

Lesson One – Understanding your Postnatal Depression and Anxiety

Exercise One – Getting to know yourself

Part A

Instructions

- Step One:** Either write your answers or type your answers to each question. You can print out and use this sheet, or write your answers in your own journal.
- Step Two:** Answer these questions as spontaneously as you can. Don't think too much about them. Just start writing the first answers that come up. The brain has a great ability to bring out the most relevant and important information, so just let your answers flow. *(Tip: If you can touch type, and are typing your answers, close your eyes as you type. That way you are not editing your answers)*
- Step Three:** Be honest. No one is going to look at these answers except you so it is safe to be completely honest in your responses.
- Step Four:** Go through and answer each question in Part A first as thoroughly as you can before proceeding.
- Step Five:** Once you have completed the questionnaire, answer the questions in Part B. It is helpful not to look at the questions in Part B until you have completed Part A. This will help you not to monitor your answers.

Section One - Your Family

1. Describe your family (from childhood)

2. How would you describe your interactions with each other?

3. Were there many conflicts in the family and how were they handled?

4. Was there an event from your childhood that still affects you today?

5. What does an ideal family look like to you?

6. Was your family this ideal family? Why?

7. What was your role in the family? What did that role require you to do?

(NB everyone has a specific role they played, eg youngest, smartest, prettiest etc.)

8. Are you still playing that role today?

9. What are some of the specific beliefs you remember being taught about:

Yourself: _____

Family: _____

Women: _____

Men: _____

Children: _____

Achievements: _____

Money: _____

Marriages/Relationship: _____

Section Two - Yourself

1. How would you describe yourself?

2. What or who do you think influenced you to become that person and how did they influence you?

3. Do you think your life is going wrong? Why?

4. What is needed in order to fix your life?

5. Why can't you accept your life right now?

6. What aspect of yourself do you hold in high regard (that is – what do you like about yourself?)

6a) Where did you learn that these were good qualities to have?

7. What aspects of yourself do you hold in low regard (that is - what don't you like about yourself?)

7 a) Where did you learn that these were bad qualities to have?

8. What makes you feel like you are not coping as a mom?

9. What do you think you need to do differently to be the good mom you want to be?

Section Three - Your Mother (or female primary caregiver. If your mother was absent during your childhood, please proceed with the questions, as you will still hold beliefs about your mother. If you had both a mother who was absent and another primary female caregiver, please complete the questionnaire for each person.)

1. Describe your mother

2. What do you think she liked about herself?

3. What do you think she liked about you?

4. What do you think she disliked about herself?

5. What do you think she needed in order for her life to be successful?

6. What do you think she felt you needed in order for your life to be successful?

7. Was there an event that occurred as a child between your mother and yourself that still affects you today?

8. Name two lessons you learnt from your mom?

a) What you would use today?

b) What you wouldn't use today?

Section Four - Your Father (or male primary caregiver. If your father was absent during your childhood, please proceed with the questions, as you will still hold beliefs about your father. If you had both a father who was absent and another primary male caregiver, please complete the questionnaire for each person.)

1. Describe your father

2. What do you think he liked about himself?

3. What do you think he liked about you?

4. What do you think he disliked about himself?

5. What do you think he needed in order for his life to be successful?

6. What do you think he felt you needed in order for your life to be successful?

7. Was there an event that occurred as a child between your father and yourself that still affects you today?

2. Can you list some specific examples from your questionnaire where you have been taught that life has to be a certain way (that is – the right path as opposed to the wrong one)?

3. Can you list some specific examples from your questionnaire where you have used language that reflects life being on the wrong path or where you were missing out or had missed out on something? Please list them below.

5a) Can you see any depression language in your questionnaire that indicates where you feel like a failure, where you have given up or where you are lacking motivation or desire to set goals?

5b) Can you find any anxiety language in your questionnaire that indicates that you are trying to control life and prevent situations from jeopardising your goals?

6. How do you think these beliefs about your self-worth have been set up?

7. Which of your parents were the major influences that taught you some of the beliefs that cause you stress, depression and anxiety? Why do you think this?

8. What has surprised you about your answers in your questionnaire?

9. Have you gained any insight into the beliefs that have contributed to you PPD? What are those insights?
