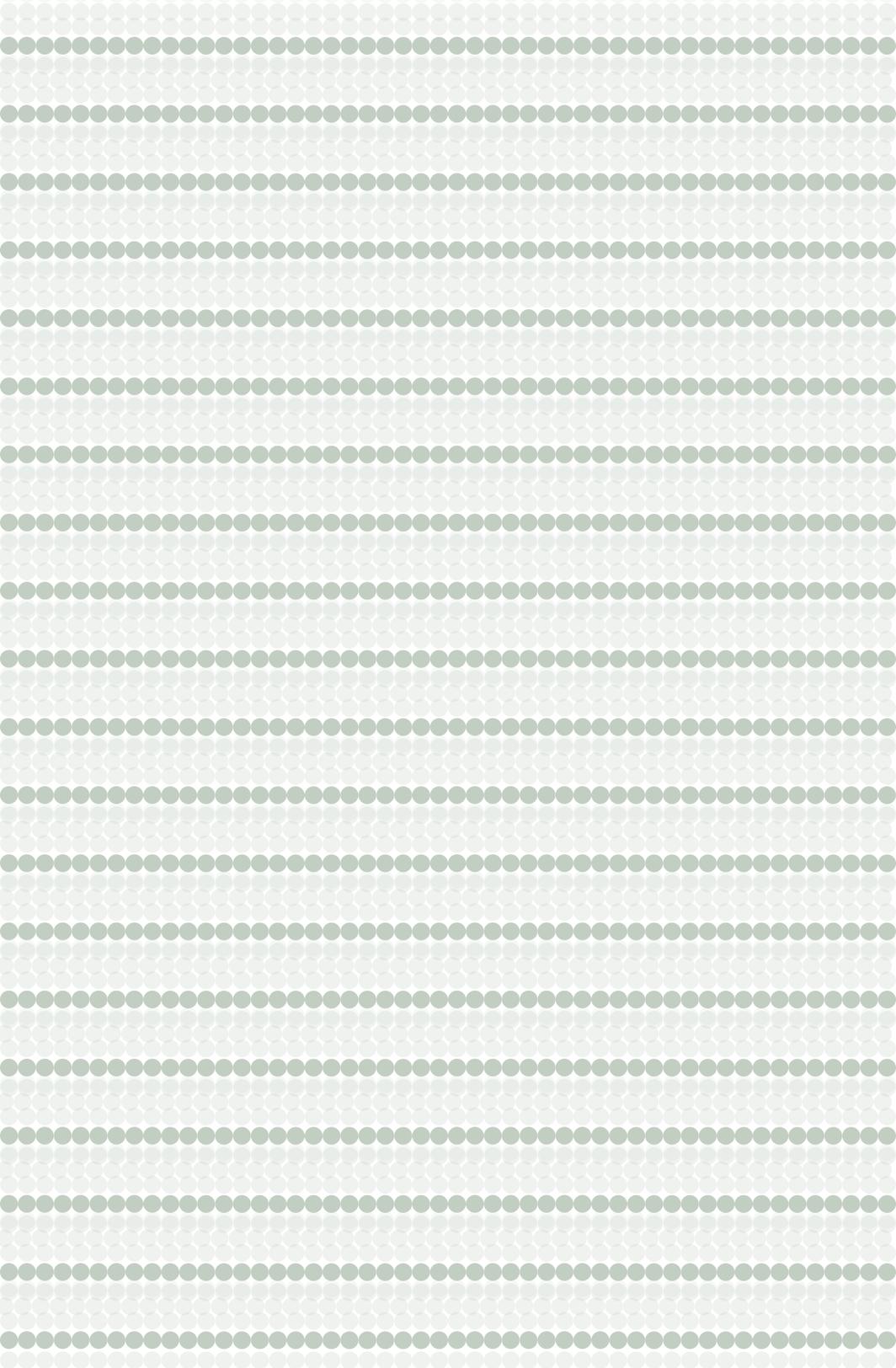


A close-up, warm photograph of a family of four. A woman with long brown hair is smiling broadly, looking down at a baby. A man with short dark hair is leaning in from the right, also smiling. A young girl with long brown hair is on the left, wearing a pink dress and hugging the woman. The baby is in the center, wearing a white dress with colorful patterns. They are all in a close embrace, suggesting a loving and supportive family environment.

Parenting in Partnership



7

Is it Possible to Parent in Partnership?

13

9 Ways Couples Can Build Equality in Partnership

19

Your Partnership as a Business

31

How to Run a Family Business Meeting

38

Your Partnership as a Loving Relationship with a
Strong Foundation

45

Become Exceptional Communicators

46

Working on the Relationship with Your Partner

50

Communication Skills for Parenting in Partnership

53

Your Partnership as a Sexual Relationship

58

Your Partnership as Co-Parents

59

Choosing a Parenting Style

70

Resources



Working with a partner while you parent can be extremely rewarding, but it can also be difficult to navigate. We're honored that you've chosen to join us for this program so we can be a resource and support to you along the way. We're ready to help you have a more joyful, peaceful parenting experience.

