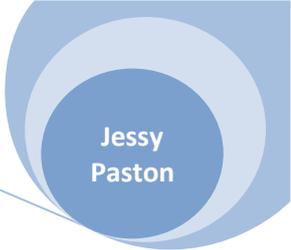


New Mum Guide

The logo for Jessy Paston, featuring the name 'Jessy Paston' in white text inside a blue circle, which is part of a larger blue circular graphic with concentric rings.

Hello New Mum!

Firstly, congratulations on your new baby! Being a mum of two, I remember how amazed I was at being part of such a wonderful miracle and being blessed with a baby (then another).

There were other emotions too, a huge mix of emotions which I did find overwhelming. With my son, I experienced one of the worst depressive phases in my life which meant his formative years were a blank in my mind, missing out on precious memories like his first steps.

Everyone expects a new mum to be happy, and there is an element of that, of course, but what if we experience other emotions?

Fear - what if we are not good mothers?

Anxiety - what if I can't look after my new baby?

Frustration - can't people see I'm trying to cope with a new baby? or I don't know what to do!?!

As well as being a mum, I am also a qualified counsellor and I have had the opportunity to work specifically with New Mums with postnatal depression (and other mental health issues) across Wychavon District in the UK.

After a year, unfortunately the funding was cut and my role ended. (Don't get me started on government funding priorities!!) Now I have set up on my own, I want to continue this valuable work and as a first step, this guide was born.

I noticed a few patterns emerging from all the New Mums I worked with and saw what simple practices they did that helped them cope better and actually start enjoying this time of transition and their new baby.

The way I work is to try and simplify things and work on your inner core or inner self, helping you find your own answers. I have broken things down into 5 steps and I would recommend you work through each step as they build on each other.

I really hope this guide will help you be more confident in yourself, not only as a mother but as a person too.

Are you ready? Let's jump in :D

1. Self compassion

I am going to make the assumption that you are the kind of person that is probably very hard on yourself, right?

You get annoyed and frustrated, maybe even out right angry, at yourself if you don't do things right or if you keep getting things wrong.

Going one step further, I bet you tell yourself off lots too using the following type of language;

"You're so stupid! You should have known better!!"

"Look at all the jobs you haven't done!"

"You're so useless sometimes"

"You don't deserve _____" (fill in the blank)

Write down 5 things you say to yourself that you would NEVER EVER dream of saying to someone else:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

How do you feel having written these down? What reaction do you think you would get from, for example, your best friend if you said the above things to them?

Spend a few minutes jotting down a few words here:

If your Self talk is as bad I think it might be and what you have said to yourself, you would never say to anyone else, I want to ask you,

"Why is it ok to talk to yourself like this?"

Self compassion is the one, most important wellbeing practice that few of us do. What we tell our minds, we believe. Our words turn into scripts and these stories determine what our lives become.

In our everyday lives, there will always be people who are quick to judge us, tell us off, criticise us, block us, hinder us, hurt us, damage us and so on. So what do we do? We join in with them! We're not even on our own side, we don't even support ourselves. If anything, we are harsher to ourselves than anyone else is.

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Paston

THIS CHANGES **NOW!**

You now have a little person in your life now who will change absolutely everything. You have a new identity now and I bet you, your life will not be the same again.

What we forget is that change takes time.

When you started school, you had to learn to be away from home, learn to be in a classroom, learn to learn, learn to be with other children etc.

When you started driving, you took lessons, had practice drives, did a test and still you continue to learn.

Maybe when you started a new job, you had an induction, settle in time, things were explained to you, your manager guided you, maybe you had a team to support your work, maybe you were given a desk etc.

Think of a time of change in your life that you have gone through.

Was it difficult at the time?

How did you get through it?

How did you cope?

Having a baby and embracing your new identity as Mum is the same and self compassion will be your best tool to start with.

Self compassion simply put is being nice to yourself, supporting yourself, being kind and caring towards yourself.

So next time you start the negative self talk, think how you would talk to your best friend, your partner - or your new baby.

After all, you wouldn't tell your new baby off for not running a marathon right now would you?

Take the time you need, the space you need and give yourself the care and kindness you need during this time of change.

2. Time for you

In recovering from my own depression and seeing clients taking this on, has proven to me this is an essential part of maintaining good mental health. All too often we are so busy doing things for everyone else, we forget to look after ourselves. We all work so very hard all year then maybe, if you're really lucky, you get 2 weeks a year off.

I'm going to suggest a new way of being if you're up for it;

How about having a little 'holiday' every day?

Can you even imagine that? Resting when you need to, doing something fun every day, creating a life that you actually want and makes you feel amazing in yourself. Doesn't that sound lovely?

All this can be achieved from simple time management.

Maybe you are already really organised but have you allocated time just for you? As in actually blocked out time, like a doctor's or midwife's appointment? An appointment for you?

If you create space to spend time just with yourself, you will be able to stop, breathe and look at the bigger picture of your life.

