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Whose responsibility is it to maintain the quality of the environment in the household? I am of the opinion that the burden of such a responsibility must not rest on the shoulders of only some members of the family. The household is a living environment shared by those who inhabit it, and it is only reasonable to expect each one of them to do their share to keep everything as clean and tidy as possible. Home has always been seen as somewhere to relax, to cut loose on those pesky restrictions on where one was allowed to dispose of a used plate or a piece of worn clothing. That is a pleasant idea at first, yet it is not hard to see how it leads quickly to a horrendous mess that no-one is willing to take care of. My stance on the distribution of housework is instead that no-one in the family should expect anyone else to take care of the mess they made, but also that every member should be as active as possible in helping ^{the} others tidy up any spots they may have missed. This manifests as small gestures such as washing a mug and returning it to the kitchen shelf, or placing a pair of shoes properly at the doorstep. Tedious at first, but once established as a shared habit, the family will no longer have to worry about the dreaded, accumulated messiness.

I have observed first-hand an extraordinary example of this strategy in a place

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no other than my home. The idea that everyone shares their portion of responsibility in housework has been instilled in our family since I was young. I was taught always to return an item after use, and never to ignore when something is misplaced. My family has the additional benefit of several members being surprisingly efficient at, or even outright obsessive with, specific tasks: aside from keeping his own desk organized, my father takes pleasure in spending his leisure time flipping through the years of magazines he collected and arranging them in chronological order. My mother is an avid fan of the art of vacuum cleaning. As for me, I find no sight more satisfying than a row of freshly washed, pearl white dishes. I take great pride in how there never is the discussion over who is finally going to sort through the pile of miscellaneous objects because there never is such a pile. For we, as a family, have learnt that—through respecting each other, taking pleasure in doing our parts, and being enthusiastic in helping with the tasks that we share ^{not only} that maintaining the quality of the environment in the household is a responsibility that rests on the shoulders of each and every family member; but also that it is, if done right, much more of a joy than it is a burden.