

Are you a mother that is doing above your fair part around the house while your spouse gets an easy ride? Are you the parent they go to anytime your child has an issue, is ill, or needs to be taken to her extra-curricular activities? If any of this seems familiar, then you're not the only one. In spite of strides towards gender equality in present decades, the fact is still that the majority of women that are married to men still see themselves troubled with the biggest share of house chore and childcare.

Therefore, how can you prevent your spouse from deliberately becoming less involved and make your family home a fair and more cooperative place? This book summary will explain how to do that. Eve Rodsky a Lawyer and working mother, has gotten understandings from various American families, who disclose methods of making sure that your spouse does his own part of domestic duties. From packed lunches to trash collecting to moving house, you'll find out on how you can change from frustration to empowerment, and recover your most valuable resource: your time.

Chapter 1 - When we talk about looking after the family, a lot of mothers are doing beyond their fair part.

The birth of children can severely transform the pattern of marriage. Eve Rodsky and her husband had an equal relationship before they began a family. They divided the household tasks and both of them had time to concentrate on their high-flying professions. However, a few years later, after the birth of their two sons, Eve unexpectedly saw herself doing more work than her husband.

And she isn't the only person. As soon as couples give birth, a lot of mothers see their lives become busier and more stressful, while their husbands' lives remain the same.

Why does this occur? For beginners, mothers have a tendency to work what is called the second shift. This means the entire routine and free work mothers do for their families in addition to their usual jobs. Eve Rodsky's second shift entailed making her children's packed

lunches, washing the clothes, and grocery shopping. Whereas, the majority of the husbands have a tendency of abiding by just a single shift which is their day job.

Secondly, mothers regularly have more emotional labor than their male spouses. It is regularly the mother's duty to keep the family's relationships and handle people's feelings: to calling the in-laws on the phone, sending birthday cards to family members, and to comfort the children anytime they're sad. This care is regularly what being a great parent entails; however, it's wearing for women to be the person keeping everyone happy every time.

Women, who have a constant mental to-do list of their entire family-related tasks, carry an increased mental load. Eve Rodsky saw herself overwhelmed by the endless stream of small things she had to deliberate on as soon as she gives birth to children: Is the food in the fridge enough? Have I arranged for my son's gym bag? Is the babysitter aware of where to see everything? All these thoughts can contribute to mental overload, making moms nervous, tired, and more forgetful.

In spite of all the additional tasks mothers do for their families, a lot of their labors go overlooked by their spouses. This is the reason why chores that are usually done by women, such as house chores and knowing the children's schedules, are regularly known as invisible work. Your husband may not for once notice or appreciate that the bathroom is always supplied with toothpaste or that your children are putting on clean clothes every time.

In the following chapter, you'll understand that although your second shift might be invisible, the negative effects of this unfair condition are glaring

Chapter 2 – Women have to pay the price of the second shift with their marital happiness, well-being, and financial security.

After giving birth to children, Eve Rodsky saw herself battling to handle all the demands imposed on her. She was really occupied in what was needed to be done that she hardly thought of how the busyness and stress impacted her own well-being. When she started to

study the mental effect of this additional work on women, she was surprised by what she discovered: The second shift has a huge effect on almost every part of a mother's life.

To begin with, think of Eve's marriage. Mothers have a tendency to do more house chores and childcare than their male spouses, which regularly causes hatred and feeling isolated within the relationship. Current research supports this, and it revealed that women who do more invisible work than their husbands report lower levels of marital happiness.

Also, the second shift has a huge effect on a woman's mental health in the form of stress and tiredness. A current survey, seen on the Today show website, discovered that out of 7,000 American moms, most of them set their stress levels at 8.5 on a 10 point scale. Also, in another recent study that was published in the Brain and Behavior journal, it discovered that women are twice as likely to be diagnosed with anxiety disorders than men. This isn't shocking since almost 80% of American moms report being really busy taking care of their families to even care for themselves.

Finally, the extra workload at home has a negative influence on a woman's career. As a matter of fact, the pay difference between mothers and women that don't have children is more than the difference between women and men. However, why do women's careers begin to suffer as soon as they turn mothers? Unluckily, they are not suitable for a company's traditional concept of the perfect worker – someone who is free to concentrate virtually completely on her work. Burdened with house chores and childcare, mothers are regularly seen as less competent in the workplace.

This anti-mother sentiment turns to a huge financial cost. For each child she births, a woman pays a mother tax or a decrease in her salary between 5 and 10%. Also, she usually gets lesser salary increases, career-making opportunities, and promotions. This all contributes to a sad truth: When women turn to mothers, they take on a huge economic risk.

Chapter 3 - You'll never have a fair share at home till you and your spouse's time is considered equally.

One day, Eve Rodsky was only getting home after a specifically long day at the work. Hours before, her husband Seth had sent her a text that somebody had left garbage in their garden. When she got to the house, Eve was furious to see that the garbage was still in the garden. Obviously, Seth wanted her to throw the garbage, despite the fact he had been at home for hours. Why? Unfortunately, the answer is in opposing attitudes toward men's and women's time.

