

Identifying and Discussing Family Responsibilities

Chapter three of *A Wife's Secret to Happiness* shares two conflicting wifetypes in our habits as married women—dual or dance. Now, I don't know anyone who dances at the thought of chores and family responsibilities. In fact, I think the constant struggle of the duel is more familiar to many of us. But things can get better from here!





Use the following worksheets to think through each of your unique skills, shortcomings, and preferences as they apply to household or family responsibilities. Once armed with this information, use it to consider your current tasks in the home and reevaluate if that's the best use of your combined resources.

I've filled out the worksheet for a hypothetical couple as an example.

Skills / Strengths	
Name: <i>Steve</i>	Name: <i>Joanne</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Naturally tidy</i>• <i>Singular focus</i>• <i>Better at fixing mechanical things</i>• <i>Technical</i>• <i>Math</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Good at organizing</i>• <i>Time management</i>• <i>Artistic things</i>• <i>Good at meeting deadlines</i>• <i>Personable</i>• <i>Communication & research</i>



Shortcomings / Weaknesses	
Name: <i>Steve</i>	Name: <i>Joanne</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Picky about certain aspects of housework.</i><i>Forgets deadlines</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Doesn't always pay attention to housekeeping details when doing chores</i>

Likes / Dislikes			
Name: <i>Steve</i>		Name: <i>Joanne</i>	
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>minimalist décor</i><i>tidy</i><i>hard things made easy</i><i>spontaneity</i><i>saving all chores until one day each week</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>planning schedules</i><i>organizing things that don't fit</i><i>inconsistency</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>problem solving</i><i>organizing</i><i>peace and quiet</i><i>planning ahead</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>having a whole day overrun with chores</i><i>dealing with money</i>



Current Tasks	
Name: <i>Steve</i>	Name: <i>Joanne</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Anything with cars, lawn care, or household maintenance</i>• <i>Cleaning bathrooms</i>• <i>Cleaning kitchen & dishes</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Organizing childcare & carpool</i>• <i>Decorating the house</i>• <i>Laundry</i>• <i>Cleaning floors</i>• <i>Paying Bills</i>
Things We Handle Together (Or Switch Off Handling)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Setting a budget</i>• <i>Decisions about childcare</i>• <i>Grocery shopping</i>	

Detailed Task Evaluation. (You probably won't need to fill this table out for each household responsibility you carry, but doing it at least once will help you think through the process whenever helpful in the future.)

Task	<i>Paying Bills</i>
Person Responsible	<i>Joanne</i>
Evaluation	<i>Bills are paid on time, but it stresses Joanne out. She doesn't like having to deal with money. She paid her own bills as a single woman but doesn't enjoy it and isn't super confident in her math skills.</i>

Areas for Improvement	<i>Steve likes math. Perhaps this is a good responsibility to move to him.</i>
How to implement Improvements	<i>Joanne is concerned that Steve will miss deadlines and pay bills late. They'll implement automatic bill pay to avoid this issue, and Steve will take over this area of their finances.</i>
Desired Result	<i>Joanne won't have to do a task she doesn't enjoy. Steve will exercise a strength (math) and bills will still be paid on time. Joanne will learn to trust Steve to follow through in this area.</i>
Time period for Reevaluation	<i>Two months until we evaluate to see if the process is working and make changes.</i>

Note: If the two-month time period comes around and Joanne finds out that a bill was late, this does not give her the right to assume control and kick Steve off the project. The evaluation period is for *evaluation*. Together, Steve and Joanne can make adjustments in the best interest of their family.





Now it's your turn.



Skills / Strengths	
Name: _____	Name: _____

Shortcomings / Weaknesses	
Name: _____	Name: _____



Likes / Dislikes			
Name: _____		Name: _____	
			

Current Tasks	
Name: _____	Name: _____



Things We Handle Together (Or Switch Off Handling)	

Detailed Task Evaluation. (You probably won't need to fill this table out for each household responsibility you carry, but doing it at least once will help you think through the process whenever helpful in the future.)

Task	
Person Responsible	
Evaluation	
Areas for Improvement	



How to implement Improvements	
Desired Result	
Time Period for Reevaluation	