

Summary

The interviewee is a husband and father in his early sixties. He does some parts in the household like cooking, grocery shopping and finances, and also does the planning for them. This division developed naturally over the years, but since he's shifted to working full-time he doesn't have enough time or energy to do much else, where in the past he was more involved in doing laundry or cleaning. The communication could be better, but he doesn't think it would solve much because he just doesn't have enough time. To him, some household tasks have lower priority than work. He is not convinced that tracking mental load would be useful.

General Information

Do you work or study?

I'm working.

Living situation

How many people do you live with?

With 1-2 others.

How long have you been in this living situation?

In exactly this one? Almost 20 years.

What is your relationship with these people? (Family, shared apartment, colleagues, friends, partners)

Family; my wife and daughter.

How would you rate yourself on a scale from 1 (completely spontaneous) to 10 (everything planned)?

Somewhere in the middle I'd say, maybe 4?

Cohabitation/Communication

How would you describe your cohabitation?

Well, what can I say, it's working more or less.

How would you describe the current communication in your living situation?

Difficult maybe? It could be better, there are some disputes from time to time.

Are expectations clearly communicated?

Maybe not always well enough, at least from my side.

Are there any wishes you have regarding your communication?

Well, I think this topic is quite hard in general because you can't only look at the living situation. I have my own business that's very demanding and occupies a large amount of my

time and energy. And that's something you can't just solve with communication. I don't think that it would just magically solve everything.

How do you handle shared spaces and tasks in your living situation?

Well, a lot just gradually turned out like that, like who does what part. And generally everyone also takes on the planning and things like that for their respective parts. But apart from that it's not very strictly planned out or anything like that.

Household Work/Tasks

How is the household work divided?

We had discussed it in the past and roughly divided it up between us. Well, actually employment and household. We've kept that up for a long time, but it has shifted a bit. Although I believe that I still take on quite a bit in the household. So when I'm home, I'm usually the one who cooks and I do the grocery shopping, admin work, holiday planning, taxes... Apart from that I've been doing less laundry and cleaning than in the past, when I hadn't worked full-time yet. When only working 80% it's easier because you have like one whole day that you can do things for the household.

Do you think the distribution of tasks is fair? Do others see it that way?

Well, more or less. We used to both only work part-time and shared household tasks and childcare more equally but now I work much more, so I think it's fair if my wife does more in the household. But I could also imagine that my wife sees this differently.

How often do you notice things in the household that still need to be done?

Well, I might notice things, but the question is if it's easily doable, or if not, if it really is necessary. There are things that you just have to get done and others that aren't quite that important. But how often is hard to quantify.

Personally (e.g., estimates, product opinions, etc.)

Are there things in the household or living situation that cause you stress?

Well maybe that my business keeps me almost fully occupied and I hardly have any resources left for any extra chores outside cooking, shopping and finances. I just never have enough time to do everything.

Can you think of other reasons for mental load?

For me that's mainly my business life where everything sort of depends solely on me. Because of that it often has priority. If my business isn't running well, I won't have an income. That would affect the whole family too. Apart from that, I guess that there's always something that should get done, but it's just not possible to do all of it.

Can you estimate how large your share of the household planning is?

Well we don't really have much planning to do for our everyday life. For planning I guess there is grocery shopping, meal planning. I do a lot of that. But apart from that.... I'm not

sure what else we're planning. So maybe 50%-60%, but it's hard to tell what belongs to planning as a whole.

Can you estimate how large your housemates' share is?

Well concretely, I'd say my wife organises cards and gifts. Right now I can't really think of anything else that belongs to planning specifically, but it's not like I'm the only one who's planning things.

Product

Have you ever tried to track your work in household planning?

No

Do you think tracking mental load would be helpful?

No, you just do what needs to get done, there's no point tracking it, in my opinion. So you'd do it so you could always check exactly who did what?

What aspects would you find interesting to see or share with others?

So like "here's everything I do" or something like that? I've got to say that I only find that of limited use. Especially if you only do it over a short timespan and then it might not be tax season or something like that. So you'd have to do it for like years or something.

Are there things that are often underestimated in task distribution?

Well, I don't think I have a good overview of the whole situation.