

RSPACE

WALK THE LINE

Can you really be sure that what you choose in your personal life doesn't amount to professional hara-kiri? SAVIA RAJAGOPAL-SHAH narrates her first-hand experience with this dilemma

I've never been one to embrace change easily. I took my own sweet time procrastinating over a decision, which I viewed then, as an earth-shatteringly difficult one. And I've realised that the longer you postpone a decision, the tougher it becomes. Your mind reaches a veritable meltdown. For some strange reason unknown to me, no one else could really comprehend my dilemma. To everyone else, the answer was evident. 'Moving abroad and quitting your job isn't really a big deal!' was unanimous. 'Yes, it is!' my mind screamed out.

Women are almost resigned to the thought that compromise is an inherent part of their DNA and I was made to feel that I had lost out on this vital code somewhere. Leaving a perfectly wonderful job behind and making a professional compromise isn't easy. It's doubly tough when you truly enjoy your work and take pride in what you do. I've never been a feminist but suddenly, I didn't want to be the one who 'compromised'. I didn't want to be the martyr and I held my spouse responsible for having 'put me through this'. How could I be asked to quit my workaholic ways and move to an entirely new country just to be Mrs. So-and-so? To me, it seemed like too much was being demanded and I didn't feel that brave (or foolish!).

I spent hours wondering what was in store for me. Compromise may be the integral part of any relationship but who's to say when it's too much? How do you really know that you're giving up too much or too little? Can you really quantify compromise? I pondered over these questions and realised that brooding over these infinite action-reaction possibilities it was a surefire way to doom any personal bliss I could possibly have. By talking to friends and family, I discussed the pros and cons of my situation. There was no middle-ground. It had to be either this or that. Whatever the final decision, I promised myself I would stick to it and not waver, irrespective of the consequences. I took some time out and in a Eureka-moment, I recalled something a good friend once told me - 'If you're good at what you do, you're good. No matter where you go. Period.' That sealed it for me. I knew that moving away from home and work would not be easy. But I took the leap.

And I've never regretted my decision till date. Sure, there are times when I feel frustrated with the adjustments. But, all that procrastination and expended energy seems like such a waste now. I see new professional opportunities before me that I would have overlooked had I stayed in my comfort zone. Having said that, I think it's very important to be sure of your reasons before making any compromise, especially when it comes to choosing family over work or vice versa. It's easy to get caught in the blame game and have regrets. I've learnt to trust my instincts through the process of compromise and still leave enough room to expect the unexpected.

Facing a similar dilemma? Ask yourself these questions...

Q. Have I researched enough about my new options before making this decision? Q. Does making this compromise make me truly happy or am I doing it to make someone else happy? Q. What are the possible negative outcomes if this decision doesn't pan out well? Q. Do I have a back-up plan in case things don't work out as I want them to?

