

## PARENT COLLABORATION WORKSHEET



Problem-solve misalignment between you and your partner or co-parent. How, specifically, might you improve communication and reduce tension? See each other's perspectives? Consider taking time out from discussing problems (or talk about things that are going well!), as well as scheduling uninterrupted time to strategize about the challenges you share. Start small, and try to manage your expectations... it may take many steps and a lot of practice to get in alignment. Keeping in mind the overall goal of goodwill between the two of you in order to help your child and yourselves, set doable goals you can measure, and monitor the natural drift back into familiar roles and patterns.

**Step 1:** Brainstorm ways you could improve communication and collaboration with your partner or co-parent. Don't rule out any ideas at first glance, even if you are not ready to try them yet. Consider the pros and cons of each idea, and see if you'd be willing to try it. Make one your goal for this week.

Collaboration idea: *We (husband and I) will find 10 (full) minutes a day to talk about plans for the next day.*

### Pros:

- 1. We will be less likely to get our wires crossed about who is doing what.*
- 2. I won't worry all day.*

### Cons:

*I feel so busy and he gets mad at me when I say we need to talk.*

Your collaboration idea:

### Pros:

### Cons:

Communication idea: *I will practice active listening 3 times this week by asking him how his day was and listening for 3 (full) minutes while he answers.*

Pros:

- 1. My husband will feel appreciated by me.*
- 2. It will force me to slow down and be calmer.*

Cons:

*At that time of night I am frantic and I may not be able to do it, which will make me feel like a failure.*

Your communication idea:

Pros:

Cons:

**Step 2:** Do the same for reducing tension between you. Brainstorm, consider the pros and cons of each idea, and choose one to try this week.

Tension-reducing idea: *I will agree to try one of my husband's ideas for a consequence for our daughter when she comes home late, even if it's not one I would choose myself.*

Pros:

*My husband will feel less defensive, like I shoot down everything he says. Maybe he will also be more open to my thoughts.*

Cons:

*I think some of his ideas are too harsh and I won't want to agree to them no matter what.*

Your tension-reducing ideas:

Pros:

Cons:

**Step 3:** When you have selected communication, collaboration, and tension-reducing goals for this week, list potential obstacles that come to mind. Then, think of coping skills you could use to maximize your chances of getting around each obstacle and reaching your goal(s).

Obstacle	Coping Skill
<i>He works late every night this week and will be too tired to want to talk about how to manage our daughter.</i>	<i>I will ask him to get up 20 minutes early so we can talk before he goes to work. And I'll promise to make him coffee.</i>