

Quotes about Postpartum Period / what Life with Baby is really like

Instructions: You could read these quotes out loud yourself, but it's more powerful if students read them. (If you have a very literate population.) Print these pages out. Cut quotes apart. In class, hand them around to students to read out loud. There are more quotes here than you will probably ever use, so you can decide if you want to prioritize some that you always want to include. If so, you can mark them with a sticker or a dot of color or something so there are easy to pick out of the pile.

Quotes about Falling in Love:

Seeing the look on a baby's face as they see the world and are in awe of all the new things around them is my favorite part of being a mother. That wide-eyed curiosity babies have as they discover a butterfly or a flower or the moon – it's something I'll never forget. Babies remind us just how beautiful our world really is.

Once we saw our daughter born, every day is Father's Day. Nothing can trump the feeling of holding your child for the very first time. Everything changes from that moment on. I never thought I would just sit and stare at a baby, but now it is just a natural and wonderful thing to do.

I love, love, love my daughter. I love her more than I ever thought I could love someone. But I hate, hate, hate being a parent. I hate how much my life has changed, I hate all I have had to give up, I hate not being able to get a good night's sleep or an uninterrupted meal.

When the nurse handed me my little bundle of newborn baby, I felt embarrassed to admit that I felt like I was holding a stranger -- someone else's baby. I knew, cognitively, that I was going to love and care for this little person, but I didn't instantly FEEL that lightning bolt to the heart. I felt terror. What have I gotten myself into? Would life ever be normal again? Could I do this whole mothering thing? What if I failed?

As the days went by, that love between my baby and me began and intensified, solidified and continues to grow. Now, I have these moments when she is snuggled into my neck or smiling up at me, that I'm paralyzed with love. This is MY baby. I would die for her, kill for her, sacrifice anything and anyone for her. Finally I understand what all those other parents were talking about.

Quotes about the Challenges of Baby Care

Breastfeeding isn't always a walk in the park. It can cause frustration, pain, resentment, sadness, even grief. But there is another side, too. And that is the potential for a joy so deep it can take your breath away. A power so profound it can change your life. It is awesome - to be able to produce food from your body, to nourish another living creature without having to rely on anyone or anything else.

It's enough to make you worry that the rest of your life will be like this. You wonder if you'll ever have sex with your partner again, or read a book that isn't made of cloth, let alone actually leave the house. It does get better, honestly. Within a few months you'll have some semblance of your life back...

"Nobody will ever tell you this," a friend whispered to me, shortly before the birth of my first child. "The first few weeks are ABSOLUTE HELL. Prepare yourself for total madness and it won't seem so bad." It was the best advice any expectant father could have. The truth is that those first few weeks are hell. You'll be surrounded by piles of dirty diapers, filthy clothes and mountains of dirty dishes. You'll be woken up throughout the night by ear-splitting baby cries. You feel as if you'll never get a decent night's sleep again. Suddenly, the boring job that you've wanted to quit for years seems like bliss.

The one thing that helps is hearing that other moms went through the exact same mood swings, exhaustion, and endless feedings. The kind ones say, "It ends soon, in a month or so." The cruel ones cackle and say things like, "Oh, it never ends. Never. Never." Ha ha, funny joke, experienced mom!

I'm on a crazed merry-go-round: I change her diapers, I feed her, she poops and pees before I even get her off the breast so I change her again, this makes her indignant so I feed her again to calm her, and the cycle starts all over again. How can I find the time for anything else when she screams for me hungrily with her mouth as wide-open as a baby bird's? And the sleep deprivation and vrooming hormones are giving me mood swings that veer from elated adoration to sudden, fierce anger. I'm crazy right now.

Quotes about Self-Care Topics:

Something that I'm still dealing with is the lack of sleep. I go to sleep tired, I wake up tired. There is no real rest in between. People say to rest when the baby rests, but that's the time you're catching up to what you need to do. The lack of sleep has left me feeling frustrated at times and doubting if I should have another child. I don't know if I can go through this again.

