



## Practitioner Class Handbook



## **Hypnosis and Mindfulness for the first year. Half day class – followed by lunch.**

### **What you will need for the class:**

- ♡ A jam jar per participant
- ♡ Journal per participant
- ♡ Colour pens
- ♡ Pencils
- ♡ Coloured paper
- ♡ A ball of red wool or cotton (optional)
- ♡ Sticky notes
- ♡ Mamma postnatal music
- ♡ Snacks and refreshments

It is useful to have a room with a big table in it as there is a lot of writing and creative work.

### **Introduction: (10 mins)**

We often see people preparing for birth, but not for the time afterward. This 3.5 hour class is to prepare you for the early days of parenting and beyond using simple tools that support your psychological well-being. A mix of simple practical and mindset tools that help you build resilience in the early days, weeks and months of parenting when many parents feel vulnerable. This class is creative and relaxed, if there is anything you don't want to do, you don't have to. If you have any questions ask freely either as part of the group or privately.

### **Talk about what you will be doing: (5 mins)**

- ♡ Creating a support system
- ♡ Postnatal Plan
- ♡ Some simple tools to reduce anxiety
- ♡ Look after your own emotional wellbeing
- ♡ Tools for tough days

# 1

**Get the class relaxed and  
loosened up!**

# 1

Objective 1: Get the class relaxed and loosened up! then a discussion about motherhood preparation.

Use an icebreaker of choice. You can use something that involves movement like a song with actions or commonality. EG. Ask the women in the room to find something in common with each other women it has to be different with each person (pregnant, sex of baby, place of birth)

## Grounding and connecting exercise

Make yourself comfortable, close your eyes, and focus on your breathing, Nice deep breaths in and out, follow your breath, breathing in and breathing out, that's right, breathe down into your belly, noticing the rise and fall of your belly, perfect. Now with your next breath in notice your feet on the ground, and as you breath imagine breathing that breath in up through your legs, your pelvis, your belly, your chest, right up to the top of your head. You may notice how you are sitting taller as you do this, your shoulders relaxing. Keep breathing up through your body, your feet on the floor...breathing up and down, up and down (practitioner: tune into the rhythm of the group, slow down if you need to). Now you are nice and relaxed turn your attention to your belly, notice any sensations or feelings, where there is softness, where there is tightness, notice where there is space and where there isn't space, notice lightness and heaviness. Notice your baby, notice where they are lying, how you are feeling them right now. Take a nice deep breath now, breathing down imagining that breath connecting you and your baby. With your next breath sending any messages to your baby or perhaps just love, perhaps you just want to connect lovingly in this moment. Today is a day to prepare for when you have your baby in your arms, allowing you to create as gentle a transition as possible for you both. Now coming back to your breath, noticing again breathing in and out, your feet on the ground, breathing from the ground up, that breath filling your body and then down and out. Feel connected, to your body, your baby and the space you are in. Now wriggle your fingers and wriggle your toes, notice your weight on the chair and open your eyes when you are relaxed and ready to begin!

## Exercise

Ask the group to write down on post it notes what three things springs to mind when they think of the weeks after birth. Have a discussion about what they have done to prepare for that, it may be research, practical steps etc. Some may not have even considered the value of preparation for the time beyond birth.

(30 mins)

# 2

**Preparation for the early days of  
parenthood.**

# 2

**Objective 2:** Start to think about preparation for the early days of parenthood and connect with that transition. This is an opportunity for the parent to start to connect with the reality of having a baby and to put things in place that may make it easier.

## Exercise Visualisation with Baby

Close your eyes, nice deep breath, imagine you have given birth, you have your tiny baby who is utterly dependent on you day, and night. Imagine yourself in your home, perhaps in bed, or on the sofa, with your baby. How are you going to go about your usual daily tasks. What could you have in place to make it simpler, to slow down, to enable you to connect and learn how to respond to your baby's cues and needs. Just take a moment to think about washing, cooking, shopping, cleaning, other children, showers, sleep...now opening your eyes and coming into the room.

## Discussion

What sort of things came up? Did anything surprise them? Was it different at all?

## Exercise

Now keeping these things in mind, you have an opportunity to fill out your PEP plan. This will help you create a support system for those early days when things take longer to do, You may find you are able to do less. What can you drop (ironing?) what do you need to do (have a shower? What can you prepare for (batch cooking)?

## Postnatal handout your PEP Plan

## Think about

### **Physical:**

(Think how you may be feeling after birth, what you may need physically, how you manage this with a baby, what help you can prepare for and what help you could ask for)

### **Emotional:**

(Think about personal factors that may impact on how you feel, what can you do to prepare for them. Think about things that have helped you when you have felt teary or upset in the past).

### **Practical:**

(Consider the practical aspects of having a baby, getting shopping in, making meals, caring for other children).

(30 mins)

# 3

**Help the parents identify who is in  
their circle.**

# 3

Objective 3: Help the parents identify who is in their circle, who can support them. Everyone offers different types of support, you may have a friend who is a really great laugh, but who isn't a great listener. Knowing who to ask for help and being able to do it comfortably!

