people for the relational demands and opportunities of working life?
- How can these can be harnessed and nurtured?

The aims of the meeting included those of specific relevance to the work of HRF and ICWF, and wider aims for the understanding of the formation, development and flourishing of healthy relationships across life-times and life-spheres, and to consider the necessary relevant approaches and policy recommendations to enable real-context benefits.

As a part of this ICWF and HRF has gained expert insight into the aspects of the issue which will inform the next stages of their joint research projects. This work will also form a new open access publication to make available to wider scholarship the material contributed here.

Experts

Academic Leaders

[Professor Mireia Las Heras](#)

[Professor Marc Grau](#)

[Professor Yasin Rofcanin](#)

[Professor Maria Jose Bosch](#) (Facilitator)

Invited Experts

[Professor Samuel Ayree](#)

[Professor Seçil Bayraktar](#)

[Professor Marta Bertolaso](#)

[Professor Aleix Bonfill](#)

[Dr Bridget Bryan](#)

[Dr Catalina Enestrom](#)

[Professor Pablo Garcia](#)

[Dr Andrea Rodríguez](#)

[Professor Nancy Snow](#)

Organisation Leaders

Social Trends Institute

Professor Carlos Cavallé, Dean Emeritus of IESE
Tracey O'Donnell (Secretary General of STI)

Home Renaissance Foundation

Bryan K Sanderson CBE (Chairman)
Mercedes Jaureguibeita (CEO)
Professor Antonio Argandoña (Academic Director)

Strands

The two-day meeting was divided into three sessions, each session followed by discussion, chaired by Prof. Maria Jose Bosch. Individual sessions drew together experts in specific fields relevant to the lines of enquiry detailed above in these strands:

Strand 1 Perspective: Sociology and Philosophy

Strand 2 Perspective: Health and Well-Being

Strand 3 Perspective: Business and Organisational Psychology

The different strands represented by the sessions below were self-contained in terms of presentations relevant to the given perspective, but were also used as material to cumulatively enrich the discussion stage of each subsequent strand, as well as contributing to the final statements. As such the summaries of the presentations incorporate elements from the relevant discussion sessions.

Please see links above for short biographies of contributors within each session.

General Summary

The home is foundational in how we form and nurture (or not) relationships, both as learnt attitudes, values and behaviours from infancy and in how these are lived-out in later home environments and other life-spheres. The home is the regenerative source of social capital which is "spent", redistributed and then, ideally, replenished in other contexts. The relational goods which enable human flourishing are formed in relationships which meet the needs of others, manifested in mutuality, service and responsive care.

For these reasons the home carries the expectations that it will provide a place of renewal, trust, mutual care and positive respite from the demands of life

outside the home. Societal changes including increased individualism, more fluid relationship structures and blurred boundaries of work and home challenge the fulfilment of these expectations. At the heart of much that was presented and discussed was this challenge.

Previous emphasis on work-life balance made assumptions about the stability of home and the need for more flexibility from the workplace. Leadership strategies including Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviours have focused mainly on how time and commitments can be flexibly managed. More recent research has shifted the focus to the relationships which underpin an individual's capacity to flourish, and perhaps engages more directly with the possible fragility of the individual's home context. Work-Supportive Spouse Behaviours and insights from Shared Reality predicate a healthy spillover from work to home as well as home to work. This is more nuanced and complex area as it treads boundaries between the private activities and choices of home and the public/professional realm.

The home is evolving and what it offers and what it needs requires reassessment and potentially more direct interventions, but it also needs safeguarding so that the blurred distinctions of work and home do not undermine its priority and capacity in contributing positively to human functioning and flourishing across life-spheres.

Presentation Summaries

Session 1: Work, Family and Home. The Nature and Importance of Interpersonal Relationships from Sociological and Philosophical Perspective.

Presentations establishing and describing the role of the home and family in generating and sustaining social capital and relational goods which contribute to health and well-being across life-spheres.

Specifically Human: How Work and Home Epistemologically Imply Each Other Models and Metrics of Relational Workplaces Marta Bertolaso, University Campus Bio-Medico, Rome Italy

Growing awareness of people experiencing increased isolation and loneliness and the negative effects on health and well-being. Expressed also in growing awareness of the health benefits of strong relationships and social connections. Erosion of social capital has a direct link to changes in expectations of work and work place.

