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Can Work-Life Inclusion Reshape Gender and Ideal Worker Norms?

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Because the biological and social role of motherhood is inconsistent with the ideal worker role, gender equality will depend on changes in (a) gender and/or (b) ideal worker norms. In this presentation, work-life inclusion will be offered in service of both purposes. It will be argued that work-life inclusion can reshape proximal expectations of how mothers and workers should behave, and that these changing expectations can help to dismantle the gendered distribution of labor. Perhaps to an even greater extent than formal work-life policies, subtle messages from leaders and organizations that encourage both mothers and fathers to engage in their family roles have the potential to create social change.