Eve believes that her husband didn't remove the garbage himself since it wasn't a good use of his time; however, he did think it a good use of hers. Hence, he cherished his time more highly.

Unluckily, this mindset is common both in men and women. Both men and women have a tendency to consider men's time as a finite, valuable resource, like a diamond. While women are considered more like sand – something infinite that can be paid to do things like garbage on the lawn.

You can test yourself and your spouse for this detrimental mindset. Just ask yourselves: Is the time your husband uses on a business call more valuable than the time you use to take your child to go see the doctor? Is the time you use on unpaid, unacknowledged work less valuable than the paid, extremely visible work your partner does?

The correct answer, actually, is no!

If you don't wish to be stuck doing over your fair share for the remaining of your life, you and your husband have to fairly divide household and childcare chores and respect each other's time equally. But firstly, you might have to defeat some harmful assumptions.

An example of such assumptions is that time is equivalent to money. A lot of men who are the key breadwinners of their family thinks that their time is more valuable since they're being paid more for it. Eve's husband is an example. He used to say before that his working hours were really precious to be disturbed, even for the demanding needs of his family.

For you to get a fairer deal in your home, you have to reframe this assumption. Time should just be measured in hours and not in dollars. Like your partner, you as well have a finite number of hours in your day. That signifies that it's as much your partner's duty to take your child to the doctor, even though it entails cutting a business call shortly.

Chapter 4 - Mothers develop their lives significantly when they refuse to let go of who they are.

Turning to a mother can totally transform a woman's identity. Ellen was an ardent interior designer who made her business from scratch. Then she began a family. Urged by her husband, she sold her company, left her design, and concentrated all her energy on her children and her family. Unluckily, in the process, she lost something as well: the passionate, ambitious woman she had once been.

Ellen isn't the only one. With the additional demands imposed on mothers, a lot of women let go of passions essential to who they are. Searching for the motives behind gender inequality in the home, Eve talked to hundreds of American women who had to forfeit their hobbies, interests, and passions. Why? Regularly, they simply felt really tired to do activities outside of their family life or careers. Even worse, some of these women felt they didn't have permission anymore, either from themselves or their husbands, to put their own welfares first.

Starved of their own hobbies and passions, a lot of mothers feel they are not seen as interesting by either other people or even themselves.

Once Ellen had swapped her passion for interior design for a single concentration on her family, she felt she didn't have anything to discuss with people about anymore. Anytime she saw her husband's colleagues at business events, she had nothing to add to the discussions except news about her children, her house, and her pets.

As Ellen's former self withdrew, her marriage did as well. Her husband, who at the start encouraged her to quit her job, now said that the woman he had fallen in love with had gone – and he asked for a divorce.

Remaining “interesting” isn't just the cause to continue pursuing your interests. If you need a fairer division of work between you and your partner, then it's important you continue doing the thing you loved before becoming a mother.

A key finding in Eve's interviews with parents is that men are more eager to carry the domestic load if doing that assists their partner pursue her passions. Men reported valuing and being

greatly proud of their partner's successes and personal interests. Therefore, if you need your partner to take some burden off your shoulders, you need to let yourself reconnect with the interests that shaped you before you were a mother.

Chapter 5 - Know who's doing a specific thing with the "Fair Play" card game.

A lot of women suspect they're doing beyond their fair share of domestic labor. And if they're like the average woman, they're possibly correct. However, wouldn't it be good if both you and your partner could find precisely the amount each of you does for your family? Eve Rodsky has invented a card game that will enable you to do that. Therefore, relax and be prepared to play "Fair Play" with your partner.

In order to play the game, have 100 playing cards. The cards will be arranged into five various categories which consist of the system of your domestic life.

Home is the first of these five categories. Cards in this category are the activities that happen in the home and regularly has to be done daily like, laundry, removing the garbage, writing shopping lists, and making your children's packed lunches.

The next one is the Out category. These chores happen outside of the home and consist of taking your children to and from school, taking them to extracurricular activities, or getting the family car checked.

Caregiving is the third category is Caregiving. It entails care work that usually falls to women. Cards in this category contain anything from toilet training your children to walking the family dog, from assisting with homework to reading your children a bedtime story.

The second to the last category is Magic. Magic-related tasks entail those that bring joy and comfort to others. Magic is different from Caregiving since it contains all of the extra things a parent does to make life special. This includes planning birthday celebrations to waking up in the middle of the night to pacify your child after a bad dream. The Magic category comprises

some of parenthood's greatest rewarding tasks; unfortunately, even these tasks regularly become invisible work.