The rapid increase in working from home has allowed for more fluid and negotiable work/life balance but has reduced the opportunities for social connection outside the home. This trend is symptomatic of the increasing disconnection of space and function. Automation, Acceleration, Accessibility and Autonomy are drivers in these changed perceptions and expectations.

Developing a dynamic relational model of work over a functional model is critical to restoring the essential human element to work tasks and roles, and addressing the health and well-being deficit. Differentiating the person from the machine.

The home and specifically in acts and relationships of caring is foundational in this development. Caring – giving and receiving care - is the ethical component of each person's being in space and time. It can be described as the responsibility to take care of our own and another's specific humanness. Though expressed in tasks and in roles, it is not content or success-driven but a relational and reciprocal human-driven response. Attitudes and behaviours experienced through care in the home are formative in whole-life patterns and continuously offer and refresh concomitant well-being.

Research work on relational rather than reductionist work paradigms harness the digital developments of our time and recognize the rapid changes people experience. New metrics are needed to understand how to support well-being in the midst of such changes. Recent applications MYSPOT, HubQuarter: Smart Alliance begin to measure how relational models benefit the drivers for social capital, knowledge exchange and continuous learning. These are also tangible benefits experienced (if not easily measured) in the home.

**Harmonizing work and family life: a relational approach.
Pablo García Ruiz, University of Zaragoza, Spain**

Company policies and conditions intended to support employee work/life balance are now widely adopted. Evidence that benefits are not straightforwardly achieved suggests that more understanding of the human mechanisms of social capital and relational good is necessary. To ask not what to do to support workers but why it should be done.

Societal changes including the primacy of individual over familial or collective needs have had an impact on the generation and regeneration of social capital (SC) – social sustainability.

Social sustainability is understood here as the ability of a society to maintain and improve the well-being of its members over the long term and across

generations. SC is characterised by mutual trust and abiding by norms of solidarity and reciprocity.

Primary SC is formed amongst family members and neighbours within an immediate and daily context. Secondary SC is seen in wider social and civic connections. Generalised SC is those positive attitudes and values informing and available to multiple contexts, especially a willingness to trust and collaborate for greater shared goods.

Evidence shows that strong Primary SC is closely connected to strong Secondary and Generalised SC. It is not improper to read back from this that lower levels of the two last named are also closely linked to falling levels in the Primary – family – sphere.

Family social capital can be depleted by internal choices and circumstances and by external demands. While the home and family are the places where the values and civic virtues of reciprocity and trust are first formed, this will also be the place where their lack or maladjustment is first experienced.

The home is a resource which needs tending if it is to indeed maintain and improve the well-being of its members over the long term and across generations.

Decisions must be made either to replace the traditional nurture offered by the home with external agencies or to support policies which help the family to perform this role in the fast-changing world with the new challenges it brings.

Businesses have a role to play as they have historically benefited from the SC provided by the home, but now increasingly should seek to support its generation. One-size-fits all does not work for the family and so it is a task that each company must undertake in dialogue (in relationship) with those who work in it.

Social Capital is replenished in well-functioning and creative settings and systems. The scarcity model (over-competition for resources) should be replaced with an expansion model.

The Primacy of Self-Care in Attaining a Healthy Work-Life Balance **Nancy E. Snow, The University of Kansas USA**

Background and insights into self-care, well-being and work-life balance from the philosophy of virtue in the work of Plato, Aristotle and Iris Murdoch. Key points include: the virtues are forms of knowledge which can be beneficially transferred across life spheres; the instrumental role of reason in maintaining inner harmony and balanced lives; and the intention of achieving happiness/well-being (*eudaimonia*) through practical wisdom (*phronesis*).

Self-care recognizes the essential need for a balanced/harmonious inner and outer life and the individual attitudes and actions which can help achieve this. Self-care is not selfishness or self-regard but a healthy understanding of what a person needs in order to be in responsible and positive relationship with others.

It has particular resonance and value in the management of the (often competing) demands of work and home. Negative feelings – being overwhelmed – can be a prompt for restorative action.

From the ethical perspective this requires reflecting on what serves the best interests of all parties affected by a personal decision. This should begin with reflecting on self-care and addressing imbalances within the individual. “How can I live a better, more balanced life?” is the beginning, but not the end, of the caregivers’ reflections and application of practical wisdom.

Individuals formed in contexts (especially homes) which enable the growth and nurture of personal, social and civic virtues, will be more likely to feel equipped to make these reflections and adjustments, but they are vital to each of us regardless of upbringing.

