

the modern domestic woman



Unpacking the Invisible Load of Motherhood

Motherhood is a beautiful, life-changing journey, but many moms find themselves feeling lost in the process. The invisible load of parenting—physical, mental, and emotional—can take a toll, leaving little room for self-care or personal growth.

This workbook is designed to help you reconnect with yourself, reclaim your identity, and build a support system that empowers you.

Let's get started!

Understanding the Invisible Load of Motherhood

Society and cultural expectations have long placed mothers in the role of the default parent—the one responsible for not only physical caregiving but also emotional labor and household management. This expectation can make it difficult to set boundaries or ask for help, leading to an unfair distribution of responsibilities.

When one person shoulders the majority of household and parenting duties, it creates an imbalance that can lead to resentment, frustration, and burnout. Recognizing this dynamic is the first step in creating a more equitable balance at home.



Why Moms Are the Default Parent and Caretaker of the Home

Society and cultural expectations have long placed mothers in the role of the default parent—the one responsible for not only physical caregiving but also emotional labor and household management.




This expectation can make it difficult to set boundaries or ask for help, leading to an unfair distribution of responsibilities. When one person shoulders the majority of household and parenting duties, it creates an imbalance that can lead to resentment, frustration, and burnout.

Recognizing this dynamic is the first step in creating a more equitable balance at home.

Talking with Your Partner About Managing the Load




Open and honest communication with your partner is essential for redistributing responsibilities and alleviating the burden you carry. Many partners may not fully understand the extent of the invisible load, making it necessary to articulate what you need clearly and assertively.

Conversation Starters:

-  “I’ve been feeling overwhelmed, and I need us to work together to balance the responsibilities at home.”
-  “I need your help with [specific task]. It would mean a lot if you could take this on consistently.”
-  “Can we set up a plan where we each take turns with bedtime/meal prep/laundry so it doesn’t all fall on me?”

If They Push Back...

Not all partners will immediately understand the need for change, and some may resist adjusting their role in household management. If you receive resistance:

-  Reframe the discussion: “This isn’t about blame; it’s about making sure both of us feel supported.”
-  Set boundaries: “I can’t continue to do everything alone. If we can’t share these responsibilities, I will need to step back from certain tasks.”
-  Seek outside support: Encourage professional guidance if needed.



Inviting Others to Help: Creating Your Village

Motherhood was never meant to be a solo journey, yet modern life often isolates mothers, leaving them without the support systems they need. Creating your village means actively seeking out people who can support you—whether it's family, friends, neighbors, or a community of fellow moms.

How to Build Your Support System:

- Start small by asking family or friends for help with specific tasks.
- Find a local or online mom group where you can share experiences and advice.
- Let go of the guilt that comes with asking for help—accepting support is a sign of strength, not weakness.

MDW Approved Mom Groups:



thebranchmoms.com

Resources for IL moms like local community groups, events and guides as well as digital support like downloadable e-books, podcasts, and more.



tiltparenting.com

Online community dedicated to reshaping perceptions of neurodiverse children and empowering parents to help them thrive at home, in school, and in life.



Finding Support Groups

One of the best ways to find emotional and practical support is by joining a mom support group. Being around other women who understand your struggles can provide relief, encouragement, and a sense of belonging.

The Modern Domestic Woman offers a morning and evening Moms Support Group designed to connect, uplift, and empower moms navigating these challenges.

MDW AM Moms Support Group

1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month
9:15 AM – 10:15 AM
Maple Leaf Coffee House
St. Charles, IL

MDW PM Moms Support Group

2nd & 4th Wednesday of the month
7:15 PM – 8:15 PM
Batavia Library
Batavia, IL

Join us as we chat about motherhood and connect with other women seeking kindness, compassion, laughter, and most importantly – support.

Questions? Message Elizabeth for details at
themoderndomesticwoman@gmail.com or send a text 630-946-9102



the modern domestic woman

Finding a Therapist

Therapy can be an invaluable tool for processing the emotional and mental weight of motherhood. Speaking to a professional can help you navigate feelings of burnout, identity loss, and stress in a healthy way.

If you're looking for a therapist, [The Modern Domestic Woman](#) can connect you with trusted professionals who specialize in maternal mental health and personal growth.

Some of our favorite maternal mental health therapists:

St. Charles, IL - [Jackie Graff](#), LCPC, PMH-C, is a Perinatal, Postpartum, and Anxiety Specialist, supporting women through postpartum, infertility, and loss.

Geneva, IL - [Angel Hernandez Ianakiev](#) is an LCSW, Certified in Perinatal Mental Health, Certified Drug and Alcohol Counselor, and Equine Assisted Psychotherapist.

Batavia, IL - [Missy Hem](#), LCPC, PMH-C, is a doula, home visitor, childbirth educator, and therapist who appreciates the highs and lows of the family growing stage of life.