All children and all families are different. You'll notice references to male-female parenting partnerships throughout the manual for reasons of consistency and familiarity, but know that this information is for everyone. The suggestions we offer here apply to all kinds of families and center on building a strong

relationship foundation, creating common goals and a shared vision for your family, and dividing household duties in ways that work for your unique situation.

Remember to ask your child's pediatrician or behavioral health specialist for help regarding specific questions you have about your child's development, needs, and behavioral challenges as they arise. Equally important, remember to ask your own health providers about your and your partner's needs and challenges.

The information on our site and in this program is not intended to serve as medical advice and should never be used as a substitute for face-to-face, personalized advice from a medical professional.

We believe in you and your family.

You've got this, Mama!



Dr. Whitney

WHITNEY CASARES

M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P.

Author, *The New Baby Blueprint: Caring for You and Your Little One*

Host, The Modern Mommy Doc Podcast

Founder, Modern Mommy Doc



www.modernmommydoc.com



@modernmommydoc



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info@modernmommydoc.com





Is It Possible to Parent in Partnership?

Yes! It is possible to build equity and a true team-like mentality with our partners. But it is also admittedly difficult for many couples, particularly male-female couples. Why? Jancee Dunn, author of [How Not to Hate Your Husband After Kids](#), did an incredible amount of research for her book to find out why parenting in partnership is so tricky. Here are some of the key takeaways:

6 REALITIES FOR MODERN-DAY COUPLES

- Outside of the home and at the workplace, things have radically changed for women over the last fifty years. But at home? Not so much.
- There are still a lot of discrepancies between male and female partners when it comes to the mental and physical loads each partner takes on in the home. It will take time for the status quo to change.
- Our perceptions are sometimes different from those of our partner. A partner may feel he or she is contributing equally when in fact he or she isn't.
- Women take on an incredible amount of invisible labor for their households including things like:
 1. Kinwork: Think buying cards and birthday presents for extended family and planning holiday get-togethers
 2. Emotion Work: Checking in on the emotional well-being of others
 3. Daily Household Support Travel Time: Taking kids to lessons, playdates, etc. throughout the week

- Men often take on chores that have more of a leisure component to them like going to the grocery store or doing yard work, and they are less likely to take on chores that require a time table or aren't optional.
- Women are often household managers, meaning they make appointments, know which foods the kids like, etc. All of these responsibilities take mental energy.





9 Ways Couples Can Build Equality in Partnership



1. Don't aim for an even fifty-fifty split: Some areas of your partnership will not be evenly divided. Laundry may be ninety percent in your bucket, but cooking may only be ten percent. You may do thirty percent of the accounting and bill pay, but your partner may do seventy percent of the school pick-ups and drop-offs. Just be intentional about making sure you're not taking on seventy percent of everything, tipping the scales toward yourself for every to-do that keeps your life running.
2. Share your mental load: Your partner cannot read your mind, so it's important to talk regularly and openly about what you're doing and how overwhelmed (or not) you're feeling. The flip-side of this is that you need to be equally sensitive to what your partner is doing and feeling, too. Hence those regular (if boring) "business" check-ins.
3. Divide and conquer based on strengths and weaknesses — or based on practical time or financial considerations.

If you and your partner are both working but your income relies on seeing clients every hour while your partner's position is project-based, it makes sense that your partner is the default parent to stay home when your child is sick. If your partner makes gourmet meals in a flash and you struggle with pasta

and spaghetti sauce, that's an obvious place for you to divide and conquer.

If you're a new mom and you're breastfeeding, this is an even simpler delineation point. For the duration of your breastfeeding experience, you are the "Feeder in Chief." Your partner should be the "Soother in Chief." Let your partner have the responsibility of getting educated on the best soothing techniques out there and make him the go-to person when the baby is cranky. If you are not a new parent, figure out some other "in chief" responsibilities you can divide. My husband, for example, is the "Nail Cutter in Chief" and the "Get the Kids Ready for Bed in Chief."

4. Use a common language when talking about what needs to get done. Some couples find it useful to talk about what the family team needs to accomplish that week or day (and will even use sports-themed language to create positions for each family member). Others find it more helpful to speak in business jargon.

5. As Jancee Dunn talks about in *How Not to Hate Your Husband After Kids*, trade items and time of value.

You want to go on a coffee date with a friend? Great, trade it with your partner for a beer and a movie with the guys. When you approach meeting your needs like a business transaction, you're less likely to feel guilt (about taking care of yourself) or breed resentment (in your partner for those times when he picks up the slack). Just make sure you both give and receive freely. When your partner comes home from his activity, it's not fair to mope around the house or to give him the silent treatment. That kind of behavior is confusing to your partner.

If you both agree to the individual's activity ahead of time, don't hold it against him when he goes.

6. Use technology to your advantage, and try shared calendars, communication apps, and shareable online corkboards, trip planners, and lists.