Nurturing healthy relationships includes recognition of this. Individuals lacking this formation might well seek as models those people whose patterns conform to well-balanced and harmonious lives, and for whom self-care is well-implanted. This model/example might well be a colleague or manager in the work context, though achieving positive outcomes across life-spheres.

The primacy of self-care will have personal, social and institutional benefits and its facilitation should be considered in workplace schemes and initiatives to support balanced lives.

**Understanding Family Resilience:
Facilitating Factors from a Systematic Review
Marc Grau Grau, UIC, ICWF at IESE, Barcelona Spain**

Using definition of resilience as the ability of a person to recover from adversity stronger and with greater resources, and referring throughout to the work of Walsh (2004) and Donati (1988 and subsequent).

Analysing family resilience identifies the core behaviours, values and activities which allow for a collective journey through resistance »self-correction« growth. Study during pandemic revealed positive parenting, quality of relationship with partner and religiosity as playing significant roles in family resilience. These were expressed in strong sense of family identity, organizational patterns allowing flexibility and building trust and communication processes which were clear, sincere and collaborative.

Family resilience depends upon the generation of relational goods which in turn are available in other and wider contexts – civic life and workplace as relevant here. Conditions for this generation of transferrable relational goods include the non-transactional will for the inherent good of the other, mutuality and the understanding that these goods are created and nurtured over time and develop in relation to the changing needs of others.

It is crucial to establish a “modus vivendi” that allows people to enjoy relational goods across all spheres of life. The priority of the home and family in this is accepted but bears further and fuller investigation especially in the areas of relationship quality, home/work contexts, and the challenges of the digital society to family life and resilience.

Resilience of the family of the employee not only affects learnt behaviours and strategies which are applied in the workplace, but also provides the stable emotional place of respite to which they return after work. Understanding better the mechanisms and conditions required for family resilience and the associated relational goods is increasingly of interest to employers.

This also relates to strategies for managing conflict across life-spheres. Reconciliation and harmonization in relationships builds resilience and encourages individual and organizational thriving.

A question here is how far can an employer rely on the relational goods of home today?

Session 2: Relational Aspects of Human Flourishing.

Presentations elucidating the need for nurturing healthy relationships and supporting human sustainability in a range of social and organizational contexts.

Family-Supportive Workplace Relationships and Employee Sustainability

Samuel Aryee, Surrey Business School, University of Surrey UK

Work arrangements have a high impact on employee health and well-being, but this has only recently become part of organizational thinking and concern. The concept of human sustainability (HS) complements the dominant ecological and resource-focused reading of sustainability. HS can be defined as an employee's ability to maintain health (psychological, social and physical) without sacrificing personal regenerative growth. The core of HS is this capacity for growth and full human functioning.

Work and family especially in the context of the home are central to allowing and challenging full human functioning. How one sphere (work) can impact favourably on the other (home) and the successful functioning of the individual needs further investigation. The deployment of Family Supportive Supervisor Behaviours (FSSB) as an instrument for supporting employee health is one significant development.

FSSB seek to offer emotional support by listening and showing care when employees are facing challenges at home which impact on work – and vice versa.

Instrumental Support offers solutions and resources to alleviate home/work tensions, within the control of the supervisor and the capacity of the organization. There are issues of scale here as clearly larger organizations can offer more flexibility than small ones.

In addition, FSSB includes role modelling. Supervisors who show in their own practice behaviours conducive to work/family balance encourage confidence and trust in those they supervise.

Creative Family-Work Policies are broader context decisions making whole organisations supportive of work/family balance.

FSSB relate to human sustainability in satisfying psychological needs and allowing individuals to thrive both at home and at work. The integration rather than separation of life spheres increases sense of agency and potential for regenerative growth – increased energy and human functioning.

Sensitivity, suitability and training of supervisors are vital for FSSB to have best impact. Awareness that not all employees value integration (preference for segmentation) and potential for approaches to be seen as intrusive into home/family life.

Not all employers or supervisors are open to promoting or using these behaviours. Recruitment and training needs sensitive handling.

It must be noted (and incorporated into research and subsequent application) that there are significant differences in work and home contexts and expectations between the Global North and Global South.

Experiences of loneliness, isolation and work: an investigation of risk/resilience factors and consequences for health and functional outcomes.

