

Expectations of Yourself After Delivery



Expectations of Yourself After Delivery

Your body has gone through many changes over the last few months. But, there are more changes to come. Whatever your path forward may be - whether that is caring for an infant or choosing adoption for your baby - we want to make sure that you are setting goals and practical expectations for you after your baby is born.

After you deliver your baby you will face many different emotions and new worries. Remind yourself that it is okay to take things as they come. Always ask for help if things begin to feel too much for you to handle on your own.

Remember: There is no perfect way to be a parent!



Ways to be Kind to Yourself After Birth

Be Gentle With Yourself:

Remember that you are doing the best you can and you can only do so much, especially when you are healing and have a newborn. Be kind to your body and your mind. No one expects you to be perfect, so don't think you should be!

Shorten Your To-Do List:

Focus on one thing at a time! If you begin to feel overwhelmed by all the things you have to do, stop, take a breath and focus on one simple thing you can do right now. And remember, if you only do the things that truly must be done today, that is okay!

Celebrate the Little Things:

It is easy to focus on what has gone wrong or what you have not finished yet. We want you to celebrate the little things that go right or that you have done every day. Have you ever celebrated the fact that you walked from one side of the house to the other? Or that you showered? Now is the time to do exactly that. Nothing is too small to celebrate. Think about these moments at the end of the day so you can relax knowing that today was a good day.

Ask For Help:

Whether you are feeling very stressed as a new mom, due to your growing family, or you are dealing with the difficult choice of adoption, we want to remind you that you are never alone. It is okay to ask for help from your support system of friends and family members. Remember that it is better to seek help before things get too much to handle. If you are feeling overwhelmed, alone, or not sure where to turn, please contact your doctor, case manager or our team right away to learn more about resources and assistance.



Reframing All-Or-Nothing Thoughts

Your emotions (how you feel), your thoughts (what you think), and your behaviors (how you act) are all connected. Staying away from all-or-nothing thoughts can help you manage expectations and help you be gentle with yourself.

All-or-nothing is a way of thinking in extremes. It can also be called black and white thinking. There is no middle ground in all-or-nothing thinking. You are either a success or a failure. Something is either right or wrong. Since making lasting change to your health is difficult, and just about everyone has slip-ups along the way, this mentality can be harmful to your progress.

Identifying all-or-nothing thoughts and then re-framing them can help you stay on the path to reach your goals. This can also help you:

- **React calmly in the moment.**
- **Keep negative thoughts from turning into negative emotions and behaviors.**
- **Consider whether you're making assumptions about or for others.**
- **Explore other points of view.**
- **See the positive parts of a situation.**

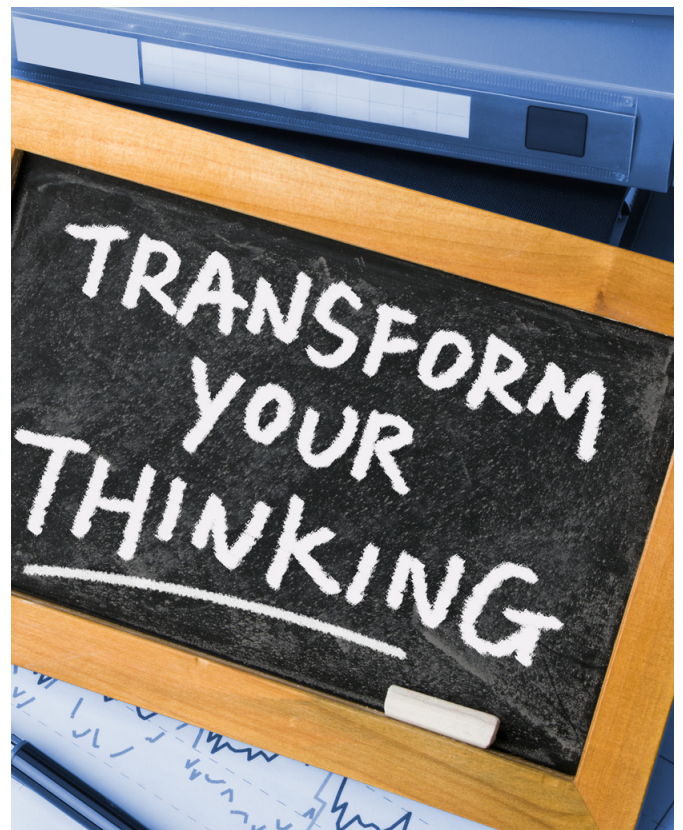


Example of Reframing All-or-Nothing Thoughts

ALL-OR-NOTHING THOUGHT: My baby woke up and started crying while I was taking a quick 5 minute shower. I'm a bad mom.

NEW THOUGHT: By showering, I took care of myself and now I feel more awake and able to nurture my child.

The all-or-nothing thought here is that you are a “bad mom” because your baby woke up and started crying. Instead, look at this thought in a more positive way. You were taking care of yourself and your child happened to wake up when you were unavailable for a short time. You are not a bad mom for taking care of your basic needs. Being a mom is tough. While you are your child’s best supporter, it is good to remember that you are also your own best support. Changing all-or-nothing thinking is difficult, but it can help you feel more in control day-to-day and boost your overall self-esteem.



Tips for Reframing Thoughts:

- Remind yourself of your strengths.
- Write yourself positive notes and leave them around your home!
- Use words like “sometimes, progress, possible, different.” Avoid using words like “always, never, perfect, impossible.”
- Remember that every day won’t be perfect. What matters is that you continue to try every day.

From Lesson To Action

1) If you think you are an all-or-nothing thinker, then pick a special notepad or journal and start identifying and writing down these thoughts. Start today by writing down any negative thoughts that you have had recently below.

1.
2.
3.
4.

2) At the end of each day this week, take a look in your notebook and try to restructure any all-or-nothing thoughts you had during the day. Start here by reworking your thoughts written above!

1.
2.
3.
4.