What does gender equality mean in a relationship?

All persons shall be equal before the law.

Would you like a poster? Children from our youth group made posters about gender equality. We want to educate people in our community about gender equality.

Look at this. A community group in our town gave me this poster.

Yeah, yeah, all people are equal. But I am the man in this house and that means I am in charge, ok?!
But we are both equal! We are partners, aren’t we?

I am the man, I am in charge. Anyway, I earn the money around here so what I say goes. You don’t earn enough money to make a difference to this family.

People seem to think differently about paid work, don’t they?

What do you mean? You work two mornings a week. The rest of the time you are just at home.

Women do a lot of work but much of it is unpaid.

What do you mean?
Let us add up the work we each do to see who does what. You start....

Well I have my job.

From eight to five on weekdays. And then you come home, watch television and fall asleep on the sofa.

I do some repairs around the house too. What do you do?

Well, there is
- Getting the children up
- Preparing breakfast for everyone
- Cleaning up after breakfast
- Getting the children to school
- My job as a domestic worker 2 days a week
- Preparing the lunch
- Doing the washing, cleaning, tidying, mending
- Washing and ironing school uniforms and our clothes
- Preparing the evening meal
- Washing dishes
- Helping with homework
- Looking after the children
- Cleaning the house
- Looking after the garden
- Looking after the pets

But that is all easy stuff!

And it doesn't get any easier on weekends. I envy the time you have to relax. I might not get paid for all this work, but it is hard work!
I have caught the flu. I can’t even get out of bed. Can you look after the children today?

No problem.

Ahhhh this is chaos.

This is harder than a day in the office. I am tired already.

What a day! Now I understand what my wife was saying about her work. I have learnt an important lesson today. Men and women have equal value.
Let us go through your list of household tasks and see what I could do. I could help the children with homework and I could help with some cleaning on the weekends.

That would be amazing! And we would have more time together if you could help me!

I have always thought cooking looks interesting. So many of the great chefs in the world are men. If you could help me at first, I could even give that a try. I might end up being brilliant at it!

What are you doing? Men don't cook!

This one does. Cooking does not make me less of a man, it makes me a better man because I can look after my family in every way. And it gives my wife a rest, she works very hard. I will set you a challenge my friend – swap roles with your wife for just one day. Then come back and tell me how you found it.

Our life is so much better now that we work as a team and treat each other as equals.

It seems the more I help out at home, the more love and respect I get from you.
Have you seen what Martha and her husband are doing? They are sharing the housework. I can't believe it!

I think it is terrible. Men should be men. They should not have to cook and clean.

I think that it is a great example to young people. I have a full-time job. I can't do all the household tasks by myself. I hope that when I get married, my husband will help me.

Men can help out around the house but they should not have to look after the children.

If a woman becomes independent, she is difficult to control.

Why do you have to control your wife? You are her partner, not her owner.

A woman must never earn more than a man.
I am terrible at fixing things around the house but my wife is really good with her hands. So she fixes things and I look after the children more.

My wife is doing an evening course. It will help her to earn more money in the future. While she is at classes I care for the children. I like being able to spend more time with my children, I have a better relationship with them now.

I swapped roles with my wife for one day. I always thought that I did all the work in the family. Now I know that she works really hard too. Now we share the household tasks more evenly.

A man should be proud of his wife if she can earn a good salary. If a man only feels like a man because of what he earns, things like love and respect are missing from the marriage.

Have you ever thought about how the work in your family is divided? Why not fill in the chart below to find out.

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If the workload in your family is uneven, are there any changes that you could make?
I used to think that men had the right to tell women what to do. Now I know better; men and women are equal.

Being equal does not mean that we have to do the same things, or that we both have to do all the jobs in the home. It just means that the decisions we make as a family are not based on gender. My husband offered to do the cooking in our home. It turns out that he is a terrible cook. Now I am doing the cooking again. I am happy with this arrangement because I am doing something that I am good at and not just because I am a woman.

I am looking forward to a future where all men and women are equal. It will be a better place for us all.