**When You Come Home From Work**

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You pull into the driveway and turn off the engine, tired from a long day at work. Just then, you notice a little face peering through the window of your house. When you walk in the front door, your child is there to greet you and wrap his arms around your legs.

It's nice to be home, and those first few minutes set the time for the entire evening. Here are five practical tips to make coming home an easier transition.

First, **remember that you've really been "fathering" all day**. One of your primary responsibilities is to provide for your family's needs. Remind yourself throughout the work day that you're doing this for the ones you love, and the transition back home won't be quite so jarring.

Second, **try unwinding a little before you get home**. Take ten minutes in your office to unwind; maybe you could go for a short walk, or have some juice before you get home. You'll be ready to interact with your children right away.

Third, **commit your first few minutes to your family**. You might prefer to head straight for the couch, but by spending a few minutes interacting and catching up with everyone first-including a hug for your wife-you'll gain the freedom to relax. Chances are, your kids will energize you, and you'll forget how tired you were.

Fourth, **it's good to talk through these issues with your family**. Maybe you do need a few minutes to unwind, and your wife can keep the kids occupied until you have energy to give them your full attention. Or, maybe she'll need you to take the kids until dinner is ready.

Finally, **anticipate discipline issues**. It can be discouraging if-as you walk in-you're bombarded with all the day's problems. And then, your first contact with your child involves punishment. Don't dismiss the discipline problem, but work out a routine that works best for everyone involved.

Coming home from work can be one of the most rewarding times of the day. Let's make sure it stays that way.