

Tim Stanik (*1978) lives in Dortmund, is married and works as a research assistant at the Faculty of Education and Sociology. His daughter Malu was born in 2009.



Source:
private

The afternoon father

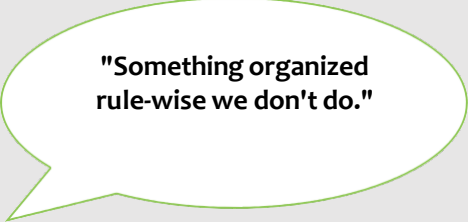
A surprised face greets me when I enter Tim Stanik's office. As soon as I introduce myself, he remembers that we had an appointment for an interview. The doctoral student is currently working on his doctorate. He had been so engrossed in his work that he had unfortunately completely forgotten the time. Still somewhat distracted, he asks me to take a seat.

Strict separation

Tim Stanik describes in detail a typical daily routine with his family, which is perfectly organized: His wife takes care of the mornings, including a joint breakfast, and he then takes his daughter Malu to daycare. There she is looked after from around 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., while her father works on his doctorate or holds seminars in his office at the North Campus. Fortunately, he can organize his working hours flexibly. "I have a half-time job, which means I should theoretically be here three days a week, but I'm there five days. But if something comes up, it's not so bad if I miss a day. Except, of course, for a seminar."

Tim Stanik is very conscientious, but in the afternoons he is exclusively a father: "Malu is at daycare until four, quarter past four, then I pick her up. Either my wife is then at home and we have dinner together around 5 p.m. or she is at sports and then I eat alone with Malu," he explains meekly. With a grin, he continues, "Well, and then we play a little bit more and then Malu also gets to watch TV for half an hour every day, from a quarter past six to a quarter to seven, to be exact." The parents again share the evening hours, so that the 35-year-old still finds time for sports or other hobbies after putting his daughter to bed. Before that, however, reading aloud is part of his obligatory program.

Since the birth of his daughter Malu, Tim Stanik has consciously divided up his daily routine precisely in terms of both time and space. "Even when Malu was smaller, I wasn't here for five days, but only three," he recalls. "Now that I'm doing my doctorate, I actually separate work and home pretty strictly. That means I don't sit down at home to do my stuff; I do it here."



"Something organized rule-wise we don't do."

This exact separation does not exist in the division of housework: "Household division is like this: We clean the apartment together once a week. Most of the cooking is done by my wife, and we do the laundry...", the doctoral student pauses for a moment: "...oh, she does more than I do. But I'm allowed to hang up the laundry now and then," he adds with a smile.

Exchange over beer

He says it's a great relief that he and his wife can call on Malu's grandparents in an emergency. Even if they live a little further away. "The problem is that my parents live 50-60 km away, and that's a lot of work for a

"It's too far to just drop by. But it's not too far to call today and bring Malu by tomorrow." They have never specifically sought contact with parents from the daycare center, says the father, because fortunately they have always had a large circle of friends in which some children already existed. Shrugging his shoulders, he explains: "I'm just at an age when many friends in my circle have had children or are about to. Of course, people exchange ideas over a beer." That's why they deliberately refrained from taking baby-swimming courses or anything similar.

"Malu is at the kindergarten for a relatively long time every day, and music school is also offered there. Of course, she meets up with a few kindergarten friends from time to time, or we do something together." He shakes his head, "We don't do anything organized on a regular basis."

Lucky coincidences

Long-term planning is not an essential part of Tim Stanik's life anyway. He lets himself be guided by what comes his way at the moment, the 35-year-old says calmly. "I'm lucky that everything in my life has worked out very fortunately so far."

His gaze narrows slightly as he recalls the time of Malu's birth. "That was almost the same situation as now. My wife was still a research assistant at the Open University of Hagen and I was already a scientific assistant here.

Employee at the TU Dortmund. My wife is

then went on maternity leave and her contract expired, which meant she couldn't get back in there." A short sigh interrupts his recollection. "Yes, I took those paternity months too, but honestly I only did it to get the money. Since you're still allowed to work, I think, 19 hours during that parental leave, I was able to keep half the job, but we got the extra money."

After a year and a half of maternity leave, his wife had to go back to work and - as is often the case in Tim Stanik's life - everything worked out very well: "We then got the KiTa place here by chance," he describes joyfully.

"I called a few KiTas and they all told me about a two to three year wait. Then I called our current KiTa and they said, 'That triffts pretty well, we're having a get-to-know-you day today. Why don't you come by?' There was this expansion and new places were created as a result. It was a total coincidence that I called on that very day. "What would have happened if Malu had not been offered a place? Tim Stanik's face darkens: "I think my wife would have stayed at home and we would have raised the child in relative poverty."

The way is the goal

Asked about his definition of career must the doctoral student thinks a little longer. "I ha-

I don't have a career plan or anything," he says cautiously. "For me, there's no plan that says, for example, that I have to have achieved this or that in ten years, but it's always about the here and now. The journey is the goal, to put it so bluntly." Asked if Malu had interfered with his career path, he shakes his head resolutely. "Nah, because as I said, there was just no career plan. It's more that priorities have shifted, how I organize my own free time and that I zuse- he that Malu has good free time, too."

"I think then my wife would have stayed at home and we would have raised the child in relative poverty"

He cradles his head slightly to one side. "You already go out less. You can't do as many cultural things because they would involve babysitting. You do visit relatively often," he says. Zoos, puppet theaters, children's museums, that kind of thing." But the birth of Malu was by no means a negative event. The timing was perfect for him. "We were thinking that now would be just the right time to become parents."

In the afternoon he is exclusively a father: Tim Stanik with daughter Malu in the petting zoo.

His next goal is now to first complete his doctorate. "Everything stands and falls with that. The grade decides whether he continues at university or whether he goes on to non-university research institutes or perhaps even something practical." Indeed, Tim Stanik looks as if he is prepared for any of these possibilities. He resolutely crosses his arms in front of his chest while casting a vague glance into the future. "So it's clear that we're going to have to leave Dortmund because the chair of my



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Institute will retire. Then the chair will be abolished. There's no way we'll be able to continue here." But Tim Stanik remains confident that everything will work out somehow.

The interview was conducted by Debora Rahma in spring 2013.