



## 10 Keys to Blossoming as a New Mom

**Welcome to Motherhood!** It's a crazy-wonderful roller-coaster of a wild ride, guaranteed to be unlike anything you've experienced. Ever.

Hi, my name is Katherine and I'm a mother of two sweet and energetic little boys. I'm also a counsellor specializing in motherhood issues. I have been honoured to support many new moms just like you to find the tools they need to thrive and blossom. Yes, it can be hard sometimes. Motherhood can test every ounce of your stamina and patience. But it's also possible to experience the sweetness in the middle of the struggle. The rose right there in the middle of the thorns. My heartfelt wish for YOU is to feel Whole, Alive and Fulfilled on your motherhood journey. Even difficulty and struggle can lead to personal growth. Motherhood is ripe with these opportunities!



What's your reality like right now? You may feel utterly exhausted and

overwhelmed a lot of the time. You want to be the best possible mom for your baby, but the honest truth is you have no idea how. All the books and websites give different suggestions. Do you co-sleep or use a crib? Cry it out or wake up with baby multiple times at night? Breastfeed exclusively or bottle-feed without concern? Who do you trust? What is the right way? And how can you get some sleep?!?!?

Maybe you're also feeling lonely and disconnected being home with your baby. You've left your usual routine of going to work and spending time with friends *faaaaar* behind. Maybe you're dying to get out of the house but you're so

exhausted and the thought of packing up all that STUFF in the diaper bag is just too much.

Then there are the people in your life. Relationships can shift and change when a new baby comes. Things may feel different with your partner, your mom, or your friends. Relationship problems that have been simmering below the surface may come to the forefront, and new problems may arise.

You may also be aware of your parenting style. It might be similar to the way your parents raised you. Is that something you want? Maybe there are some areas where you thought your parents were great and other ways that you would prefer to do things differently with your own child.

Or maybe your concerns are feeling really, really big right now. You're not bonding with your baby the way you'd like. Maybe you're gripped with fear and anxiety throughout the day or you're filled with sadness and you don't know why. Perhaps you're feeling completely numb and disconnected with others or even yourself. Or you're just not coping at all right now. The reality is, post-partum depression and anxiety are affecting moms like never before. Is this a concern for you?

This is your new reality. Life is completely different now and you're not sure quite sure how to manage...



## Many new moms are wondering...

- How do I find time for myself?
- How do I prioritize my relationship with my partner?
- How do I meet other moms and build community and connection?
- How do I maintain friendships from my old life pre-baby?
- How do I become a great mom?
- How can I do things differently with my child than my parents did with me?
- How can I manage the big feelings that I'm experiencing now?
- How can I bring more joy and fulfillment to my motherhood experience?



## ***How Can You Find a Way to Survive AND Thrive as a New Mom?***

The good news is, with the right tools and support, it is entirely possible to THRIVE as a new mom! Difficulties may arise, but you can learn how to face them head-on. Instead of looking at challenges as something negative, you can learn to see them as opportunities to grow, learn and evolve into your best self! Before you know it, you will be growing and blossoming as a person through your experience

— as a mom. And you know what? When you are growing and evolving yourself, chances are your baby will thrive too :)



# Here's What You Need to Know to Blossom, Thrive, and Flourish as a New Mom!



1. **Build a Support Network.** With family, friends, co-workers, and other new moms. But how do you find the time? It's often a matter of adjusting your expectations and setting simple, achievable goals for connection. Maybe you can attend a play group with other moms and babies once a week. Have a coffee date with your best friend on Saturday morning while Dad, Grandma or a babysitter watches your baby. And don't forget about the online world for support and connection, especially when it's hard to get out of the house (ideal for when baby is sleeping!) There are plenty of websites and groups of other moms online looking for connection and supporting each other.
2. **Ask For Help.** This is a big one- and a hard one for many new moms. Remember-- throughout history and still in many places in the world today moms get a lot of help after a baby is born. You aren't meant to do it alone! You can't give from an empty cup. You need help to be the best mom you can be to your child. If help isn't forthcoming, ask for it. Ask your husband/partner, parents, friends, aunts, uncles, co-workers... often these people would love to help! Get someone to help you with errands, cooking, cleaning, dishes, watching your baby so you can rest... whatever you really need and your helpers are able to offer! You can even hire help around the house if you can afford it (or adjust your budget if you can't, sometimes this can absolutely make a world of difference for new moms!)



