The Mental Load *Inventory*

Brain tabs open:

~~Pediatrician (Tues?)~~
Out of milk. Again.
Picture day outfit
Birthday gift for Sat.
...and 47 more

A worksheet for partners to see who's carrying what, and share it more fairly.

What is *the mental load?*

It's the invisible job of keeping a family running: remembering, planning and noticing everything everyone needs. It's easy to miss because so much of it happens in someone's head. When one person carries most of it, burnout and resentment usually aren't far behind. Every task really has three parts:

Notices

Realizes it needs to happen. "The baby is almost out of size 3 diapers."

Plans

Figures out the how and when. "I'll order size 4 tonight so they come Friday."

Does

Actually gets it done. Places the order, puts them in the drawer.

How to use it

1. Each partner fills out their own copy, on your own, without peeking.
2. For every task, write **M** (me), **P** (partner) or **B** (both) for who usually notices, plans and does it.
3. Sit down together, compare answers and tally your results on page 4.
4. Choose 3 tasks to hand off completely, from noticing all the way to doing.

Go in curious, not keeping score. The goal isn't to prove who does more. It's to make the invisible visible so you can be a team.

Single parent? Use "P" for your support people: a co-parent, family, friends or paid help. It's still eye-opening.

Who carries *what?*

Write in each box: M Me P Partner B Both of us

Kids, day to day

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Packing lunches, snacks and the diaper bag	☐	☐	☐
Clothes that fit (and swapping them out each season)	☐	☐	☐
Bath and bedtime routine	☐	☐	☐
Daycare or school forms, emails and sign-ups	☐	☐	☐
Homework, reading and practice	☐	☐	☐
Picture day, spirit days and special events	☐	☐	☐
Childcare, babysitters and backup plans	☐	☐	☐

Health

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Scheduling doctor, dentist and well checks	☐	☐	☐
Medications, refills and vitamins	☐	☐	☐
Who stays home on sick days	☐	☐	☐
Noticing when someone seems off or unwell	☐	☐	☐

Home

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Noticing what we're out of	☐	☐	☐
Meal planning	☐	☐	☐
Grocery shopping	☐	☐	☐
Cooking dinner	☐	☐	☐
Dishes and kitchen cleanup	☐	☐	☐
Laundry (washing, folding, putting away)	☐	☐	☐
Cleaning bathrooms and floors	☐	☐	☐
Household supplies (diapers, toilet paper, batteries)	☐	☐	☐
Repairs, maintenance and calling the plumber	☐	☐	☐
Trash, recycling and yard work	☐	☐	☐

Who carries *what?*

Write in each box: M Me P Partner B Both of us

Money & paperwork

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Paying bills	☐	☐	☐
Budget and tracking spending	☐	☐	☐
Insurance, taxes and important documents	☐	☐	☐
Car maintenance and registration	☐	☐	☐

Family & social life

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Birthday gifts, cards and party RSVPs	☐	☐	☐
Holiday plans, travel and traditions	☐	☐	☐
Keeping in touch with grandparents and family	☐	☐	☐
Kids' playdates and friendships	☐	☐	☐
Planning date nights or time together	☐	☐	☐

The invisible stuff

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
Noticing when a child is struggling emotionally	☐	☐	☐
Keeping track of everyone's schedules	☐	☐	☐
Remembering important dates	☐	☐	☐
Researching the "right" car seat, school, or sleep advice	☐	☐	☐
Worrying about it all at 2am	☐	☐	☐

Add your own

TASK	NOTICES	PLANS	DOES
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐
	☐	☐	☐

Tally it up *together*

Count how many times each letter shows up in each column.

COLUMN	M	P	B
Notices			
Plans			
Does			

What surprised you most?

Where did your answers not match? (That's where the invisible work lives.)

Which tasks feel the heaviest, even if they're small?

Our 3 hand-offs

Pick tasks to move to the other person completely: noticing, planning and doing. Then let them do it their way.

1. _____ Now owned by: _____

2. _____ Now owned by: _____

3. _____ Now owned by: _____

Feeling stretched thin? *You don't have to carry it all.*

Lotus Rose Counseling helps moms untangle overwhelm, let go of guilt and find the words to ask for what they need, in person and by telehealth. Reach out when you're ready.

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