



GENUINE EMPATH  
SEASON ONE OF FOUR

# The HSP Seasonal Planner

## *Fall Edition*

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*Plan around your capacity,  
not just your calendar.*

September through November, mapped for the stretches that tend to land hardest — so you're building in recovery on purpose, instead of finding it by accident.

# Welcome to Fall

*Season one of four*

This is season one of four.

Not because your year runs in tidy three-month blocks. It doesn't. It runs on drop-off lines and practice schedules and the particular tiredness that shows up the second week of September, once the new routine hasn't settled yet but everyone's already worn out by it.

Fall asks a lot of you. New schedules. New noise. A calendar that fills up before you've even opened it.

So this edition starts before the season does. The next page names what's usually coming — the stretches that tend to land hardest, already flagged, so you're not the one who has to spot them first this time. Then the months. Then the days.

Use what's useful. Skip what isn't. Write in the margins if the lines don't fit your family.

*You don't need to survive this fall. You get to plan for it instead.*

# The Fall Forecast

*Named before the season starts*

These are the stretches that tend to land hardest for a lot of families this time of year. You didn't miss them — they just hadn't been named yet. Circle or underline the ones that apply to you.

- The first week of school — new routine, new noise, everyone regulating at once
- Back-to-school night / open house
- Picture day
- Fall sports tryouts or season kickoff
- The first away game or out-of-town practice weekend
- Halloween — costumes, school parties, trick-or-treat noise
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Time change in early November — earlier dark is a load event, not just a clock event
- Thanksgiving — travel, hosting, or both

## What's specific to your family this fall?

*A kid starting a new school. A move. A custody transition. A due date. Add it here — this list is a start, not the whole picture.*

# How to Read the Monthly Zoom-Out

*Before the first grid*

This page isn't a calendar. You already have one of those. This one tracks something a calendar can't see: how much each day actually costs you.

Here's how the four parts work.

## WEEK OF

Write the date the week starts. Doesn't have to be Monday — just a date you'll recognize later.

## THE SEVEN DAY BOXES

For each day, write one letter: L for low, M for medium, H for high. Base it on what's already on the calendar, not on how brave you feel right now. A pediatrician appointment is an H whether or not you're dreading it yet.

## THE PATTERN

Look at the row once it's filled in. Three H's in a row isn't a coincidence — it's a warning. That's the cluster. That's the week to move something, ask for backup, or lower your own expectations on purpose.

## RECOVERY ANCHOR

One real thing, not a vague one. Not "self-care." "Tuesday, 20 minutes alone with coffee before the kids are up." Put it inside the cluster week, not after it's already over.

*Here's what a filled-in week might look like:*

### EXAMPLE

**WEEK OF: Sept 8**

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| M | T | W | T | F | S | S |
| M | H | H | H | M | L | L |

**RECOVERY ANCHOR:** Thursday, 20 min in the car after pickup

*Three H's in a row, Tuesday through Thursday — that's the cluster. The recovery anchor lands in the middle of it, not after it's already over.*

You'll fill in three months this way. It gets faster after the first one.

# September

Monthly zoom-out

**LIKELY HEAVY THIS MONTH:** First week of school • Back-to-school night • Picture day • Fall sports kickoff

Mark each day's expected load — L (low), M (medium), H (high). Three or more high days close together is your clustering signal: that's the week to build in extra recovery.

| WEEK OF | M | T | W | T | F | S | S | RECOVERY ANCHOR FOR THIS WEEK |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |

## October

Monthly zoom-out

**LIKELY HEAVY THIS MONTH:** Halloween • Parent-teacher conferences • Sports season peak

Mark each day's expected load — L (low), M (medium), H (high). Three or more high days close together is your clustering signal: that's the week to build in extra recovery.

| WEEK OF | M | T | W | T | F | S | S | RECOVERY ANCHOR FOR THIS WEEK |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |                               |

## November

Monthly zoom-out

**LIKELY HEAVY THIS MONTH:** Time change (clocks back) • Thanksgiving • Possible out-of-town weekend

Mark each day's expected load — L (low), M (medium), H (high). Three or more high days close together is your clustering signal: that's the week to build in extra recovery.

| WEEK OF              | M                    | T                    | W                    | T                    | F                    | S                    | S                    | RECOVERY ANCHOR FOR THIS WEEK |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/> | <input type="text"/>          |
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# How to Read the Daily Capacity Map

*Before your first daily page*

This page has one job: catch what today's going to ask of you before it asks it. Fill out the top half in the morning. Fill out the bottom half at night. Neither half should take more than a couple of minutes.

## **TODAY'S FORECAST**

Check one box — low, medium, high, or mixed. This is a gut call based on what's already scheduled, not a mood reading.

## **HIGH-STIMULATION / LOW-STIMULATION TODAY**

Two short lists, not sentences. Just name what's coming: "grocery store," "pediatrician," "nap window," "solo drive."

