



## Study Confirms Women Most Often Manage Their Households

Women are more likely than their partners to be managing their homes and children's schedules.

"Did I turn the dishwasher on? Does Liam have an outfit for school pictures on Friday? Will I have time to run to the grocery store? Are bananas on the list? What should I make for dinner? I need to book a dentist appointment for Sophie."

These are the types of thoughts that keep many women up at night (probably later than they intended). According to recent Modern Family Index research, women are **two times more likely** to be managing the household and **three times more likely** to be managing children's schedules than their partners. And it's draining. Wheels are forever turning and there's always planning to do. But we're often our own worst enemy, striving to do everything at once and holding ourselves to incredibly high standards.

How can we learn to share the invisible labour and mental load? Or let go of the tyranny of perfection that drives us? Here's a start:

### HAVE SELF-COMPASSION.

Think about how you would treat an overwhelmed friend. You'd probably encourage them to lighten the load and take care of themselves.

### LIVE IN THE PRESENT.

Sometimes it's hard to turn off those spinning wheels, but you're missing out on the now by always thinking ahead.

### MAKE YOUR OWN CHOICES.

What works best for you and your family might not be what's trending in your social circles. Don't get sucked into keeping up with other people's lives or fall into the FOMO (fear of missing out) trap.

It's easier said than done to give up the unattainable standard of perfection. After all, we're rewarded in life for excellence. Let Sheryl Sandberg inspire you. In her best-selling book "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead," she says she tries to embrace the motto "Done is better than perfect." Sandberg believes that "aiming for perfection causes frustration at best and paralysis at worst."

Consider letting your children take on a few more age-appropriate chores or asking your spouse to be responsible for dinner plans a couple nights a week. This will require letting them do it differently than you would – and being OK with that. After all, does it really matter if the T-shirts are colour coordinated? Or that you're having salmon instead of chicken?

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Think about the opportunity to outsource, too. (This is especially true for single-parent households with less support.) Think laundry, cleaning, gardening, cooking or meal prep and pet duties. Bonus: You're often helping other women who are looking for flexible roles. Consider creative options as well, like swapping childcare with a trusted neighbour.

While some of it is about letting go of expectations, it's also about prioritising what's most important. You can outsource laundry, but you can't send someone else to your child's university graduation (when they can of course). Author Nora Roberts may have said it best: "The key to juggling is to know that some of the balls you have in the air are made of plastic and some are made of glass."

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## NEXT STEPS

### To keep your mental health in check, remember:

- If you don't care for yourself, you can't be there for others.
  - Outsource the less meaningful tasks and show up for the big ones.
  - Find ways to relieve stress, like meditation or exercise, and prioritise it.
  - Work with your wealth manager for household budget planning.
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Sources: workingmother.com; hermoney.com; businessinsider.com; solutionsatwork.brighthorizons.com