WEEK 3 – mental load self-sabotage

Despite the overwhelmingness of the REALITY of the MENTAL LOAD of mothers... this week we would like you to think about and share how you self sabotage yourself and add to your own mental load in unnecessary ways..... are you terrible at delegating? do you fall into the 'it would be easier/quicker/better if I just do it myself' trap - (would it really? does it matter?? really matter??) are you a perfectionist? do you procrastinate? do you 'buy into' ways/things/ideas of how a family/home/life 'should' be?? Indulge me as the devils advocate and/or tell me a tale of triumph in reducing your motherload ... share a story, a song, a list, image, photo, meme

I'm really annoyed at the moment by having to constantly ask and be endlessly grateful to people who look after my kids while I do paid work from home. My partner can always assume the kids are taken care of when he works because he has me. Sometimes I self sabotage by being annoyed at having to ask for help all the time and 'owing' people a favour so I just don't ask.

I procrastinate... I think... **or it might be self care in disguise**... I am unsure. Just taking breaks from the constant noise in my head from a giant to do list and times of paralysis. I fall down when I start with the "things should be like this" scenario

I bite off waaaay more than I can chew sometimes, setting myself up for failure! There's no way I can even achieve half of what I set out to do most days! Trying to get better at being realistic and giving myself permission to have some chill time 🙌

This image speaks... weighed down but contained for the sake of those who depend on you. Holding it together..... and while you do, others don't... They just carry on watching from the sideline. Oh! if you'd only asked... or I never knew.... or You make it look so easy... I don't know how you do it....

This is a patch on a hole on the toilet wall, the hole was there for probably 6+months and it happened because I didn't get around to installing the door stops in the first 6-7 years of living in the house. I used to carry that job on the list in my head most days, along with the many many other things that needed finishing or fixing or rearranging or sorting or organising around the house. These were all the 'I Should' things that gnawed at me when I even just contemplated sitting down for 5 mins, or watching a movie with my kids or going out for even just an hour.... **there were always so many things I SHOULD get done**..... I COULDN'T EVER relax. Then when checking in with my dr about my mental health she announced that SHOULD should be banned... and that (along with a few other strategies) was a game changer for me and my mental load. As a concept it click with my brain and I now only put things that NEED to be done or that I WANT to do on my todo list. The SHOULD list still exists but it doesn't get airtime, I don't attribute any emotion or energy to it. The patch has been there like this for at least another 6 months, it needs sanding painting etc but I honestly no longer care.... it's amazing. I still have mental load, I still take on too much and have tough days and am physically and mentally

exhausted etc but it's not as hard as it used to be, it feels more balanced, less crazy, I have more control..... my dr is a genius!!

I allow myself to be distracted easily particularly with **social media** and using my phone rather than doing something physically and that I enjoy. It's **an easy, quick and convenient way to take a break** between mothering but I'm **not sure that is the best thing** to make me feel good. It is like a bad habit. I also don't state what I need clearly enough. Maybe because I'm too busy distracting myself rather than thinking about what I really need.

I add to my mental load by saying **yes to too many things** when I should sometimes say a polite no. But I say yes to things because I am excitable and sociable and I love diving into things/events/projects/opportunities with other people and in fact enjoy a level of busy-ness but sometimes it does get overwhelming and I feel that I'm just scraping through and not doing things well. I'm slowly working on getting better at this one. Or I just need to accept that I'm going to be a scraper and juggler all my life!

I find myself in trouble when I keep **making decisions instinctually to keep everyone else happy** around me, and my own needs have slowly been buried at times and this ends up being the detriment to those around me, and even at times my career because i make a mistake/bad decision and it was only because I was trying too much to help everyone else first. Altruism I guess. Need to be more aware of this!

I self sabotage by being entirely too determined and stubborn, gratefully and persistently declining help, and holding things in, telling myself I'll be fine and don't need things that I want or need physically and emotionally and then all of a sudden the pile of things weighing in me is too much. Plus it's winter and instead of rugging up and getting my kids and I outside for walks and playing, I hibernate inside and let myself feel worse. Telling myself I'm 'resting' and that this will make me feel better too. It usually doesn't... but then I can still tell people I've been resting like they always seem to suggest. And even in writing this, my knee jerk reaction is to add at the end **"but I'm fine, truly". And I am. Damn straight I am. But I'm also not.** Talk about confusing, right?!

We have been through a huge shift at home this year, as I've stepped completely into full time work and my husband is the full time at home parent.
It has taken a big emotional shift for both of us - **I have had to let go of a lot of my control**, and wait for him to step fully into the role. The patriarchal world we all live in has meant that most people expect my husband to not be good in this role. But after a few rocky months it turns out his is VERY good at this role.
So **this issue isn't just people not knowing how to say "no" - it's also about stepping out of expectations ENTIRELY** and waiting for other people (let's be honest, mostly men) to step up and shoulder the roles that have traditionally (in our patriarchal society) been allocated to the women.
The patriarchy expects so much of us and so little of men. And yet they are SO capable.
I have big feelings about this! And I think that **we all have to shoulder some of the discomfort that's going to be required in order for society and our system to change**.
It is very hard to live through the change (especially when we all know that we could get it done in a fraction of the time!) but we have to step out of these roles and be prepared for the fallout AND be prepared to stop ourselves from rushing in and fixing it.