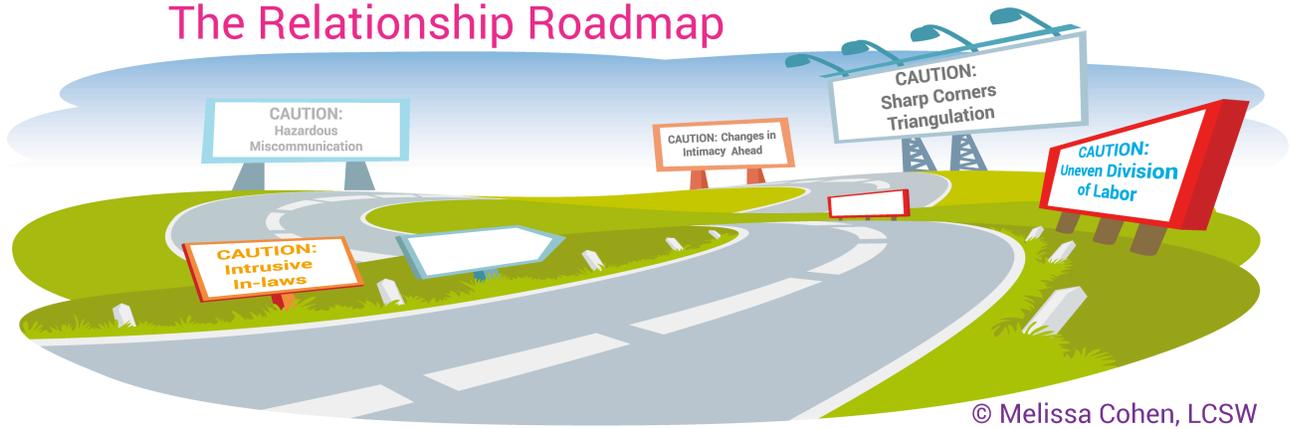


The Relationship Roadmap



Division of Labor

This is the home-management side of your partnership.

We have confused gender equality with a 50/50 partnership.

Quid pro quo doesn't work because many "tasks" cannot be quantified.

Men have very few positive role models of modern fatherhood.

When tasks are not divided by traditional gender lines, there is inevitably more conflict because the couple must negotiate who does what.

When creating your list:

- ⤴ Be as specific as possible so there is no confusion on who does what.
- ⤴ Focus on your strengths and weaknesses as you divide the tasks.
- ⤴ Some tasks have deep seated underlying meaning that must be addresses to minimize conflict.
- ⤴ Remember that asking for "support" is not likely to accomplish much because the request is too vague to act upon.

Both parents are experiencing their own pressures and challenges. Validating each other's experience and feelings is important.

Mothers tend to have a strong need for control over the unpredictability of early motherhood. They may say that they want

The Relationship Roadmap



© Melissa Cohen, LCSW

their partners to share in the childcare, but then get frustrated when Dads don't do it "right"

Daddies might do things differently, but that is not a bad thing. If the goal is to have the kids bond with both parents, mothers need to resist the urge to intrude or micromanage.

Be careful not to fall into the pattern of keeping score and demanding reciprocity (I'll do this but only if you do that). This is actually a sign that the relationship is ailing.

The Division of Labor requires frequent fine-tuning. Stay focused on delegating, accepting each other's strengths and weaknesses and let go of power struggles.

No task is more important than your spouse or your relationship.