Bridget Bryan, King's College, London UK

Both loneliness and workplace health have gained increasing interest from the public, policy makers, and researchers in recent years. However, little attention has been paid to experiences of loneliness in the workplace, and its implications for workers and employers.

Two studies exploring experiences of loneliness in the workplace, and its association with health, wellbeing and occupational functioning. The first study used mixed-methods systematic review methods to identify workplace, health, and personal factors associated with workplace loneliness. The second study used semi-structured qualitative interviews to explore lived experiences of loneliness among a sample of 31 UK-based workers.

Overall, results show that loneliness is associated with poor occupational functioning and wellbeing among workers. Our results also point to the role of the aspects of the work environment that increase risk of loneliness in staff, which can inform strategies to address workplace loneliness. Reducing loneliness may have long-term benefits for workers and employers.

The dehumanizing of work tasks – seeing them as irrelevant to relationships has a negative impact on workers and can lead to experiences of isolation and loneliness. Feeling valued and for activities to be given meaning rehumanises work experience and builds connection.

Key needs are to feel authentic, valued, understood and belonging. These are in relation to colleagues, organization and wider society. How these needs are

met at home and within the family was not part of either study, but would be very usefully investigated in further research.

Question emerges from this is how far organizations can (or should) help employees handle relationships at work and home.

Suffering and Healing Relationships in End-of-life Care

**Andrea Rodriguez-Prat, BA, MsN, PhD WeCare Chair: End of Life Care
Universitat Internacional de Catalunya Barcelona, Spain**

**Aleix Bonfill, PhD La Salle Barcelona, Universitat Ramon Llull
Barcelona, Spain**

Reflecting on the health theme in the most vulnerable. Those whose personal illness and suffering leads to a wish to hasten death (WTHD). WTHD has relational aspects linked to physical and psychological state. This is revealed in the complexity of response and the unstable nature of intention. There may be hidden existential yearning for connectedness, care and respect. (These yearnings are inherent in all human relationships and can be read back into the pre-illness experience of family and work life. This relates to needs to be met in usual daily context and exacerbated in terminal illness.)

Key anxieties are the fear of being a burden to family/carers, the fear of loss of autonomy and self-determination, the fear of loss of dignity. Medical practitioners have referred to moral distress in patients. Training should include understanding of these complex psycho-social needs and ways of addressing them.

This extreme insight into human need for connectedness and value should inform less extreme contexts in which individuals are vulnerable to loss of sustaining relational support.

Session 3: The Interplay of Relationships between Life Spheres

Presentations of research and frameworks developed to enhance well-being across life spheres and their application in the workplace.

Relationships and the Interplay of Work and Non-Work. What we know from a decade of research

Mireia Las Heras, IESE Business School and Yasin Rofcanin, University of Bath UK

Overview of research at the International Center for Work and Family at IESE Business School in work published 2015 – present. Research has explored how the family influences work and vice versa and the broader social and governmental factors affecting this.

Work-Supportive Spouse Behaviours (WSSB) are identified as Emotional Support, empathy and understanding; Instrumental Support, practical and structural help/flexibility; Appreciation of Work Demands, and Encouragement for Professional Growth. “Work, Family and Human Flourishing” (2023) found that WSSB leads to increased creativity, self-efficacy in work and home domains.

“The Role of Compassionate Love for Sharing Co-worker Work-Family Support at Home to Promote Partners' Creativity at Work” (2022) showed co-worker support enhances partner creativity and in turn enhanced creativity with relational compassionate love amplifies support's effects on partner's work creativity.

“Family-supportive supervisor behaviours (FSSB):The role of relational resources in work and home domains” Impact of WSSB on FSSB: found significant benefits for work-life balance, well-being, and performance. Supervisors with strong spousal support extend similar support to team. Promotes work-family balance, enhances workplace culture, boosts productivity.

“Family motivation of supervisors: Exploring the impact on subordinates' work performance via family supportive supervisor behaviours and work–family balance satisfaction (2022) Supervisors with high family motivation are more likely to engage in FSSB (mediated by supervisor's work family balance), positively affecting their subordinates' job performance and satisfaction with work-family balance.

“The mediating role of schedule i-deals [personalized work arrangements]in the relationship between supervisors' own caregiving responsibilities and employee outcomes” (2017) Supervisors who are caregivers are more empathetic towards employees with similar work-life challenges. This empathy leads them to negotiate schedule i-deals. In turn, employees are more likely to report heightened job satisfaction, improved performance, and an increased satisfaction.