## **RECOVERY WINDOW**

Finish the sentence: "After \_\_\_\_, I protect \_\_\_\_ minutes of \_\_\_\_." Decide this before the day starts — deciding it mid-meltdown is too late.

## **CAPACITY CHECK-INS**

Three tiny boxes: morning, midday, evening. Use whatever marker means something to you — a number from 1 (empty) to 5 (full), a one-word read like "okay," "foggy," or "running on fumes," or a symbol only you'd recognize. Not analysis — just a marker you can look back on.

## **I WILL NOT SKIP**

One boundary, decided in advance, so you're not negotiating with yourself when you're already depleted.

## **PLAN VS. REAL**

Fill this in at night. Not to grade the day — just to notice where the gap was. That gap is the most useful thing on the page.

*Print or copy this page as many times as you need. One day, one page, no exceptions.*

# Daily Capacity Map

Print or copy this page as many times as you need

**EXAMPLE** — "After the pediatrician, I protect 20 minutes of sitting in the car in silence before I go back in the house."

## TODAY'S FORECAST

☐ Low

☐ Medium

☐ High

☐ Mixed

## HIGH-STIMULATION TODAY

## LOW-STIMULATION TODAY

## RECOVERY WINDOW

After \_\_\_\_, I protect \_\_\_\_ minutes of \_\_\_\_.

## CAPACITY CHECK-INS

MORNING

MIDDAY

EVENING

## TODAY, I WILL NOT SKIP:

## TONIGHT — PLAN VS. REAL

# The Fall Toolkit

*Scripts for the asks that only show up this season*

## School & Classroom Asks

### ROOM PARENT OR STANDING VOLUNTEER ROLE

*"I can't take on a regular role this year, but I'm glad to help with one specific thing if you tell me what's needed."*

### CLASS PARTY PLANNING

*"I can bring a supply, but I'm not able to help organize this one."*

### FIELD TRIP CHAPERONE REQUEST

*"I can't chaperone this time. I hope it's a good one."*

### FUNDRAISER PUSH

*"We're going to sit this one out this year."*

## Sports & Extracurricular Asks

### TEAM PARENT OR COACHING ROLE

*"I'm not able to take on a team role this season — happy to show up and cheer from the sideline."*

### CARPOOL REQUEST

*"I can commit to Tuesdays, but I can't add more days right now."*

### AWAY-GAME WEEKEND

*"We're going to skip this one. We'll be at the next home game."*

### GROUP TEXT ASKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

*"Can't this time, but thank you for thinking of us."*

# The Fall Toolkit

*Scripts for the asks that only show up this season*

## Holiday & Social Asks

### HALLOWEEN GROUP PLANNING THREAD

*"We'll see everyone trick-or-treating, but I'm not able to help organize this year."*

### COSTUME PRESSURE (ELABORATE/HOMEMADE ASKS)

*"We're keeping it simple this year — a store costume, and that's the plan."*

### THANKSGIVING HOSTING ASK

*"We can't host this year. Would love to bring a dish instead."*

### FRIEND GROUP FALL GET-TOGETHER

*"I want to see you, but a big group isn't what I have room for right now. Could we find a smaller time?"*

## Family & Logistics Asks

### EXTENDED FAMILY VISIT DURING A HEAVY WEEK

*"This week's already full for us. Could we plan your visit for [later date] instead?"*

### PARTNER OR CO-PARENT, DIVIDING THE LOAD

*"I need you to take the school-morning shift this week. I'm at capacity."*

### WELL-MEANING ADVICE ON YOUR SCHEDULE

*"I hear you, and I'm going to do this my way this season."*

# Fall Recovery Menu

*Not a to-do list — a menu*

## **If you have 5 minutes**

- Stand outside without your coat zipped. Let the cold air do something.
- One warm drink, made slowly, drunk sitting down.
- Hands wrapped around a mug longer than the drink actually requires.

## **If you have 15 minutes**

- Sit in the car after drop-off before starting the rest of the day.
- A short walk once it's sweater weather — no destination, no pace to keep.
- Lights off, one lamp on, nothing playing.

## **If you have 30 minutes or more**

- A drive with no one else in the car and the radio off.
- Sit somewhere the leaves are changing and don't take a picture of it.
- Early dark means an early excuse — a bath, a book, the day ending on purpose instead of by collapse.

# Looking Ahead

*The next season*

Fall asked a lot of you, and you built a way to meet it on purpose instead of just absorbing it. That's not nothing.

Winter brings its own weight — the holidays, a break with no school structure to lean on, and the letdown that tends to land once the decorations come down. It has a different shape than fall's. It'll get its own forecast, its own toolkit, its own version of this same map.

For now: keep the forecast page. Keep noticing your patterns. The work you did this season carries forward — you're not starting over each time, you're building on what you're learning about yourself.

*See you this winter.*