3. **Receive.** This goes along with asking for help. When someone is kind and generous enough to help you, let it in! Take a moment to breathe it in, knowing you fully deserve the kindness. You might feel full of gratitude. Express it with a heartfelt thank you to the generous person in your life. Gratitude is powerful and brings lots of positive energy to your life.
4. **Authentic Connection.** Reach out and share what's REALLY going on for you! You may be amazed that you're not alone in your feelings... Many new moms think they are the only ones feeling and experiencing what they do. Sharing authentically gets things out of your head and it can be a huge relief to find sameness with other moms. This doesn't mean blurting out your deepest, darkest fears to the cashier at the grocery store. Find a friend or family member or another new mom from your play group who seems open and empathetic. Be willing to share yourself and also listen deeply and with compassion when someone has something to share with you.
5. **Spend Time Doing Things You Enjoy and That Fulfill You.**



one of them some kind of exercise or physical activity), and set a goal to do each one at least once a week. Do you like to dance? Play the guitar? Read novels? Then do it! Do it while your baby is napping or in the evening after baby is asleep. Or

when Dad gets home from work or while Grandma is over cuddling your baby. Whenever you can (except when you REALLY need to sleep. Sleep is super important too). Notice how you feel during and after spending time doing what you love. Remember how great it feels and how it energizes you when you're struggling to find the time and energy to do it.

6. **Prioritize Yourself and Your Needs 2<sup>nd</sup>.** That's right, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Not first (because obviously, your baby really NEEDS you for his/her basic needs and that has to come first). But not dead last either. New motherhood is a special time where it's ok that everything else gets put on hold for a little while to focus on your baby AND yourself (because when mama is ok then baby is ok). What about all those other things that get in the way of taking care of yourself. Laundry? Cleaning? Dishes? Errands? Put those things 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> or not at all (see #2 Ask For Help). When you have a free moment, ask yourself what YOU really need right now (see #'s 4 and 5). When you meet your own needs 2<sup>nd</sup>, you'll feel so much happier and more fulfilled. Babies do best when their mamas are happy. And you do too :)



7. **Know That You are Human and Human Beings Are Emotional Beings.** It's normal to feel and express (in healthy, non-destructive ways) a whole range of feelings like joy, sadness, anger, excitement, fear, love, frustration, and many more. In order to feel the "positive" emotions, we need to feel the "negative" ones too. Emotions are a package deal! Take the pressure off yourself to feel happy all the time. You're human. Give your feelings the opportunity to flow (like your baby does!) and you will naturally find they will come and go.
8. **Allow Obstacles to Become Opportunities.** Perhaps you and your partner are fighting a lot. Or you're so overwhelmed by all the parenting decisions you need to make that you feel completely stuck. Or you're feeling lonely and isolated and resentful of your baby. When you're in the middle of a big struggle, what do you do? It might be tempting to blame others or blame yourself, but does that really solve anything? An empowering way to look at any difficulty is as an opportunity for personal growth. By facing your

feelings about the difficult situation head-on and speaking your own truth authentically without blaming others, you can learn to view the situation from a new perspective and find new understanding and resolution.

9. **Healing Your Own Emotional Wounds Means They Won't Get Passed on to Your Children.** Do you find yourself yelling a lot? Or feeling overwhelmed by irrational fears and anxieties? Do you have issues from your past or your childhood that you haven't dealt with (and who doesn't!)? These issues can often come to the forefront during pregnancy and new motherhood. Facing difficult issues and feelings makes it less likely they will affect your parenting and be passed onto your child.

*So how do you do that?*

- When big feelings come up, notice them without pushing them away.
- When you have the opportunity (once baby is asleep, etc.), journal about your feelings or share them with someone you trust.
- Don't censor any feelings. Give them free reign for a limited amount of time.
- Does this feeling remind you of something that happened during your childhood when you felt the same way (even if the situation is different)?
- What are you afraid all of this means about you? Do you fear that you're not good enough? Not lovable? Not important? Weak?
- Then ask yourself, is this really true? Chances are, you've been looking through the lens of a belief you developed about yourself a long time ago.
- When you discover the truth about yourself... your Strength, your Lovability, your Importance to the people around you and in this world... you can heal wounds from the past and let the light of your best self shine through!



## 10. **Recognize when you need additional support.**

- Are you having trouble adjusting to new motherhood?
- Do you feel traumatized by your birth experience?
- Are you having relationship difficulties (with your partner or someone else).
- Do you have concerns about post-partum depression or anxiety?
- Do you want to free yourself from your own childhood pain and wounding so you don't pass it on to your child?
- Do you want emotionally resilient children? (by becoming an emotionally resilient mom)
- Do you want to truly thrive, blossom and flourish as a mom and feel whole, alive and fulfilled?

Through my online counselling practice, Blossoming Mother Counselling, I offer individual counselling as well as support groups for new moms. Early intervention can help reduce your risk of post-partum depression and anxiety, and help you to embrace each moment and have a joyful, enriching experience of motherhood.



[www.blossomingmothercounselling.com](http://www.blossomingmothercounselling.com)

[katherine@blossomingmothercounselling.com](mailto:katherine@blossomingmothercounselling.com)

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