

# Serenity Birthing – Your Birth and Beyond, The Way that Resonates With You



# Module 6 – First Days as Parents



# Module 6 – First days as parents

- 🌈 Feelings you may encounter as new parents
- 🌈 Thoughts about support to put in place for the early days



# Common Feelings

It is quite normal to feel:

- 🧡 Overwhelmed with the hugeness of it all
- 🧡 Tearful and emotional
- 🧡 What on earth have I done? I've ruined my life
- 🧡 I'm just a cow, all I ever do is feed, feed feed
- 🧡 Will I ever sleep again?



# Why it is normal to have these feelings

- 💖 Becoming a mother changes your identity profoundly – you are responsible for a tiny human who needs everything from you
- 💖 You may feel you want things to get back to “normal” - it takes time to adjust to a new normal
- 💖 You may be feeling overwhelmed because you need more support and help or to lower your expectations of what you can get done in a day
- 💖 Caring for and feeding a baby is a 24/7 job – it is normal to feel overwhelmed if trying to do other things like cleaning or working
- 💖 You will likely be sleep deprived because babies wake to feed often – being tired makes everything feel more overwhelming



# What you can do to make it easier

1. Be kind to yourself

2. Ask for help

3. Allow your partner and others to help you

4. Acknowledge your situation/feelings and accept them



# Who can help you postnatally?

- ♥ Yourself – be kind, be prepared, know what to expect
- ♥ Family – usually free but no up-to-date information
- ♥ Mother's help – affordable but no formal training
- ♥ Maternity Nanny – usually lives in and baby centred
- ♥ Postnatal doula – affordable, flexible support, family centred



# Postnatal depression (PND)

- ♥ PND affects one in ten women
- ♥ PND also can affect partners
- ♥ PND is FAR less common in families that have support during and after birth





# Things to look out for

- ♥ A persistent feeling of sadness and low mood
- ♥ A lack of enjoyment and loss of interest in the wider world
- ♥ A lack of energy and feeling tired all the time
- ♥ Trouble sleeping at night and feeling sleepy during the day
- ♥ Difficulty bonding with your baby
- ♥ Withdrawing from contact with other people
- ♥ Problems concentrating and making decisions
- ♥ Frightening thoughts – for example, about hurting your baby or yourself



Seek help as soon as possible from your GP,  
Midwife or Health Visitor



# Post Traumatic Stress – The signs

- ♥ PTSD can be caused by an experience involving the threat of death or serious injury to an individual or another person
- ♥ A response of intense fear, helplessness or horror to an experience or event
- ♥ The persistent re-experiencing of the event by way of recurrent intrusive memories, flashbacks and nightmares
- ♥ Avoidance of anything that reminds of the trauma
- ♥ Bad memories and the need to avoid any reminders of the trauma, will often result in difficulties with sleeping and concentrating



Seek help if you are suffering from PTSD as  
therapy is important to help it to resolve



# What about Self Help?

- ♥ It can be helpful to try to adapt your own mindset if you can. It can improve the situation a lot. Try to be mindful of your feelings:
- ♥ Accepting this is the way life is without attaching emotion can be helpful – when it rains animals don't mind, they just carry on
- ♥ Try to remember time is precious – your baby will only be this way today, tomorrow is another day. This too shall pass can be a helpful motto when things feel tough
- ♥ Cuddle your baby skin to skin – it will help boost oxytocin and make you all happier



# Practical Exercise

- ♥ Take some time to consider what feels right and what feels important for you as a parent. Have discussions with your partner or family about what parenting path you feel you may like to take. Remember to be flexible and kind to yourself and that babies often have ideas of their own!
- ♥ Take Time to consider what support you have in place for the early days. Do you want visitors? Would you like the help of a post-natal doula? Do you know what local support is available? Are there breast feeding support groups that meet near by?
- ♥ Perhaps consider practical things to help in the first few months. Maybe stock your freezer with batch cooked meals or healthy, easy things to eat, have numbers ready for help doing cooking, cleaning, takeaways, support etc so you don't have to look them up when you are tired and have a small person that needs your attention
- ♥ Remember to keep writing in your diary, any thoughts and feelings or questions that come up

