

ROLES

Whether you loathe or enjoy household tasks, they need to be completed. **The distribution of who does what can have a significant impact on your relationship.** The responsibility of household tasks falls on both partners, even though one partner might accomplish “more.” As individuals we take on certain household tasks based on interest, ability, or obligation.

To ensure a distribution of household tasks that strengthens your relationship, become aware of what roles both you and your partner have.

It's normal to evaluate the fit of those roles periodically. By reevaluating, you may find you two enjoy status quo, or you might uncover some previously unknown resentment.



Roles are most likely already assigned in your relationship: someone takes out the garbage, someone else does the laundry, etc. But do you know every chore your partner does to contribute to the entire household? Probably not. There are household tasks we complete routinely that go unnoticed. When you become more aware of which tasks you and your partner complete, you can evaluate the quality of the distribution. Interest can change over time as well as ability; it is natural to make adjustments along the way.

JUST REMEMBER,
YOU AND YOUR
PARTNER ARE
WORKING TOGETHER
AND CONTRIBUTING
YOUR EFFORTS
TO THE SAME
HOUSEHOLD – THE
SUM REALLY IS
GREATER THAN ITS
PARTS WHEN YOU
WORK AS A TEAM.

DISCUSSION

// Are roles divided based on interest and ability or obligation per traditional gender roles? How did you and your partner originally divide the roles? Was it an explicit conversation about role distribution, an unspoken agreement, or a combination of both?

// How are household tasks allocated to other family members (children)? Is this process of reallocation done by both partners together or is managing the distribution a task completed by one partner?

// Consider expectations – As a couple, what are your expectations for household tasks? As an individual, do you hold your partner to a certain standard when it comes to completing household tasks? What happens when expectations and standards are not met?

// How do roles change when your lifestyle changes (children, job change, new home, retirement, etc.)? Have you discussed how future lifestyle changes might affect the roles you and your partner currently have?

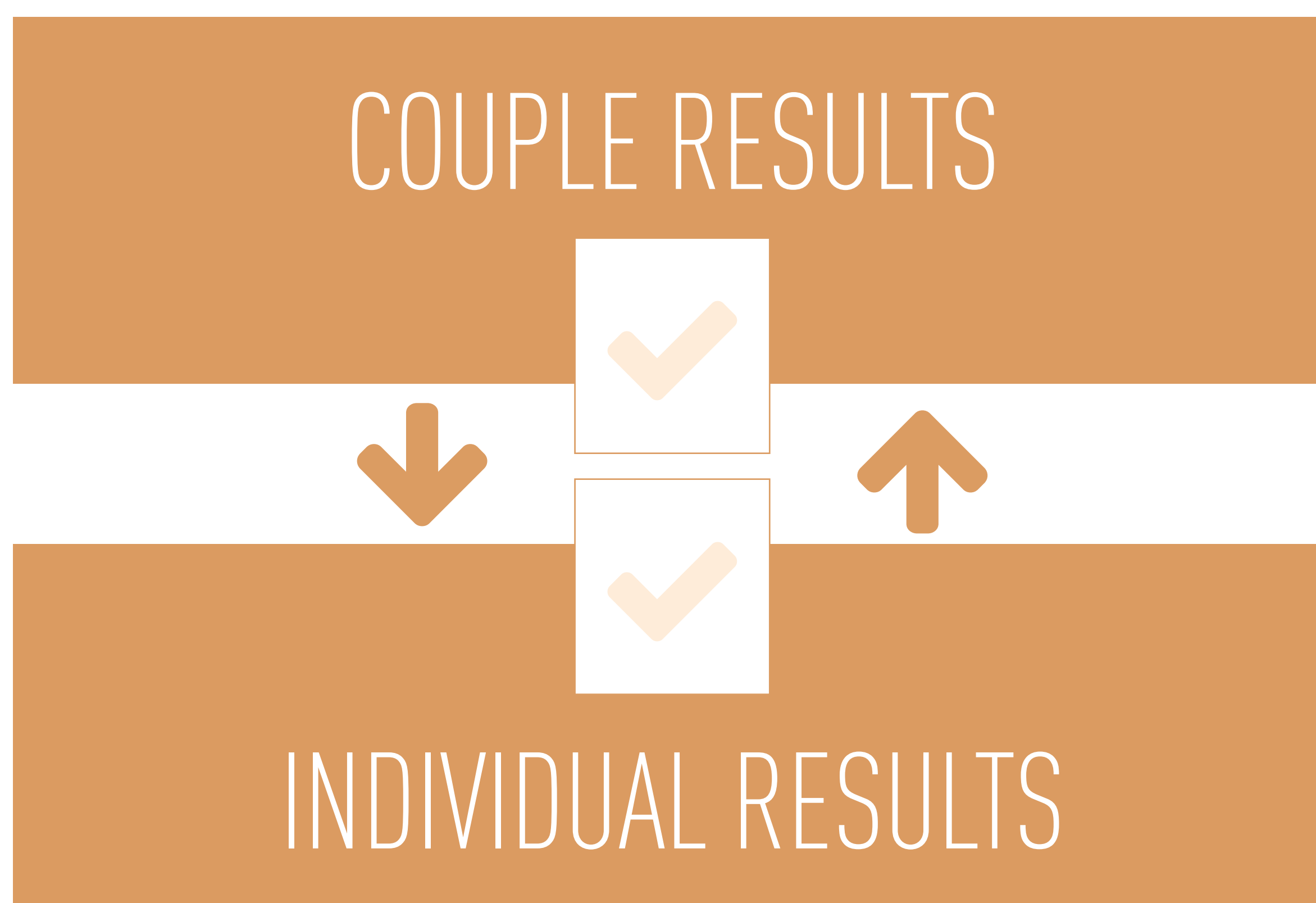
// How is leadership distributed within your relationship? What are effective ways to make decisions regarding your household? Is this a shared responsibility?

CHECK IN WITH CHECKUP

Check in with your Couple Checkup results

by reviewing the *Relationship Roles* (engaged couples) or *Roles & Responsibilities* (married couples) section of your report.

Are you surprised by the suggested discussion items?



Does this accurately reflect how you feel about roles in your relationship?

TAKEAWAY

Roles within your relationship may or may not already be distributed in a balanced manner, either way, there may be room for improvement through evaluation and increased awareness; this improvement will help strengthen your relationship.

APPLICATION

Take awareness to a new level; spend a week switching roles with your partner. Changing up who does what within the household will give you a new perspective and appreciation for your partner's contributions.

NEXT STEPS

Establish a monthly meeting to evaluate household task distribution and reassign roles as needed. Consider causes of change: interest level, schedule, seasonal tasks, etc.

SECTION SUGGESTION

Consider exploring **Expectations** or **Free Time** next.