

GUIDE

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# To lighten your mental load



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# Instructions

## Principle:

The "brain dump" technique consists of freeing your mind by writing down all thoughts, tasks, responsibilities, and concerns that come to mind. This helps to reduce mental load by visualizing what is weighing on you and identifying elements that can be delegated or better managed.

## Duration of the exercise:

At least 30 minutes

## Materials needed:

- A large piece of cardboard or a white sheet of paper
- Markers in different colors
- Sticky notes or small colored pieces of paper
- If doing this exercise with others, assign a specific sticky note color to each person





# Step 1 : Brain dump

Duration: 10 minutes minimum

## Preparation :

Set up in a quiet space with the board clearly visible. If doing this as a family, explain the concept to all members, emphasizing the importance of sharing the mental load.

### 1. Writing down tasks:

Distribute sticky notes in different colors to each family member. Encourage everyone to write down all the tasks, responsibilities, and concerns on their minds. The goal is to be thorough and specific—no self-censorship! If anyone is unsure of what to write, examples are provided at the end of the document.

- Household chores
- Grocery shopping
- Medical appointments
- School commitments
- Personal projects



### 2. Sorting & Organizing:

Arrange sticky notes into categories (e.g., household tasks, commitments, concerns). If working alone, stick your notes under the appropriate categories. If working in a group, invite each person to attach their sticky notes to the shared board.

# Step 2: Identifying responsibilities

Duration: 10 minutes minimum

## 1. Individual reflection or group discussion:

Gather around the board and review each sticky note. Allow each person to express how they feel about each task, particularly the ones they find most burdensome.

### IF ALONE

Identify tasks that can be reduced or simplified. Write down actions you could delegate (e.g., housekeeper) or tips to better manage certain responsibilities.

### AS A COUPLE

Discuss the sticky notes together, expressing what feels most burdensome. Encourage open communication to identify tasks that can be shared. Write down each person's responsibilities.

### WITH CHILDREN

Involve them in the process by assigning them simple tasks they can handle (e.g., cleaning their room, helping with groceries, mowing the lawn).

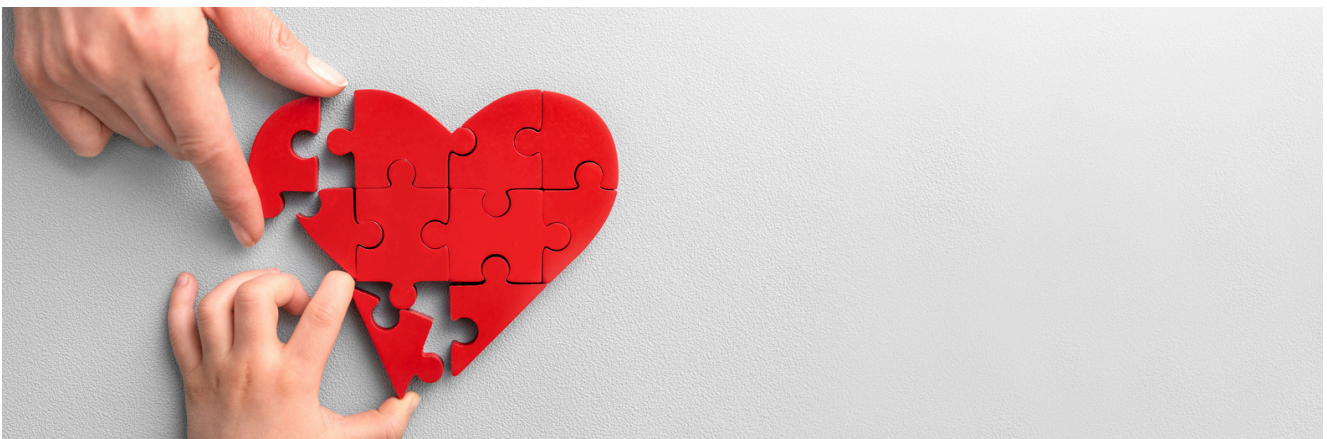
## 2. Task distribution:

For each task or concern, discuss who could take responsibility for it.

Ask questions such as:

- Is this task necessary? Does it add value to our life?
- Who has the time or energy to handle this task?
- How can we fairly distribute responsibilities?

Write the initials of the responsible person on each sticky note.





# Step 3: Action plan

Duration: 10 minutes minimum

## 1. Creating a schedule:

Once responsibilities are assigned, create a task calendar that everyone can access. This can be a magnetic board on the fridge, a paper chart, or a task management app.

### IF ALONE

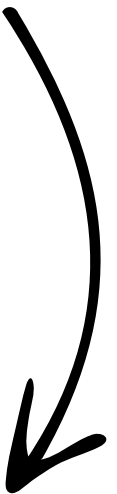
Develop a task management plan, create weekly routines, and set aside time for relaxation.

### AS A COUPLE

Establish a task-sharing calendar and commit to checking in weekly on what needs improvement.

### WITH CHILDREN

Create a family responsibility chart with visual elements to make task distribution more engaging. Set up weekly check-ins to assess how everyone feels about their responsibilities.



## 2. Commitment:

Each participant verbally commits to their assigned tasks. You can set up weekly check-ins to discuss what is working and what needs to be adjusted.

# Examples of tasks by category

Household maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cleaning rooms (living room, kitchen, bedrooms, bathroom)</li><li>• Washing windows</li><li>• Dusting</li><li>• Vacuuming and sweeping</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Laundry management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sorting, washing, and drying clothes</li><li>• Ironing</li><li>• Putting away clean laundry</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Cooking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meal preparation (menu planning, shopping, cooking)</li><li>• Managing leftovers and food storage</li><li>• Cleaning the kitchen after meals</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Shopping & supply management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grocery shopping</li><li>• Buying household products</li><li>• Checking inventory (expiration dates, missing items)</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Outdoor maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mowing the lawn</li><li>• Shoveling snow</li><li>• Gardening</li><li>• Cleaning windows</li><li>• Tidying outdoor spaces (yard, gutters, garbage bins)</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Paid work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparing and attending meetings</li><li>• Managing emails and professional correspondence</li><li>• Completing work projects and tasks</li><li>• Other</li></ul>
Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing education and learning</li><li>• Attending conferences or workshops</li><li>• Other</li></ul>

Financial management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating and following a household budget</li> <li>• Meeting with a financial advisor</li> <li>• Paying bills</li> <li>• Managing investments and savings</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling doctor or dentist appointments</li> <li>• Attending medical consultations</li> <li>• Managing prescriptions</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Social & recreational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning outings with friends</li> <li>• Attending family events (birthdays, weddings)</li> <li>• Registering for personal hobbies and activities</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Well-being management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-care (reading, exercising, meditation)</li> <li>• Balancing work and personal life</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Éducation des enfants :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring schoolwork and progress</li> <li>• Attending parent-teacher meetings</li> <li>• Encouraging extracurricular activities (sports, arts)</li> <li>• Organizing and managing transportation</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Family planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizing vacations or family outings</li> <li>• Managing family celebrations (Christmas, birthdays)</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>
Personal goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Setting career or personal growth goals</li> <li>• Planning long-term projects (buying a home, children's education)</li> <li>• Engaging in volunteer work or community involvement</li> <li>• Other</li> </ul>

This list can vary based on personal circumstances and priorities. It provides an overview of the many responsibilities that can be shared to help lighten the mental load.