This research built on earlier work on Family-Friendly Organizational Culture, Servant Leadership and family supportiveness, and national and governmental variations in family supportive policies and outcomes.

The boundaries of work and home are now more blurred and understanding the intricate interplay between work and family life in the context of remote work is essential for fostering supportive and resilient family systems in today's evolving landscape.

The Role of Shared Reality at Home and at Work **M. Catalina Enestrom, IESE Business School**

Shared reality is the perception of sharing the same thoughts, feelings, and concerns with another person about the world. Research focuses on how shared reality with romantic partners influences work experiences. It is relevant in the modern workplace given the difficulty in making sense of and coping with the environment. Key finding is that shared reality promotes meaning in life and work by reducing uncertainty about the environment.

A study of healthcare workers and their romantic partners during the pandemic showed that shared reality was associated with reduced stress. Shared reality promotes relationship satisfaction in part through its effect on support offered by partner and shared reality also positively influences partner's experiences.

A study of shared reality between co-workers shows that it predicts work meaningfulness, prosocial behaviour and performance (self and peer rated). Co-workers who exhibited shared reality behaviours were inferred to experience more: interpersonal outcomes: closeness, coordination, and intrapersonal outcomes: work meaningfulness, performance.

We should help individuals establish shared reality with their close others to promote positive spillover between work and home. In doing so, we can nurture healthy relationships to promote overall well-being while increasing work meaningfulness and performance.

Mobilizing resources in remote work: A collective effort by the employee, the manager, and the organization **Seçil Bayraktar Toulouse Business School, France**

Research related to well-being and social connections recognizes the complex relational needs and challenges of workers in remote work settings (RWS).

Employees with strong self-leadership can thrive and be productive in RWS. "Quiet Quitting" meaning minimal work-engagement can be a danger of RWS to productivity and well-being. Inclusive leadership can be seen to encourage

self-leadership while managerial control can result in employee disengagement.

A question is the contribution of the RWS, in this context the home, to these work attitudes and behaviours. Evidence that tighter societal cultures, those with “traditional values,” can act as a positive psychological buffer for workers from home. This can be explained by defined home/family structures (including hierarchy orientation and religiosity –perhaps a culture of service) and a collectivist/shared bearing of demands and distribution of resources.

Mobilizing resources in remote work as a collective effort by the employee, the manager, and the organization recognizes the advantages of RWS: autonomy, flexibility, and the disadvantages: isolation, blurred boundaries.

Two theoretical frameworks pertain here: Conservation of Resource (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989; 2001) describes the competition for resources and their most effective deployment. In this context ensuring that employees in RWS do not feel excluded from benefits and that self-efficacy is recognized and rewarded. Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci et al., 2017; Ryan & Deci, 2017) understands the resources needed in the remote work context can be linked to the three major psychological needs of humans, which are autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

A proposed framework is a Resource Caravan. The joint effect of the individual, the manager, and the organizational aspects ◦ to both protect and foster the existing resources; ◦ and develop those that the individual is deprived of with the aim of increasing well-being through satisfying the basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Few CEOs have a background in organizational psychology. There can be a risk that “paper policies” can be put in place without the resources and training to make the policy a reality.

Recent policies on the “Right to Disconnect” recognize the problems of blurred work/home boundaries but not the self-management needs of individual workers. An I-Deals approach may have a role in addressing this.

Workers representative organisations including trades unions also need a voice in how these frameworks and initiatives are best implemented.

Addressing the Questions

How does the home play a distinctive positive role in equipping people for the relational demands and opportunities of working life?

- The role of care witnessed, given and received in the home in satisfying and building specific human relational and transferrable strengths, and the significance of the work of the home as a model of service and care. (Bertolaso, Garcia, Roderiguez)
- The generation and potential for regeneration of social capital in the home available in other contexts noting attitudes and relationships formed and encouraged in the distinctive and privileged context of the home through its culture of service and care. (Garcia)
- The home as the source and maintainer of relational goods seen in the family's positive response to challenges and conflict as a means to resilience. This resilience is both available in other contexts and a continuing familial resource in the event of external challenges (Grau)
- The home as a place where the personal and social virtues can be seen, learnt and applied, specifically in self-care which requires self-knowledge and healing strategies to allow positive contribution to wider relationships. Taking personal responsibility for healthy relationships and the basis life-long learning and openness to development across personal and professional realms. (Snow)
- Work-Supportive Spouse Behaviour in the home positively impacts on work experience and benefits supporting as well as supported spouse. (Las Heras and Rofcanin, Enestrom)
- Shared Reality of romantic partners can be applied to more effective co-worker relationships. (Enestrom)

How can these can be harnessed and nurtured?

