

Examining Expectations

List out the following:

EXPECTATIONS FOR SELF: as a partner + as a parent

EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTNER: as a partner + as a parent

Refer back to the 5 sources of influence to help you dig into these expectations.

It can be helpful to discuss these together. Perhaps your partner has some insights about your expectations that you aren't as aware of.

This is **NOT** a time to criticize or point fingers, but is meant to raise insights and to be exploratory.

SOURCES OF INFLUENCE

- 1. Early Experiences (i.e. in the home, being parented, how love and attention were shown, etc)**
- 2. Social Structures + Norms (i.e. school, church, societal pressures and values)**
- 3. Ideals (i.e. Pinterest mom, IG mom)**
- 4. Stereotypes (i.e. “a good parent does...”, “a loving partner does...”)**
- 5. Personality (i.e. perfectionistic, neurotic, laid back, open to new experience, etc.)**

EXPECTATIONS FOR SELF

My expectations for myself as a MOTHER are...

Adjusting Expectations + Impossible Standards

Choose at least one expectation and write out how you can make compromises or adjust it to be more realistic.

Next, are there any you would categorize as IMPOSSIBLE STANDARDS?

If so, write them down and work through the outlined steps to adjust your expectations or revise your impossible standards (see example below).

Discuss these together. Brining your expectations to the surface and talking them through together is an important part of clear communication and being on the same page.

EXAMPLE

Impossible Standard

Since I am a stay-at-home mom and don't "work" I haven't earned the right to ask for help or a break.

Evidence For

- No one offers me a break
- I keep being told how lucky I am to stay home
- I don't feel valued for what I do

Evidence Against

- Every working person gets a break
- Taking care of kids is exhausting and requires a lot of emotional regulation, it isn't realistic to do this without a break

Revised Standard

- Since I am a stay-at-home mom, it is important I get breaks and help when I need it. I may have to ask for what I need, but that doesn't mean my contribution is less valuable.

In the moment mantra: I am doing an incredibly important job, and it requires that I take care of myself.

One behavioral change: Ask your partner to take the kids.

My expectation:

What can I compromise? OR Adjust to be more realistic?

My expectation:

What can I compromise? OR Adjust to be more realistic?

My expectation:

What can I compromise? OR Adjust to be more realistic?

REVISING MY IMPOSSIBLE STANDARDS

Impossible Standard

Evidence For Evidence Against Revised Standard

In the moment mantra: One behavioral change:

Impossible Standard

Evidence For Evidence Against Revised Standard

In the moment mantra: One behavioral change: