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The Childcare Capacity™ Method

THE CHILDCARE CAPACITY WORKBOOK



A Practical Pregnancy Guide
to Choosing Childcare with Confidence

Discover your capacity
before choosing:

M

Mental

E

Emotional

F

Financial

R

Relational

S

Spiritual

By Relebogile Maku



Founder, Nanny Employer Wellness

Where parenting meets leadership

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THE CHILDCARE CAPACITY WORKBOOK

A companion to planning childcare during pregnancy



Mental



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How to Use This Workbook

Before you choose a childcare option, choose to understand your capacity.

This workbook is a companion to my article on planning childcare during pregnancy. It walks you through the same five capacity lenses I use with the parents I coach: Mental, Emotional, Financial, Relational and Spiritual. These lenses apply whether you are leaning toward a nanny, daycare, a nanny share, family care, or staying home yourself.

There is no perfect childcare plan. There is only the plan that fits the season you are in, the child you are raising, and the parent you are becoming. This workbook will not tell you which option to choose. It will help you get honest about whether you have the capacity to carry it.

Two Ways to Work Through This

- 1 Reflect and check. Sit with the questions on each page and work through the simple checklist. This works well with a journal, a cup of tea, and no distractions.
- 2 Prompt an AI assistant. Each capacity includes a ready to use prompt you can paste into ChatGPT, Claude, or a similar tool if you would rather be guided through the reflection in conversation.

Either way works. Use whichever helps you think most honestly.



Mental Capacity

Mental capacity is about clarity, not certainty. It is whether you can think clearly enough to outline what you actually need, not whether you have every answer yet.

Reflect

- What do I actually need from childcare right now, separate from what everyone around me is doing?
- Which childcare option have I already ruled out without fully researching it, and why?
- Where do I tend to assume “common sense” will fill the gaps instead of spelling things out clearly?

Checklist

- ☐ I have written down, even roughly, what I need from childcare in plain language
- ☐ I have researched more than one childcare option, not just my default
- ☐ I have a rough sense of what would change my plan (a job change, health, finances)

TRY THIS AI PROMPT

I am pregnant and starting to think through childcare options for after my baby is born. Ask me questions, one at a time, to help me get clear on what I actually need mentally and practically from a childcare arrangement, before I decide between a nanny, daycare, nanny share, or family care.

E

Emotional Capacity

Emotional capacity is your readiness to trust someone else with your child, and to sit with the feelings that come with that, without letting fear make the decision for you.

Reflect

- How do I honestly feel about handing my child over to someone else, even for a few hours a day?
- What would emotional safety look like for me in this arrangement, and have I said that out loud to anyone?
- Whose voice, a parent, a friend, social media, is shaping my fear more than my own experience?

Checklist

- ☐ I can name the specific fear behind my hesitation, not just “I am nervous”
- ☐ I have talked to my partner or a trusted person about how I actually feel, not only the logistics
- ☐ I have a plan for who I can talk to if guilt or worry feels heavy after the baby arrives

TRY THIS AI PROMPT

I am pregnant and feel [insert your honest emotion, e.g. anxious, guilty, relieved] about the idea of someone else caring for my child. Help me unpack where this feeling is coming from and whether it is based on fact or fear, without telling me what decision to make.

F

Financial Capacity

Financial capacity is not only what you can afford today. It is whether your plan can survive a disruption without forcing you into a desperate decision.

Reflect

- Have I costed out my primary childcare option in full, including backup care, fees, transport, and extras, not just the headline number?
- If my first option fell through in month three, do I know what my next move would be and roughly what it would cost?
- Do I have any financial buffer, or would a change in circumstances mean starting from zero?

Checklist

- ☐ I have a rough monthly budget for my primary childcare option
- ☐ I have researched the cost of at least one backup option
- ☐ I know which agencies, daycares, or family members I would contact first in a crisis

TRY THIS AI PROMPT

Help me build a simple monthly budget comparison for [nanny / daycare / nanny share] childcare in [your city or country], including one time costs, recurring monthly costs, and a backup option, so I can see the full financial picture before my baby arrives.



Relational Capacity

Relational capacity is whether the people around your childcare decision, your partner, family, or caregiver, are aligned enough to support it rather than quietly strain it.

Reflect

- Are my partner and I actually aligned on this decision, or have we simply avoided the conversation?
- What role, if any, will extended family play, and have we agreed on that role together?
- How will I respond if someone I love questions or disagrees with my childcare choice?

Checklist

- ☐ My partner and I have had a direct conversation about childcare roles and expectations
- ☐ We have agreed on how much input extended family will have
- ☐ I know how I will respond if my decision is questioned

TRY THIS AI PROMPT

My partner and I need to align on childcare before our baby arrives. Give me five direct, non confrontational conversation starters we can use to talk through expectations, roles, and boundaries around childcare and any family involvement.



Spiritual Capacity

Spiritual capacity is simply about peace. It does not require a specific belief system, only honesty about whether a decision truly sits well with you.

Reflect

- Does this decision bring me peace, or is there a quiet unrest I keep talking myself out of?
- What values do I want this season of childcare to reflect, regardless of which option I choose?
- Have I given myself permission to change my mind if my sense of peace changes?

Checklist

- ☐ I can say honestly whether this decision feels settled or unsettled
- ☐ I know what values matter most to me in this season, not what I think should matter
- ☐ I have given myself permission to revisit this decision later without guilt

TRY THIS AI PROMPT

Help me reflect on whether my current childcare plan aligns with my personal values and gives me peace, by asking me thoughtful, non judgmental questions rather than giving me advice.

A Gentle Reminder

You are not behind. You are not failing. You are leading with intention, and that matters more than you know.

Capacity can change. The option that fits this season may not be the option that fits the next one, and that is not a failure, it is flexibility. Revisit this workbook whenever your circumstances shift.

My Starting Point

Which capacity feels weakest for our family right now, and what is one small step that would strengthen it before the baby arrives?

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