- Family-Supportive Supervisor Behaviours recognize the value of the home/family to the individual, and increasingly, to wider work relationships. (Ayree, Las Heras and Rofcanin, Bayraktar)
- Individualised workplace responses such as I –Deals work more specifically with the needs/ strengths of the home context to benefit both contexts. (Las Heras, Rofcanin)

- Key needs are to feel authentic, valued, understood and belonging. These are in relation to colleagues and organisation and need recognition in work context. (Bryan)
- Remote/Home workers need reassurance and availability of resources ensuring that employees do not feel excluded from benefits and that self-efficacy is recognized and rewarded. (Bayraktar)
- It is not a how but a why question and the benefit to employers and employees and wider society needs to be understood as such. (Garcia)

Further Research

Contributions revealed that although the home is recognized as foundational and critical in how relationships are formed and valued there is a natural reluctance and resistance to rigorous investigation of home life. The boundary of the wish to offer support and the accusation of intrusion is a slim one. Employers in particular are wary of such terrain. Instead, most often, a generalized (and potentially outdated) concept of employees' home context is held, though there is increased openness to offer more individualized responses where possible to specific self-disclosed employee needs. Measuring the success of such strategies is inevitably limited to the work context. Whereas one can read into an employee's increased engagement and productivity an improved home context it is not readily open to measurement there.

Having noted this, findings on loneliness and isolation at work (Bryan) and the need for relatedness for working in remote settings (Bayraktar) suggest a potential correlation between a relationally depleted home context and a failure to thrive at work. Framing such research would be challenging but of value in understanding the new needs of those working from home, and those receiving limited emotional support from home.

The distinction between emotional and instrumental support made across several of the FSSB presentations also offers some helpful bearings. Emotional support at home and work meets the needs for empathy and trust required for the best functioning of an individual. It is instrumental support however that allows the space, time and actions to enable this best functioning to have an external expression to be achieved.

Investigation of the instrumental support structures of the home, including the relational aspects of the work of the home, but extended to the formation and application of time-management, practical care provision and

organizational skills. This already chimes with the research strand of HRF/ICWF but bears significant elaboration.

Additionally it became clear that different jobs, different sizes and types of organizations, quite apart from wide variations of expectations of work and home in different parts of the world, impact on the efficacy and suitability of certain strategies. To better inform workplace policies, future research should investigate the impact of the role of FSSB and I-Deals in less familiar but globally more common contexts, which would build evidence to implement and develop these strategies.

It is also important to note that for many across the world the physical work of the home is their principal activity and responsibility. Therefore the home is their workplace as much as it is for it is for remote workers, though clearly with different challenges. Fuller research into these households and well-being would be valuable.

The interdisciplinary study of healthy relationships, which we are encouraging through this expert meeting and the upcoming open access publication offers a framework and expectation for future research in this field.

Final Thoughts

From the presentations and research shared some clear insights were gained:

- The importance of improving the quality of relationships both at work and at home, as well as enhancing the relationship between work and home, which is a significant relationship in itself.
- Strengthening the family is crucial to building resilience in both personal and professional life
- Family-supportive workplace policies can enhance both employee well-being and family relationships.
- Nurturing family bonds leads to better emotional health, which positively impacts work dynamics.

The connection of home and workplace and the relational needs of the humans who live and work in them is a reality. What is changing is the direction of travel of the necessary practical, social and emotional skills involved. Whereas the workplace has assumed certain support structures and networks present in the home, in many places this no longer a given.

A trend which emerges from the presentations of several participants is the increased role and responsibility of the workplace in providing support structures, networks and life-training. It maybe that we are seeing a move to "Homing from Work" as much as we have seen to "Working from Home".

The situation was well-expressed by Professor Garcia thus:

"Either we accept that families [and homes by implication] are becoming weaker, and we promote other possible sources of social capital...; or we promote policies that help ... strengthen family relationships in terms of scope, time, and quality. In other words, we may consider "nurturing healthy relationships at home" a valuable goal for society.

It is not just a question of being able to "reconcile" the demands of the two spheres (work and family life), but of the two projects supporting each other and helping each other to flourish."