Wheaton, IL - [Carrie Summers](#) is an LCSW and Perinatal Mental Health Certified therapist who loves supporting moms during all seasons of motherhood including divorced and single moms juggling the intensity of the separation process.



The Recovery Method: A New Standard for Postpartum Health and Wellness

The Recovery Method empowers postpartum mothers with online resources to take control of their health, using evidence-based practices, compassionate care, and inclusivity to redefine postpartum for future generations.

Founded by healthcare professional and mother Dr. Naha Pandya who recognized a critical gap in support for new moms, The Recovery Method is on a mission to change the way postpartum health is approached. After years of research and hands-on experience, The Recovery Method was created to ensure that every mother receives the comprehensive care she deserves.

With a focus on compassion, inclusivity, and expert guidance, you can build a supportive community that not only helps you recover but thrive.

What you can expect from The Recovery Method community:








- a database of healthcare providers by discipline and location
- postpartum educational resources and videos
- provider-verified products and supplies
- tips for navigating your postpartum journey

Discover more at therecoverymethodinfo.com

Overcoming Negative Self-Talk

Negative self-talk can be one of the biggest barriers to caring for yourself. It often stems from societal expectations, guilt, or feelings of inadequacy. However, learning to counteract these thoughts with positive affirmations can shift your mindset, boost your confidence and ultimately, bring you some well-deserved peace.

Affirmations to Combat Negative Self-Talk:

-  “I am more than just a mom; I am a whole person.”
-  “My needs matter just as much as my family’s needs.”
-  “It’s okay to ask for help—I don’t have to do it all.”
-  “Taking care of myself makes me a better mother.”
-  “I am doing my best, and that is more than enough.”
-  “I will honor my needs and prioritize my well-being without guilt.”
-  “Every day, I am learning to show myself the same compassion I offer others.”



How Burnout Happens Without Us Knowing

Burnout in motherhood is often silent and gradual, creeping up as you push through exhaustion, stress, and an endless to-do list. Many moms are so focused on caring for their families that they ignore their own signs of fatigue until they reach a breaking point.

Burnout can manifest in ways such as:

- Physical and emotional exhaustion: Feeling drained, tired, and unable to recharge, even after rest.
- Reduced performance: Decreased productivity, difficulty concentrating, and a sense of ineffectiveness.
- Cynicism and detachment: Feeling disconnected, negative, or indifferent about work, relationships, or activities that once mattered.
- Increased irritability or frustration: Overreacting to minor issues and struggling to manage emotions.
- Health issues: Experiencing frequent headaches, stomach problems, or sleep disturbances due to prolonged stress.

Recognizing these warning signs is crucial to preventing a complete emotional and physical breakdown.

Tips for Recovering from Burnout

Recovering from burnout takes time and intentional action. It may seem impossible to take care of yourself when you're already stretched thin, but even small moments of self-care can make a difference. Prioritizing yourself doesn't have to be overwhelming—it can happen in small doses, woven into your daily routine.

Here are some strategies to help you regain balance and well-being:

- **Prioritize Rest:** Allow yourself to get more sleep and take short breaks throughout the day, even if it means adjusting routines.
- **Delegate Responsibilities:** Share household and parenting duties with your partner, children, or extended family.
- **Set Boundaries:** Learn to say no to tasks or commitments that drain you without bringing joy or necessity.
- **Engage in Self-Care:** Carve out time for activities that recharge you, whether it's reading, meditating, exercising, or simply taking a quiet moment alone.
- **Carve Out Time for Yourself:**
 - Set an alarm on your phone as a reminder to pause and check in with yourself.
 - Schedule time with yourself just like you would for an appointment—commit to it.
 - Use small windows of time (e.g., five minutes of deep breathing, journaling while the kids nap, or listening to music while cooking).
- **Connect with Others:** Talk to supportive friends, join a mom group, or seek professional guidance to process your emotions.
- **Fuel Your Body:** Eating nourishing meals and staying hydrated can help combat physical exhaustion linked to burnout.
- **Practice Self-Compassion:** Remind yourself that you are doing your best, and it's okay to need support.



*You're doing a
great job, mama.*



Motherhood comes with an invisible load that often goes unnoticed by others but is deeply felt by moms every day. It's the mental and emotional labor of managing schedules, remembering every detail, and balancing the needs of the family, all while trying to care for themselves.

Even when it feels like no one sees the work being done behind the scenes, it's important to remember that moms are doing an incredible job, holding it all together in ways that deserve recognition and gratitude.

By recognizing the invisible load, setting boundaries, and seeking support, you can find joy in both motherhood and your personal identity. We hope this workbook has been a helpful guide to help you start prioritizing yourself.

Because you deserve it.