Not into the gadgets? No problem. You can keep each other in the loop just as efficiently with low-tech features like lists in a notebook, magnetic whiteboards, and paper meal planners taped to the fridge. The means don't matter so long as the end — consistent and considerate information sharing — is achieved.

7. Sometimes you simply have to accept that, "Haters gonna hate." You and your partner are both legitimately feeling spread thin. So when you hand off a little of your mental load to your partner and he doesn't accept it with a smile and a, "Thanks, honey!" choose to ignore the eye rolls, small huffs, and pained expressions you might get instead.

8. Extend grace to yourself and to your partner as you make this complicated transition.

Being a modern couple is hard stuff. Respect the complexity, vulnerability, and individuality you and your partner each bring to the table. You will succeed and fail in different ways. Meet each up and down with love and compassion.

9. Take a giant step back: It's annoying to have someone looking over your shoulder, micromanaging your every move. (If you've ever had a super-controlling boss or even a nitpicky parent, you know the feeling.) When someone doesn't trust us or tries to manage us, it makes us feel resentful and irritated.

We sometimes even lose our organic interest in the topic and stop putting our best effort into it.

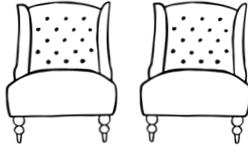
That's just what happens when we don't *allow* our partners to play an equal role in taking care of our children. We kind of sabotage any hope of true co-parenting. So be conscious about how to empower your other half more often as the parenting boss. That might mean actually leaving the house so he has the space to parent without your eagle eyes. It definitely will mean holding your tongue (or your own sighs or eye rolls or judgement) if he is not doing things exactly how you would do them.



YOUR TURN

Which of these nine strategies is the easiest for you and your partner?

Which is the most difficult?



Your Partnership as a Business

If you want the benefits of a team-approach to parenting, you'll need to, at least some of the time, operate like a business.

Hold Business Meetings Regularly

The best-run businesses meet regularly to sync up on upcoming projects, to problem solve around challenges, and to divide and conquer tasks. Commit to meeting with your partner on a regular basis so you can huddle together on important issues and practically parse out responsibilities and tasks.

Make Room for the Most Important Objectives in Your Family Business

If you want to create more space for your family's top priorities, you've got to do four things:

1. Decide that your family won't be defined by how busy you are or how much you accomplish in a day.

Understand that keeping ourselves and our families busy often keeps us from true enjoyment and/or distracts us from our underlying anxieties or conflicted feelings. It's a filler that, in the end, keeps us empty.

2. Clear your calendar of responsibilities, tasks, and activities that don't serve you and you don't *need* to do. Not sure where to make the cuts? Try completing a monthly audit of your time.

Monthly Calendar Activity

Use the calendar on the following page to write out activities you and your family have planned for the next month and coordinate the activity type with the following colors:

“Have-to’s”
IN RED
Obligatory or Stressful

“Want-to’s”
IN BLUE
Relaxing + Enjoyable

“Flexible”
IN GREEN
Unscheduled

Assess the balance of **RED** and **BLUE** (stressful and relaxing). Are there **RED** activities you need to take away from your family calendar? Are there **BLUE** activities you need to schedule in?

When you look at your available time, are you happy with the way you're spending it?

3. Delegate. Offload tasks that drive you and your partner crazy (or that you don't do well).

What are some responsibilities that someone else could be doing *even better* than you or your partner, and in a shorter amount of time? Is there yard work, window washing, or even something within your professional duties that's dragging you down and stealing precious time away from you? That's what you outsource — the stuff that drives you crazy and that someone else can do better, faster, or cheaper.

(Don't forget to think about cost in terms of time and peace of mind!)

MONTHLY CALENDAR ACTIVITY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday

WHAT WE OUTSOURCE:



I'm not good at cleaning houses. My housecleaner is. She's *faster* at it, she's better at it, and she doesn't look like a tornado hit her when she's done with it. That's why I pay her to take care of the number-one task I don't need or want to do.

Hiring a housecleaner has reduced our family's stress, and it forces us to organize the house the night before she arrives each week.

More importantly, hiring her has given us back our precious time, so we can spend it on more important things (like anything else). We also outsource a lot of meal prep during the week with ready-made (healthy) kits, school-lunch prep, and mowing the lawn.

Outsource to your kids. When you think about getting others on your team, don't forget about your kids. Even young kids can contribute to the household. Coaching little ones to help with tasks in an age-appropriate way builds your family community, teaches responsibility, and helps kids develop resilience.



