

12 TABOO

POSTPARTUM TRUTHS

WHAT YOU MAY NEED TO KNOW,
BUT PROBABLY HAVEN'T BEEN TOLD



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When I was pregnant I was very much looking forward to being a mother and caring for my baby.

I had seen all the baby commercials and movies implying that motherhood was amazing.

I took all the prep classes for a successful birth and postpartum experience.

Unfortunately, I couldn't have predicted all that would go wrong and wish I had been better prepared.

If you have found me because your postpartum experience is not matching up to the bliss you imagined know that you are not alone.

I hope to validate you and put you at ease that these truths, though not often talked about are experienced by a lot of mothers.

12 Taboo Postpartum Truths

What you may need to know, but probably haven't been told

1) The birth you want and prepped for may not go as planned. No really!

I took the birth prep classes and saw the videos including the one of a C-section, knowing full well that, that could be me. I was not naïve, but I was still shocked and disappointed when almost everything on my birth plan didn't happen.

I actually did not have a C-section, however many things went so differently than expected including needing to be induced at 37 weeks.

I wish amidst the push (and my own desire) from the Bradley method instructor to have a "natural" birth, that I was also warned that having too much expectation and too much control could really hurt me.

I don't fault myself for being prepared and having a plan, I just wish I had approached the birth with more of a surrendering attitude.

2) It is perfectly OK and normal not to bond right away with your baby.

I had no idea that I would experience anything other than utter love for my newborn baby.

When this did not happen I felt terrible and confused.

I now know that this happens to a lot of new moms.

I may have still had my disappointment about this, but I wish I had known that it's both common and normal and had reassurance that the bond would form in time, which it did.

3) Some babies are easy and some are difficult, and you may get the latter.

Maybe this sounds obvious, but I couldn't have imagined just how much having a colicky baby would impact me and my emotional well-being.

I was ill-prepared to say the least.

I wish I had known about the different temperaments and needs of babies. I could have been better prepared and armed with what to do and how to get the help I desperately needed.

4) Breastfeeding is often challenging (baby may not latch correctly, you may not make enough milk, etc.) so don't kill yourself over it.

No one told me this!

Or maybe I didn't think to ask.

It's hard! (At least for me it was and a lot of other mothers I know)

It was not at all the natural wonderful bonding experience I thought it would be.

I wish I was more prepared of the possible challenges and was able to let it go without the guilt or utter devastation that it didn't work out for me.

5) It's understandable and normal to grieve your old life.

I couldn't have predicted just how much I would miss my old life and freedoms.

I felt terrible for feeling this since I had planned for and wanted a baby.

I wish I had known that this is completely understandable and normal.

I also regret not doing a better job at taking care of myself by giving myself permission to get back to some of those activities that I missed a lot sooner. Not so easy to do when you feel trapped.

6) The job may suck, so don't do it all by yourself. Get help!

Saying the job of caring for my baby sucks may sound harsh, but if you are tirelessly caring for a colicky baby that you are not bonded with than you know exactly what I'm talking about.

I wish I had given myself grace and validation that the job of tending to my baby's every need was going to be less than enjoyable and had gotten more help.

Instead I let limitations get in the way like money to hire someone (would have been well worth the investment, even if it meant having some debt) or my own limiting beliefs such as thinking I'm supposed to be able to handle it on my own.

Having help could have saved me from the worst year of my life!

7) You're not alone with what you're feeling. I promise!

Most of the reason I felt like the scum of the earth for struggling so much after having my baby is because I felt so alone and isolated in what I was experiencing.

I had no idea that many moms had struggled in the same way I had.

I wish I had known this and joined a live or even a Facebook postpartum support group sooner.

8) You may try and control your partner when they help (and they may stop offering if they continue to feel controlled.)

Looking back I see that my husband really did want to help more but I got in my own damn way. I wish my only response to his offers of help were "yes" and "Thank you."

That's it!

Not, "Oh that's OK, I got this" or "here let me just do it" or even worse, criticizing him "you're not doing it right, you need to hold the baby like this."

Yikes!

It wasn't pretty and led to a stressed out and resentful mom. (Husband too)

9) Expect to feel out of control for a while.

I can admit I have a bit of a type "A" overachieving personality. Up until this point I didn't see any issues with this.

If I wanted an A on a test, I studied harder. If I wanted to lose weight I put in more effort.

I got results and I felt in control and I loved it!

Having a baby hit me hard in the face that I could not work harder to control almost anything (successful breastfeeding, bonding, enjoyment for baby, napping and feeding schedules.)

Babies are unpredictable and have their own personality right out of the gate.

I felt like a failure and I wanted to quit but felt trapped and imprisoned for 18 more years.

I wish I had known that I might feel out of control and that this was not at all to be taken personally.

10) You will be tempted to compare to other moms, but you can find *your* way to be a good mom.

In the beginning I found myself doing things out of guilt or having so many "should's" in my day.

I would compare myself to other moms or allow whatever story I had in my head about what a good mom does guide me.

Doing these things out of guilt or obligation only made me more depressed.

I wish I had given myself permission to do what works for me or be the kind of mom I wanted to be even if it seemed to go against the norm of other moms.

Today I try not to compare or worry so much about being a "good" mom. I strive to be a happy mom above all else.

11) You might feel regret after having your baby and this does not mean you're a monster.

I think by now you're gathering that motherhood was rough for me. If I'm really being honest I found myself hating being a mother and having regret.

On top of this I felt like a monster for feeling this way.

Who wouldn't?!? A mother regretting her baby!?!

Now I know that given what I went through (negative birth experience, no bond with baby, struggle with breastfeeding, colicky baby, doing it all on my own) most people would feel this way.

I wish I had been able to validate myself more and have some extreme self-compassion.

Additionally, getting the help I needed would have eased these feelings tremendously.

12) You may need emotional support and it's available! (And it's worth the investment in you)

I was embarrassed and quite frankly pissed off that my transition into motherhood was not joyous. I didn't want to come to terms that maybe I needed some emotional support or maybe I was experiencing postpartum depression.

I wish I had reached out for support sooner by joining a mom's support group where I could hear from and connect with other moms going through something similar.

I also wish I had met with an experienced therapist or postpartum coach sooner.

Besides holding off for several months, I opted not to see the therapist who specialized in treating postpartum depression because she was not covered by my insurance.

Big mistake!

I personally don't think a professional who has not been through this first hand will truly be able to understand, validate, and provide the best solutions.

I have a huge regret that I didn't seek out a therapist or coach who specialized in treating postpartum mothers sooner, insurance or not.

If you can relate to a lot of these truths and could use some support then please reach out to me for a free 15 min consultation where you can expect to be met with compassion and non-judgment from someone who's been where you're at.

Call, text, 949-424-3034 or email me what your biggest challenge is right now that I can help you with. info@postpartumhappiness.com

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Postpartum *happiness*

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