Support is really important. We know from research that connection and community helps mental health and wellbeing, this is especially important after you have had a baby. Once your partner has gone back to work it can feel suddenly very different. In this exercise we're going to explore how different people offer you different things. The handout you are about to get encourages you to think about how different people in your friends and family support you. They may even be people within the healthcare community! Think creatively.

Close your eyes and take a deep breath, breathing in 321, breathing out relax relax, relax, perfect, if your thoughts wander bring them back to your breath, deep belly breaths in and longer breathe out, just slowing your breath down, that's right. Now imagine the people who you have around you, it might be who makes you laugh.....someone who offers up a shoulder to cry on .....someone who is practical and organised.....someone you feel comfortable asking to do laundry” Just allow those people to come into your mind right now. People who you know would help, and as you bring them into your mind just say to yourself, “I choose to allow myself to accept your help”. That's right. Now opening your eyes and coming back into the room, nice deep breath in and out.

## Exercise

**Build your team**

Who can I trust with baby?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who will listen?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who makes me feel loved?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who can fold my laundry & cook me a meal?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Whose shoulder can I cry on?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who makes me laugh?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Discussion

After this is done ask if there was anything that surprised them, were there any blanks (it's ok if there are). Did it bring up any feelings? Remind them that some people may have an entirely blank sheet - which is why it's so important to know that there are healthcare professionals you can call on if you need support, groups you can join (like the postnatal one).

**Practitioner note: Have a list of useful numbers for postnatal services, such as breastfeeding counsellors, mother and baby groups, Pandas etc.**

(30 mins)

# 4

**Self-care**

# 4

Objective 4: Self-care: Help the parents to understand that they matter, and that little acts of self-care can make a difference to their mental well-being.

Self-care! Mothers often put themselves last, there is so little time. But small acts of self-kindness and mindfulness can both rest your mind but also soothe you. It doesn't have to be a trip to the spa, it can be the simple calm breath, or the messages you give yourself. "As I am washing myself I am caring for myself". (Practitioner note: You can use examples from the book here)

What does self-care mean to them, what sort of things do they do that contribute to their wellbeing at the moment. How could they adapt these when they have a baby?

## Exercise: Time to get creative

Self-care rainbow in journals. Fill them in, colour perhaps some collage, writing, decorate. Think about 10 seconds through to 5 minutes.

## Discussion

How did they get on? See what some people consider self-care, that others may not have thought of. Share ideas.

(30 mins)

# 5

**Introduce them to tools for tough days.**

# 5

Objective 5: Introduce them to tools for tough days that can help reduce anxiety, like the calmer crying, calm breath, ladder breath.

There are so many tools you can do for this, here are some examples. You can have these as handouts that they can put up around the home. Seeing them regularly can help them to unconsciously adopt those exercises.

Choose which one you want to do in the class. You can choose one from this list or from the book. You can also get them to do the slumpish remedy in the class. It's a great creative exercise and you can add the calmer crying, ladder breath and so on into the jar.

## **Close with this simple relaxation**

Make yourself comfortable, close your eyes and relax. Take these few moments to allow yourself to let go, imagine a place where you feel relaxed, comfortable, secure, it may be somewhere from your past, your present or somewhere completely made up. Be aware of what you can see feel hear in this place, how calming and soothing it is to just be able to sink into comfort, free of anything that may be troubling or worrying you and in these moments just enjoy this time connecting with the mother in you.

Soothing her, nurturing her, knowing that she is preparing for your baby to born. Imagine the mother in you turning to meet the maiden in you. Notice how the warmth radiating from her, the kindness in her eyes, the wisdom in her heart, notice how as she holds out her hands to you how gentle they are, and as she gathers you in for a hug notice how soft and loving she is. Look at her again and feel the love and warmth she has for you, as you allow yourself to open up to that love and warmth, imagine it flowing between you like a connection. And as you move forward into motherhood, the maiden and the mother in you are forever connected, lovingly and supportingly.

## **Closing the class:**

Use the post it notes again and ask them the most important things that spring to mind for a calm and confident motherhood.

## Postnatal session format

**1.5 hours:** You can provide refreshments but not necessary. If you are providing hot drinks please have them in safety containers.

Each session these are discussion topics based around the content in the book. Familiarise yourself with the content of the book around the following headings.

Read this statement at the beginning of each session and grounding exercise.

“Welcome, my name is xxxx. This session is a chance for you to relax and connect with others, it’s a moment for you as a mother. Today’s topic is xxxxxx. All of us will parent in our own way, please be respectful of others. We expect babies to cry, that’s ok, you may have tears as well, that’s ok too. Everyone’s feelings are welcomed lovingly in this space”.

Either close your eyes for a moment, or keep them open it’s up to you. Breathe deeply, then breathe out. And again breathing in, 321, breathing out relax relax relax.

1. Sleep and Rest
2. Support
3. Nourishment
4. Tough Days
5. Connection
6. Self-care

1 x Exercise from the Mindful Mamma practice cards

Keep a list of referral services for perinatal mental health, breastfeeding counsellors, specialist therapists, health visitors, or national organisations and leaflets too. PANDAS etc.









## Notes