Chores: A List by Age

WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE	AGE				
	2-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-18
Pick Up Toys	•	•	•	•	•
Dirty Clothes in Hamper	•	•	•	•	•
Make the Bed	•	•	•	•	•
Help Feed Pets	•	•	•	•	•
Dust		•	•	•	•
Help Fold Laundry		•	•	•	•
Wipe Up Spills		•	•	•	•
Prepare Basic Snacks		•	•	•	•
Put Away Groceries		•	•	•	•
Water Houseplants		•	•	•	•
Set and Clear Table		•	•	•	•
Vacuum			•	•	•
Match Clean Socks			•	•	•
Unload Indoor Trash Cans			•	•	•
Weed Garden			•	•	•
Load / Unload Dishwasher			•	•	•
Replace Toilet Paper Rolls			•	•	•
Rake Leaves			•	•	•
Dusting & Cleaning Surfaces				•	•
Clean Bathroom and Sinks				•	•
Walk Dogs				•	•
Make a Snack & a Simple Meal				•	•
Mow Lawn				•	•
Bring in Mail				•	•
Supervise Sibling's Chores					•
Mop Floors					•
Shop for Groceries Using a List					•
Laundry					•
Wash Windows					•
Prepare Food Independently					•
Trim Hedges					•
Yard or Garage Maintenance					•
Wash and Vacuum Car					•

YOUR TURN

What tasks and responsibilities could you outsource?

How could your children contribute to your household?

4. Streamline your processes for the things that you *need* to do but that aren't necessarily your faves.

There are times when having too much to do means you need to just do less. But the reality is that not everything can be brushed aside. Meals have to be made, clothes have to be washed, checkboxes have to be checked. Our daily tasks don't have to overwhelm us, though. Use these tricks to get it all done in the least amount of time and with the least amount of stress possible:

a. **Batch To-Dos:** Instead of spending all week thinking about what you need to get done, take a chunk of time to make a plan. Half an hour should be enough to organize your day or your week ahead. Then, set aside another hour or two to try to move through as much as possible on your list in one fell swoop. If you're still not done once the timer goes off, plan another two-hour chunk in a few days' time. Compartmentalizing your to-dos reduces your mental load, allowing you to be more mindful throughout the day. Think about setting aside a specific time each day or week to attend to recurring tasks. Maybe, for example, you can set aside Sundays from 7 to 8 p.m. for laundry and Wednesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. for meal planning. When you have a set time for every responsibility, it frees you from thinking about them when you're doing other things.

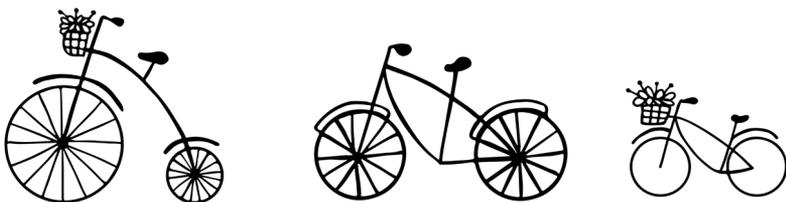
b. **Refuse to Equate Chores and Errands with Self-Care:** Ever taken a vacation day and spent every minute of it running errands for your family? Usually, by the time five o'clock rolls around, you feel tired and grumpy. Maybe you even wish you had just gone to work! At the very least, you feel disappointed and wistful about how you used your time. Errands are a necessary evil, but don't confuse them with quality moments alone or with your loved ones.

You can manage to get most of your checklist items crossed off without lifting a metaphorical finger. (Hint: the trick to that is in the next tip!)

c. Automate: Remembering that you are not the only person who can take care of your home, your kids, your bills, or your calendar is essential. The running list of tasks that fills your mind all day long — the appointments you need to make, the dry cleaning you need to take in, the groceries you need to buy — is unhealthy, and it steals away your ability to focus on the here and now. Once you've delegated, though, there's still another way to reduce the amount of time you spend keeping mental tallies of all of your to-dos: automate.

Thank goodness we live in a modern world where, for a small fee (or no fee at all), we can automate almost everything we do. Diapers, toys, school supplies, household items like paper towels, hand soap, and toilet paper — you can get them all online. Put your bills on autopay. Shop online for kids' clothes, focusing on quality basics that can be handed down child to child.

Find go-to sites for clothing and shoes (both for your kids and for yourself) so you're familiar with the sizing and fit. This is very budget-dependent but, especially if you have multiple kids of the same gender, buying quality over quantity makes a difference.



YOUR TURN

What non-outsourced tasks and responsibilities are the most mentally draining to you now?

When during the week could you set aside time to focus on those tasks and responsibilities? Put them on your calendar just like any other appointment.

How could you be more intentional about your free time or self-care? Do you tend to use free time to complete chores or errands?

What tasks and responsibilities could you automate to save time?





How to Run a Family Business Meeting

STEP 1: Using the worksheets on the following pages, make a list of all the household tasks, projects, and responsibilities you have as a family in the coming week and month. Include chores or tasks related to your home, upcoming travel, kids, extended family, and finances.

STEP 2: Decide which tasks can be delegated, freeing you and your partner from them completely.

STEP 3: Decide which tasks can be automated, freeing you and your partner from them completely.

STEP 4: Divide the remaining tasks and responsibilities between you and your partner based on objective factors like finances and time (as opposed to gender roles).