Finally, certainly not least, is a Wild category. It includes those massive life events that, regardless of whether it's planned or not, still need someone to handle all the extra activities that comes with them. Tasks that are in this category comprise seismic events like moving house and dealing with loss. Obviously, Wild cards are a huge responsibility; therefore, in this category, it's perfectly okay to ask your partner for help, even though the card is yours.

After you've done the cards and you both know the game, start by dealing with each card to the person who's normally accountable for the task on it. Afterward, start with the game and play!

Chapter 6 - When dealing with the cards, take time to know which tasks are important and who is in charge.

You and your partner have eventually gotten to the point where you're ready to rearrange the cards and deal with the pack. This marks the start of the change you've been anticipating: working together as collaborators instead of score-keeping competitors.

With the stakes this high, it's essential to notice a few vital ground rules.

First of all, none of you should get any cards by default. Even though you've regularly been the one to prepare your child's packed lunches, that doesn't signify that you should continue to do this task. Neither should card be dealt on the basis of gender stereotypes – your partner shouldn't receive a "household maintenance" card since he's a man.

The sole cause you should be dealt with a specific card is if the duty on it really matters to you, but it doesn't matter at all to your partner. This doesn't signify that your partner doesn't do it since he assumes you should do it – it signifies he doesn't bother about if it gets done at all.

Let's say taking your children to church really matters to you, and not to your husband, then make a play for that card!

However, it's also essential to look out for cards that don't have any actual value for both of you.

Let's say that Sara doesn't like going for children's birthday parties with her young son. When Sara said to her husband that she declined to attend one ever again, she thought he would be angry. Surprisingly, he agreed with her! He'd also hated them as well, and believed that their son didn't particularly like them as well. It was an epiphany; Sara had just been taking her son to these parties since she felt she should, not because it was an activity that her family really loved.

No cards should be dealt with only because you think that your family should be doing what's written on it. If it's not important to you and your partner, remove it from the deck. Know that, you don't need to do anything!

After their conversation, Sara and her husband decided on the game-changing step of removing children's birthday parties from their deck completely, except it was the party of a close friend or family member. The outcome? They both had their weekends back.

Chapter 7 - Play fair by abiding by the three-step system of conceiving, planning, and executing a task.

In one of the interviews of Eve Rodsky's, a father proudly described that he made all the evening meals for his family. However, when he was asked how he got the time to plan a weekly dinner menu and shop for ingredients, he stared at Eve. He said "No, my wife does all that. My duty is to cook."

Just like a lot of people Eve talked to, this father didn't understand the difference between conceiving, planning, and executing, or CPE: the three parts of all household tasks.

The father was executing his job – cooking –however; he didn't take charge of conceiving it. That was simply done by his wife, by carefully putting together meal plans in advance. Also, she was planning the chore by doing grocery shopping and ensuring that everything was set for its execution.

Eventually, her husband was getting all the praise for an activity that she was possibly adding more to than he was!

One essential rule of “Fair Play” is that the three components of CPE should never be divided; doing that can immediately cause disaster.

Let’s take a look at one mom, who understood at the last minute that she had an obligation that clashed with taking her daughter Lucy, to her friend’s birthday party. Although the “children’s birthday parties” card was Mom’s duty, she told her husband to do it.

She believed it was really direct; however, hours after she saw missed calls on her phone. Her husband hadn’t known the venue of the party and didn’t have the host’s phone number. Lucy eventually missed the party completely.

CPE separation was to blame. Mom had done the conceiving and planning – she was aware of where the party was taking place and found out where Lucy had to be taken to. However, she hadn’t shared this with her husband, assuming he only had to execute the task by taking Lucy to the party. Without his participation in the whole CPE, things crumbled.

The Mom should have re-deal the entire “children’s birthday parties” card earlier in the week when she should have understood that she couldn’t do the whole CPE. By doing that, her husband could have planned ahead and gotten the correct information. No family drama required.

This mom didn’t ignore her duties intentionally. Likewise, the majority of men don’t mean to ignore their partner’s invisible work. However, having good intentions is pointless. What is important is that your family has a system set that makes sure that all labor is visible, and that’s what “Fair Play” does.

Fair Play: A Game-Changing Solution for When You Have Too Much to Do (And More Life to Live) by Eve Rodsky Book Review

The typical modern woman does beyond her fair share of domestic labor, and unfortunately, this inequality is ruining her career, her mental health, and her marriage. Fortunately, it doesn't need to be like this. You can get closer to an equitable sharing of household chores by first knowing who is doing what, and then making use of Eve Rodsky's "Fair Play" card game to re-allocate chores in a considerate, more collaborative manner.

Don't take revenge, rather, talk.

It can be really annoying when your partner doesn't finish one of the task cards he or she has been given. And when you're feeling annoyed at your partner's supposed laziness, it can be tempting to retaliate and take revenge. You might reason, "If you're not going to unpack the dishwasher, I'm not going to remove the garbage!" However, this is a counterproductive approach. Rather, call your partner back to the table, have an adult discussion on what went wrong, and redeal the cards if needed.

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