Are your needs being met? If not, which ones are not and what can you do about it?
Are you getting enough rest? Especially important if baby keeps waking you in the night.
Also, don't forget, we need more rest at a time of change / transition as we are learning new things and our brains are working harder as you think about new things and take them on.
Are you playing enough? Are you doing things that keep you, YOU? What fun things can you do, by yourself and with baby (then maybe with other loved ones)

Use a diary and block time out when you need or want to do things.

If you get overwhelmed at the amount of things you have in one day; spread it out over the week. Still overwhelmed, spread it over the month. Ideally, just have one 'thing' to do a day and you can build on it. Remember not to beat yourself up if you achieve nothing. Self compassion, remember!

You will not forget appointments this way, you will take away that feeling of not having enough time, of not having enough hours in the day. Instead, this will help you feel calmer and actually show you how much you are coping with and managing.

By managing your time, YOU can create the life you want. YOU book in what you need, YOU can say no to things that do not serve you.

YOU are in charge of your thoughts and feelings, your actions, your appointments. Your appointments in your diary will show you what you are giving time to, what you are seeing as a priority and stop the feelings of overwhelm, anxiety and get rid of that 'I don't have the time!!' feeling.

3. Judgement

When my kids were little and so many of the mums I have worked with have had this same belief:

"Everyone is looking at me and thinking what a bad mother I am"

We all think it but in reality, everyone else are simply trying to cope with their own emotions and their new baby.

In reality, it is us who judge ourselves the most.

So the first step is looking at what a good mother is. Write down a few words or sentences defining what being a good mother means to you:

Now have a look at what you have written and ask yourself these questions:

Are these my beliefs or someone else's?

Where did I learn about motherhood from?

Does what I have learned, resonate with me or do I believe this because society says so?

Am I trusting my own instincts with my own child?

Having a look at what you have learned and what is being said to you will help you decide what kind of mum you want to be.

This is maybe the first time you are a mum and I am sure you are being given great well meaning advice from everyone you know - probably even people you pass by in the street! But just like anything else in life; YOU choose how you want to be as a mum.

How do you achieve this?

If you go at YOUR pace, create space and are self compassionate, you will learn to start hearing what your needs are and most importantly, hearing your own motherly instincts coming through.

You have full permission to trust and follow these instincts.

If you want to co-sleep, then co-sleep

If you don't want to do the controlled crying, then don't

If you want to take them swimming, then do

Having confidence in yourself and your instincts will make you so much happier in yourself and the cherry on top?

If you know your truth, you will not feel judged. If someone is judging you, you will soon realise it is their perception, clouded by their insecurities and NOT you.

You've got this.

4. Connections

One question I always ask clients before I start working with them is:

Who is in your support network?

Think about that for a moment and write them down:

Are these people around you supporting you in the way YOU need? Studies have shown that connecting with loved ones do help you feel happier.

When a new baby comes into the household, everything changes. Even the dynamics between you and your partner will change. It is very important to be aware of these new dynamics and manage the change.

Have a think of your support network and ask yourself these questions:

Am I being listened to?

Do I feel drained or energised after seeing people from my network?

Are they respecting my boundaries?

Do I need to set some emotional boundaries? Maybe even making appointments in my diary if some are taking too much of my time?

There are a lot more questions you can ask yourself but the important thing is that you are concentrating on looking after yourself first. If you are not on top form, you might not be able to give as much as you want to your new baby.

Remember the safety messages when you are on an aeroplane? Put your own oxygen mask on first before anyone else.

You have permission to live your life YOUR way by being lovingly assertive and creating boundaries if needed.

5. Bigger picture

Once you have created time and space to think and be, you can start looking at the bigger picture, asking yourself questions like:

What kind of person do I want my baby to see me as?

What kind of family do I want to have? (and not what society is telling me!!)

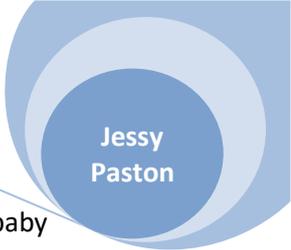
What are my dreams?

What do I want to achieve?

By managing your time, creating boundaries and getting time to yourself, you can start doing 1 thing every day, or every week to create the picture you want to reflect the life you want. This will take a long time and it is an on going practice.

As cliché as it sounds, it is all about the journey.

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I really hope these 5 steps will help you become a confident new mum, help you enjoy your baby and the time you have together and create a life that is more in line with what you need, making you happier and more authentic.

Please do share with anyone you may think will benefit from these 5 steps and if you need some extra emotional support, my contact details are below.

Enjoy your new baby and being a new mum.

The best but hardest job in the world <3

All my love,

Jessy

PS!! As a huge thank you for signing up and downloading the guide, I'm offering you a FREE 1 hour session. Drop me an email and let me know what issues you are dealing with at the moment and I will send you back times to connect.

Look forward to hearing from you soon.

It's time you received the help you need and maybe you just need one session to help you gain some clarity. Don't miss out, get in touch now x