STEP 5: Promote mutual ownership of shared tasks when necessary by utilizing technology.

Use technology to your advantage with shared calendars or documents that are easy for both of you to access. If some responsibilities require input from both partners or ongoing communication throughout the week (like drumming up ideas for birthday gifts or planning a party), start text or email threads so you both stay in the loop.

*Action Step

Tasks we plan to delegate: To whom:

Tasks we plan to automate: Through:

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES LIST

Tasks this Week

Tasks this Month

TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES LIST | DIVIDE + CONQUER

Tasks this Week	Partner One	Partner Two	Shared
Tasks this Month			

YOUR TURN

When is the best time for you and your partner to schedule a family business meeting?

What benefits would you and your partner experience as a result of regular meetings?

What barriers might you face when scheduling or holding your meeting? How could you address those barriers?

What technology could you use to make your meetings more effective and/or to communicate in between meetings?



Your Partnership as a Loving Relationship with a Strong Foundation

If you want to parent in partnership, a strong foundation is critical. You've got to attend to the basics.

The two biggest deterrents to a healthy sexual relationship between parents are busyness and stress. Turn your attention first to freeing up some downtime and to bringing down your stress levels as individuals. (Mama, we've got your back on this one with [The Mama Reset Self Care Retreat \(at Home\)!](#))

TAKE TIME AWAY FROM YOUR KIDS TO BE TOGETHER

Getaways

When you become a parent, most of your waking hours away from your kids but with your partner are spent in businesslike discussions about schedules, shopping lists, and chores like we talked about in the last section. Those things are important. In fact, it's hard to run a household equitably without them. When you get away, you can choose to forget all that. You can get back to the two of you as a partnership but also to the two of you as individuals — the people who fell in love with each other in the first place.

Getting away is no easy feat. And if taking time to be with your partner feels a little frivolous, it will be the first thing to fall off of your priority list. So commit to it, and plan ahead.

Murphy's Law, after all, seems to particularly apply to good times. Do your best to avoid disaster with the following:

- **Avoid Overscheduling:** The best part about going away with your partner is going and being, not doing. Remember: the less planning you do and the less overscheduling you do, the better time you'll have.
- **Plan for an Extra Day:** Life and jobs limit almost all of us from luxurious, extended trips away. But when time and finances allow, try to squeeze out one extra day during a longer trip instead of taking two shorter trips throughout the year. Getting away, planning the details, arranging the childcare — these are all difficult to do. Once you invest the effort to get there, you might as well settle in and enjoy your time.
- **Make Sure the Vacation Night Fits Your Needs:** Some people are extroverts and like to travel with others or plan date nights with other couples. Others are introverts and like to keep it cozy and contained. Sometimes we need different things than our partners do when we vacation. So, when's time to relax, make it a point to have pretty direct discussions about what you're trying to get out of it all. Is this a friend's social adventure or a romantic getaway? Is there a way to incorporate both agendas or to plan both types of trips for different times? In order to make sure you both have your needs met, set your expectations in advance.
- **Clear Your Schedule (and Your Kids' Schedules) When You Return:** One thing you can plan on? Your kids will want your undivided attention when you return. And expect some big emotions to come along with the reunion. (For more help, you can check out our program on [Navigating Children's Emotions](#).) Think about planning some Special Time with each of your children when you return so that you can reconnect and they can regroup.

Date Nights

You may have heard other people tell you that you should have a date night every week to keep your relationship strong with your partner. In a perfect world, that would be lovely. In the real world, life gets busy or complicated. (Things like COVID-19 really put a wrench in the plans of most couples I know, how about you?) Most couples can barely squeeze in a moment to breathe, much less a date night. Remember, you don't need a formal date night to connect with your partner. You just need time together without the noise of your lives. Put down the checklists and talk about the things that really matter — where you are as a couple, what's going on with your kids (not their activities), and what's going on with you as individuals. That's when you'll connect best.

When you do have date nights, choose activities that allow you to make memories with your partner, even if planning dates that way means you go out less frequently. Identifying the activities that have always made you happiest as a couple, that get you back into a connected rhythm, will help you plan dates that continue to fan your relationship's flame.

Weeknights

Date nights matter but how about weeknights? In the early days of parenting, it can be impossible to set aside time during the day to relax *sans* your baby. Your child's feeding needs and your need to prioritize sleep above all else can replace spending unstructured hours with your partner on a consistent basis. As soon as humanly possible, though, think about ways you can shift your schedule to have daily downtime together, whether it

be setting an earlier bedtime for your kids or preserving a few moments at the beginning of the day to talk over coffee. Use weeknight “free time” as an opportunity to be individuals again, but in parallel and without the obligations of parenthood. It’s a good time to remember what it was like to be a couple in your own home before your kids “invaded” it. So what if you don’t always use those hours for deep discussions? Sometimes picking up toys off the playroom floor in peaceful silence or sharing funny stories from the day can be just as satisfying.



