

Contents

Preface	ix
Acknowledgments	xv
I. Background: Entering the Meaning-Making Loop	1
1. Introduction	3
Fatherhood: Vignettes From a Researcher's Notebook	3
Fatherhood: What Are We to Think?	4
Finding a Language to Capture Diverse Fatherhood Images	6
An Alternative View	9
Dominant Discourses and Beyond	11
Exploring Family Life for Other Possible Discourses: A Look Into Sharing Parenting	15
2. Academic Discourses: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Fatherhood	19
Historical and Cross-Cultural Discourses	21
Men and the Provider Role	23
Father's Involvement in Family Life and Child Care: Quantity-Quality Discourse	24
Father's Influence on the Child	29
Effect on Men of Becoming and Being a Father	31
Revisiting Fatherhood Discourses: The Contribution of This Study	34

II. Meaning-Making	37
3. Diversity of Styles in Sharing Parenting	41
Dan and Liz: Interchangeable Parenting Partners	41
Rodney and Kate: Sharing Parenting While Reserving Certain Specialties	42
Jason and Helen: Sharing Parenting With Accounting Equity	43
Jack and Denise: Man as Designated Stay-at-Home Parent	44
Todd and Collette: Woman as Designated Stay-at-Home Parent	45
Descriptive Snapshots of Five Couples	46
Styles of Sharing Parenting	47
Reflections	53
4. A Diversity of Paths: What Influenced Men and Women to Move Toward Sharing Parenting	55
Family-of-Origin Stories	56
Co-Creating Sharing Parenting Possibilities: Some Prime Movers	65
Distinctions and the Decision-Making Process	73
5. Guiding Light: Foundations for Sharing Parenting	76
Commitment to Parenting	77
Parenting Philosophy	82
Goodwill	96
Reflections	99
6. Tag-Team Parenting and the Mechanisms of Sharing Parenting	100
What's in the Language?	101
Tag-Team Parenting: Key Mechanisms to Making It Work	115
Reflections	125
7. The Dance of Father Involvement: Men's and Women's Connected Experiences	127
The Dance Metaphor	128
Readiness to Dance: Some Differences Between Women and Men	129
Solo and Partnered Dancing: Claiming Parts in the Parenting Repertoire	131

Women's Experiences in the Dance of Father Involvement	136
Men's Experiences in the Dance of Father Involvement	139
Reflections	146
 8. Sharing Parenting and the Reciprocal Revisioning of Fatherhood and Motherhood	 149
Revisioning Patterns of Leading-Following	150
Reflections	161
 III. Reflexive Commentary	 165
 9. Sharing Parenting: Possibilities to Inform Alternative Discourse	 169
What Makes Sharing Parenting Work?	169
Obstacles to Sharing Parenting	173
Gender Politics of Sharing Parenting	176
 10. Revisiting Dominant Discourses and Final Reflections: Implications of Taking a Different View	 183
Beyond the Dominant Discourse?	184
Final Reflections	200
 Appendix A: Methodology	 203
 Appendix B: Research Informants: Biographical Snapshots	 223
 References	 233
 Index	 241
 About the Author	 245