

## Take a Load Off

3/24/2020

We're so glad you're back! We hope you and your family are safe and healthy. It's hard to keep up with (let alone adjust to) all the changes happening in our communities, cities and across our country. Sarah and I have committed to creating content that will be helpful to you. We will do everything we can to continue to support you and bring you relevant content each week, especially during this global health crisis. Sarah created an amazing handout for families with information about COVID-19 that you may find helpful when speaking with your kids. [Click here to take a look.](#)

Over the last two weeks we tackled something that may have hit close to home – sharing the responsibility of raising your children and truly co-parenting, whether you and your co-parent live in the same home or not. We hope you took some time to reflect on how you feel about truly sharing the decision-making with your parenting partner. Working together is especially important as your kids are out of school and require more planning and cooperation in order to care for them.

This week, we're lightening things up, literally and figuratively. We're talking about how to take a load off your shoulders by outsourcing. Yep, that's right. You don't have to do everything yourself. There are services that exist solely to make our lives more convenient.

What?!!! Give up MORE of my roles?!!!! What are you doing to me?!!!!

Whew, maybe this topic isn't as light as I thought. Oh well, we already dove in; we might as well keep going. Stay with me.

I hear from parents all the time about how exhausted they are and how much difficulty they have juggling all the things they have to do on a daily basis. This has become even more of an issue now that the kids are at home and you may also be working from home due to COVID-19 restrictions. Your everyday juggling act has now become the full circus!



The good news is if you've been following us for a while, you've already started working on the skills you need to manage these new challenges. We've talked a lot about prioritizing and letting some things go. That just became a critical skill.

Over the coming weeks, you're going to have to put all your prioritizing skills to the test. You're also going to get really great at practicing disappointing someone every day. If you need a refresher on these ideas, check out our blog posts from February 4 & February 18, 2020.

Right now, you have the added responsibility of being a teacher or learning coach for your kids. This is not a role you signed up for, but it's one that has been assigned to you. If your kids are in middle or high school, they may be able to be more self-directed. So, you may have more uninterrupted time for your own work. But, kids in daycare or elementary school need a lot more supervision and guidance throughout the day, which makes it difficult to take care of your own tasks without backup and a solid plan.

So, what do you do? The first step is figuring out what daily tasks are the most important, which can be done later, and which can be left off the list entirely. Remember prioritizing?

The second is figuring out how to outsource tasks that need to be done, but that can be done by someone else. When I talk with parents about all of their daily responsibilities, most realize that they are spending a great deal of time on things that someone else could be doing (or that don't actually need to be done at all). That is even more true right now.

You might be hesitant to even think about outsourcing right now. I understand; it's good to be cautious. So, some of these suggestions may not work today. That's okay. File them away for the time when you're able to get back to your normal routine. However, outsourcing might mean sharing more daily tasks with your spouse/partner or other adults living in the home. It might involve having your kids help out more with daily chores. Outsourcing doesn't always mean that you have to look outside your home for help. Outsourcing, in whatever way you do it, is just a way of recognizing that you are human and can't do everything yourself.

Regardless of whether you are hesitant to outsource right now or if you're ready to dive right in, there's one important point to remember:

***It's okay to ask for help.***

So, let's get practical. I'm sure you already have some things you outsource. Do you ever ask someone take your kids to or from an activity (carpool anyone)? Do you ever order food delivered to your home? Have you ever hired someone to do your taxes? Have you ever taken your clothes to a dry cleaner? All of these are ways of outsourcing. It's just having someone else do a task so that you can free up your time to do what really matters to you.

Here are some other examples of ways you might outsource, now or in the future:

- Instead of fighting through the crowds at the supermarket, you can have your groceries delivered to your home.
- At some stores, you can request in-store or curbside pickup, both of which minimize person-to-person contact.



- If you want to order food from restaurants, there are many food delivery services. (At this time, many services give you the option of having your food left in a designated place, so you don't even have to have contact with the delivery driver.)
- If you and your spouse/partner need some time together (or if you just need some time alone), you can hire a babysitter or ask a family member or trusted friend to watch your kids for a few hours.

To help you generate some other outsourcing ideas, we created a handy free printable, My Outsourcing Cheat Sheet, with ideas to help you take some of the load off your shoulders. Check it out and see what you find to make your life easier during these trying times.

Again, we hope you that you and your family are making the choices you need to in order to stay healthy. Keep supporting one another and connect with your loved ones. See you next week!