YOUR TURN

List four activities you and your partner each like to do individually.

PARTNER 1

PARTNER 2

List four experiential activities you and your partner could do together locally. (Think beyond dinner and a movie! Some options, for example, might be concerts or hikes.)

List four bigger experiential activities you and your partner could do together (like trips or events).

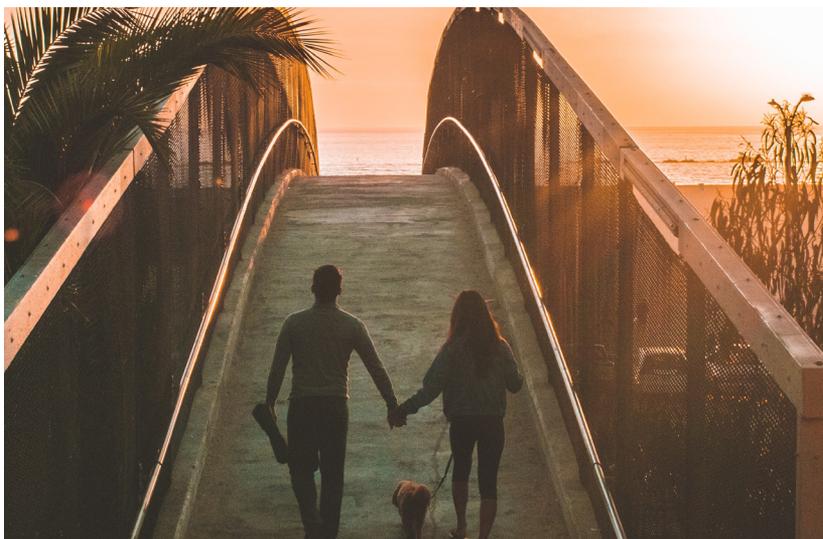
Who are some potential caregivers who can look after your children for a few days?

What are some potential barriers you might face?

Working on the Relationship with Your Partner

If you parent with a partner, taking care of that relationship can feel like one of the least important items on your to-do list, especially when you have multiple littles in your home.

I cannot stress enough the value of couples counseling, even for the strongest relationships. Getaways, date nights, and consistent time together is not enough. If you want to parent as a true team, you've also got to understand the family dynamics of each of your birth families, because they contribute to the way you interact with each other and with your kids. Figure out what the issues are individually that make it difficult to partner well. Learn from an expert how to really hear each other talk. Discover your deepest needs and your partner's, too.



Become Exceptional Communicators



WITH MAEGAN MEGGINSON, MA, LMFT

*Founder and Director,
The Center for Couples and Sex Therapy*

Couples with children under the age of five report more relationship distress and relationship dissatisfaction than any other parents on the spectrum. You're managing three important, distinct relationships:

1. The relationship you're having with yourself.

This is even more important than your relationship with your partner because, if you don't have anything to give to yourself and you don't know yourself, you won't have anything to give to your partner.

2. Your relationship with your partner as a co-parent.

3. Your relationship with your partner as spouses/life partners.

Learn more about The Center for Couples and Sex Therapy [here](#).

ASK YOURSELF THESE THREE QUESTIONS ABOUT EACH OF THESE RELATIONSHIPS

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOURSELF:

What's going well?

What needs to change?

What needs do you have that aren't being met?

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARTNER AS A CO-PARENT:

What's going well?

What needs to change?

What needs do you have that aren't being met?

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR PARTNER AS A SPOUSE OR LIFE PARTNER:

What's going well?

What needs to change?

What needs do you have that aren't being met?

Communication Skills for Parenting in Partnership

Try to communicate with Compassionate Assertiveness. This means talking in a way that lets you and your partner lower your guards. The goal is to reduce defensiveness and come from a place of curiosity while maintaining self-respect and boundaries.

HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH COMPASSIONATE ASSERTIVENESS:

- Be direct and firm, but be loving. Give a lot of kindness and compassion. Bring curiosity to your conversations whenever possible.
- Open the door to honest emotional conversations with phrases like, “The story I’m telling myself when you say X (or when you do Y) is _____. Is that true?”
- Avoid critical and shaming language. For every one negative encounter you have with your partner, it takes five positive interactions to get you back to a stable place.
- Make requests instead of demands. This builds trust, and when both you and your partner trust that you have each other's backs, you reduce the tension in your interactions. This, in turn, engenders a team approach to communication and parenting.

YOUR TURN

How effective is your communication with your partner?

Is it easy or difficult for you to communicate with Compassionate Assertiveness?



Your Partnership as a Sexual Relationship

Creating a good sexual relationship takes intention and work, but it is an important part of growing stronger together. And it all starts, Maegan says, with a critical conversation about how you'd like your post-kids sexual relationship to look. Use this framework to minimize the awkwardness and maximize your understanding of your partner-partner dynamic.

First, set a foundation of emotional safety, trust, and good communication. Agree to listen to each other without judgement and to focus on what you want moving forward, not what you've had (or missed) in the past.



Master the Five Dimensions/Gears of Touch. This shared language will help you jumpstart your conversation about your sexual relationship. The Five Dimensions are:

1

AFFECTIONATE TOUCH

This is completely nonsexual, PG-level touching. We're talking small kisses, pats on the back — the kind of touch you wouldn't be embarrassed about in front of your mother-in-law.

2

SENSUAL TOUCH

Touch that's about pleasure but not sexual, like a longer kiss or a luscious hug.

3

PLAYFUL TOUCH

The transition zone between sensual and erotic (flirty and fun).

4

EROTIC TOUCH

Touch intended to "turn up the heat" (a.k.a. foreplay).

5

ORGASM-FOCUSED ACTIVITY

Touch that's "end of the line" activity (like intercourse).

Most couples who are parents get stuck in their sexual relationships when they're ping-ponging between Gear One and Gear Five, with no exploration of all the pleasurable gears in between.

YOUR TURN

How are things going sexually for you personally?

How about your sexual relationship with your partner?

SIT WITH YOUR PARTNER AND TALK THROUGH EACH OF THE FIVE GEARS.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH WHERE YOU ARE AS A COUPLE ON EACH OF THESE GEARS?

AFFECTIONATE TOUCH



Why?

SENSUAL TOUCH



Why?

PLAYFUL TOUCH



Why?

EROTIC TOUCH

VERY SATISFIED

4

COULD BE BETTER

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why?

ORGASM-FOCUSED ACTIVITY

VERY SATISFIED

5

COULD BE BETTER

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Why?

Additional notes or thoughts:

*Action Step:

Schedule time for sex with your partner and keep your commitment to it. Even if you don't use the time to actually have sex, honor your decision to hold space at that time for some type of activity that brings you closer together.

Your Partnership as Co-Parents

Parenting in partnership isn't just about sharing to-do lists and building a strong foundation. Those pieces are essential, but so is developing a mutual vision and shared goals for your family. Understanding parenting styles and agreeing on a common approach to parenting will create more consistency and peace in your household. All parents are individuals with varying temperaments and parenting strengths and weaknesses — that's okay! It's most important that parents are on the same page when it comes to *general* style and family goals.



Choosing a Parenting Style



WITH AMY STOEBER, PH.D.

It's helpful to identify your default, go-to parenting style, and there are four main styles experts have identified: authoritative, permissive, authoritarian, and neglectful.

	HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR SELF-CONTROL	LOW EXPECTATIONS FOR SELF-CONTROL
HIGH SENSITIVITY	Authoritative: Respectful of Child's Opinions but Maintains Clear Boundaries	Permissive: Indulgent, Without Discipline
LOW SENSITIVITY	Authoritarian: Strict Disciplinarian	Neglectful: Emotionally Uninvolved and Doesn't Set Rules

Learn more about Dr. Amy [here](#).

Authoritative Parenting: An Evidence-Based Approach

- Parents who practice an authoritative parenting style with their children balance warmth and support with firm limits.
- Children raised with authoritative parenting are more likely to be resilient and less likely to engage in risky behaviors.
- Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg described this well-studied, effective approach in his book, *Building Resilience in Children and Teens*:

"This parent sets the tone and reasonable limits, expects good behavior, offers a lot of love, and encourages kids to make choices and be independent, but when it comes to the big issues, it's, "Do as I say."



Authoritative Parents Focus on Resilience

When you're an authoritative parent, you parent according to your long-range goals for your children. Dr. Ginsburg describes this as having essentially seven parenting goals that help children become, "the thirty-five-year-olds we want them to be." Authoritative parents, he says, strive to help their children develop what he calls "The Seven C's of Resilience."

YOUR TURN

Which parenting style do you most often use?

How about your partner or other caregivers who are responsible for your child?

How well is your current parenting style working for you and your child?

What support, information, or resources do you need to develop a more evidence-based, authoritative parenting style if you don't already parent this way?

1

COMPETENCE

WHAT IS IT?

The ability to effectively handle various situations; acquired through experience.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Allows a child to trust his or her own judgments to make responsible choices and face difficult situations.

2

CONFIDENCE

WHAT IS IT?

A solid belief in one's own abilities.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Allows a child to face and cope with life's challenges.

3

CONNECTION

WHAT IS IT?

Close ties to family, friends, school, and community.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Allows a child to avoid seeking destructive alternatives to attention.

4

CHARACTER

WHAT IS IT?

A fundamental sense of right and wrong that allows children to stick to their own values and demonstrate a caring attitude toward others.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Enjoins a sense of self-worth and confidence.

5

CONTRIBUTION

WHAT IS IT?

An understanding that, as an individual, you can make the world a better place.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Gives a child a sense of purpose and motivates him to take actions and make choices that will improve the world.

6

COPING

WHAT IS IT?

The capacity to face and handle life challenges with a wide array of strategies.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A child who learns to cope with stress is better prepared to overcome challenges.

7

CONTROL

WHAT IS IT?

An understanding that one can control the outcomes of one's own decisions.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

A child who sees control as an external force becomes passive and pessimistic. A child who sees control as an internal force becomes active and optimistic.

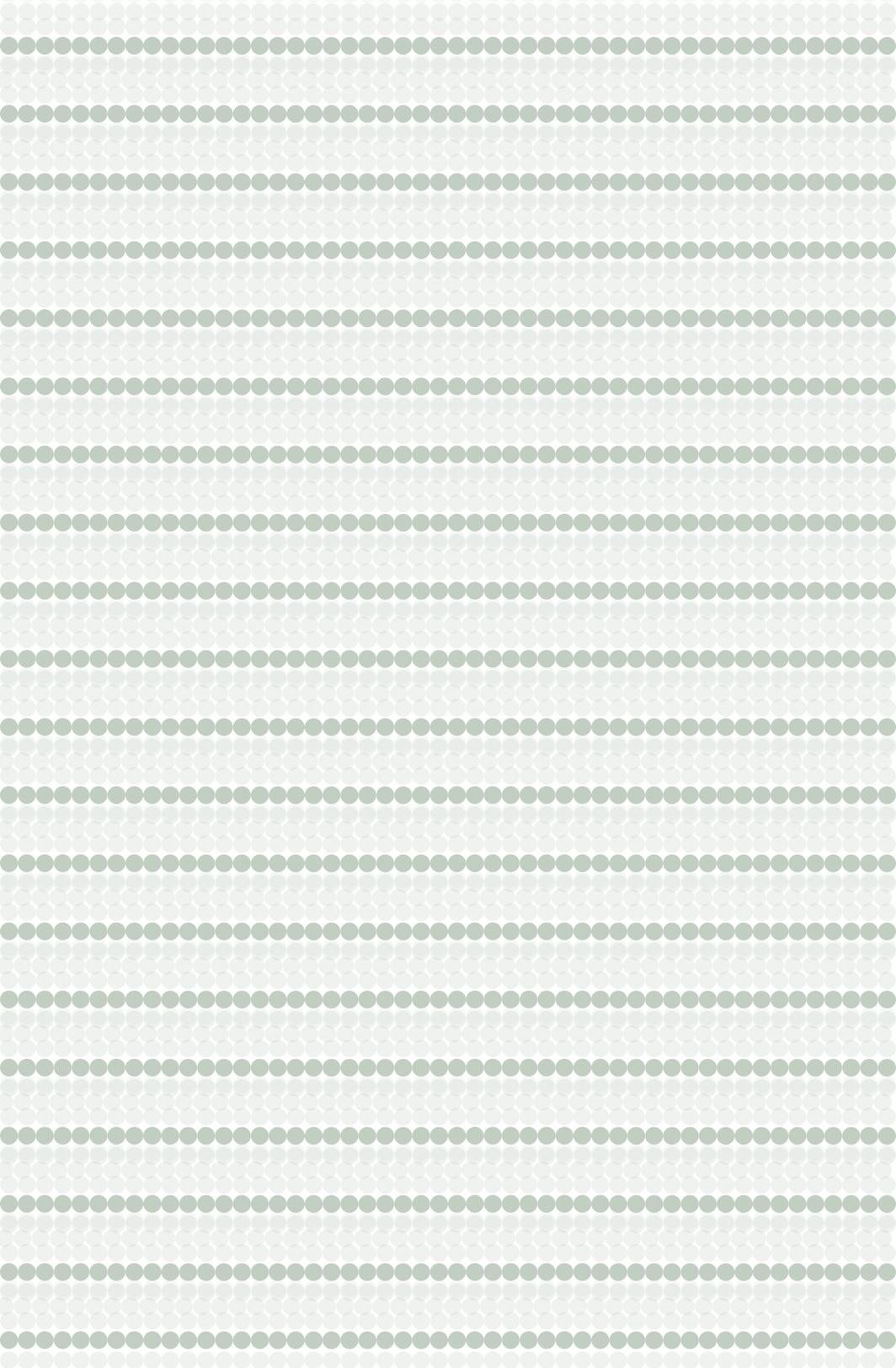
YOUR TURN

Which of the Seven C's is a natural strength for your child?

Which of the Seven C's could your child continue to work on?

What opportunities could you provide to strengthen your child's resilience in that area?

What barriers might keep you from focusing on that area of resilience for your child?





Doctor's Note

Thanks so much for joining us as we explored how to Parent in Partnership. We'd love to know what you thought of this program — [send us an email](#) to share your thoughts. Your feedback means a lot to us!

We're in your corner, Mama!



Dr. Whitney

WHITNEY CASARES

M.D., M.P.H., F.A.A.P.

Author, *The New Baby Blueprint: Caring for You and Your Little One*

Host, The Modern Mommy Doc Podcast

Founder, Modern Mommy Doc

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 info@modernmommydoc.com



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