Due to the fact that I had a cesarean section, I had a lot more physical recovery than I had planned on. I was unable to lift things (only my baby), which even made breastfeeding hard. I had to rely on other family members for help as well to cook and clean for me. I also suffered from depression due to the change in hormones, which was also a challenge for me to overcome on top of all of the physical problems I was having.

The most difficult was balancing my physical life with my emotional rollercoaster. Too many ups and downs kept me from keeping control in a specific area of my life, diet and exercise. I managed to make bottles, dinner, take the kids out, entertain them. I also had time to feed them properly. I didn't have time to exercise or take care of myself... I satisfied every craving with an attitude that I deserve to eat anything I want, so I will.

At first, I felt guilty taking any time away from my baby to take care of myself. It seemed like it was selfish that I wanted to go exercise, or uncaring when I wanted to read a book while nursing instead of just gazing at my child adoringly. But I learned that when I give myself permission to take care of my own needs, then I am a better parent. I more enjoy the time that I am with the baby, because I'm not feeling resentful, and not wasting energy being cranky.

Quotes about Emotional Challenges:

It's such a misunderstood time. There's an expectation that you have this bubbly baby and should be happy, but reality is, it's extremely hard work. The baby cries. It's completely needy. Your needs go to the bottom of the list. It's hard, especially without support. When people expect you to be happy all the time, that's rough.

I was always tired and felt like I would never have enough down time. I was constantly criticizing myself for my stretch marks and weight gain and all the things I felt like I was doing wrong. I had severe postpartum depression. My husband was working a lot and was not around to help out. As soon as I walked in the door from work, I had to clean, cook, take care of kids, do laundry, get kids ready for school, and try and recover.

The roller coaster of emotions was sometimes really hard. The downs were tough. But, the ups were pretty wonderful – sometimes the littlest things give me such joy. The first time my baby smiled at me, like really smiled at me because of something I had done, was so incredible. I thought it was the best feeling I would ever have. Then last week, my baby laughed for the first time – this incredible little chuckle.

Quotes about relationships

I love my kids, but am utterly exhausted, especially working full time. I haven't slept more than 2 hours in a row in 5 months. I have no interest in sex with my husband. I should stress he is a wonderful, caring father. He more than pulls his weight with childrearing and household chores. I still find him attractive. But, honestly, I can't think of anything more enticing at the end of a day than falling into bed and sleeping. Will this pass with time?

New parenthood was a tough adjustment. Suddenly, I wasn't the most important person in my husband's life, and he wasn't the most important person in mine. That's a really weird feeling. I coped by being overly critical of him. I was constantly nit-picking how he held the bottle, fastened the diaper, swaddled her. I had to lighten up and remind myself that, as long as she is safe, just to keep my mouth shut and let him find his own parenting style.

I was too tired to maintain my relationship with my partner. I was also too tired to clean or do any sort of housework. And too tired to go out with friends. I felt very lonely.

I think the greatest challenge was the change in my relationship with my fiancé. Although we never talked about it, we both realized that I had diverted nearly all of the attention from him to the baby, and I think that we both felt bad about it. It was also difficult to adjust to the lack of alone time that we had together and the new responsibilities that needed to be fit into our already busy lives.

I was also proud of how my husband and I shared duties and relied on each other in the first few weeks after our baby's birth. We took turns sleeping and doing household chores as well as taking care of our baby.

I saw my marriage in a different, even lovelier, light. Watching my husband be a father and seeing how gentle he was with my little ones made me love him even more.

Quotes about Adapting to a New Identity

During my pre-pregnancy life, I was an over-achiever in perpetual motion: driven, focused, overworked and loving every minute of it. After my baby was born, I learned to ignore the demands for accomplishment that swelled up from within me. I opened to the pleasures of mothering, and tuned-in to the little piece of perfection that snuggled contentedly to my breast. I began to follow her cues, ignoring self-imposed obligations so I could cherish each moment.

When I was pregnant, I'd expound confidently on plans for my baby's upbringing. Other parents would gently say, "Parenting is really an exercise in giving up control." I would smile and nod, but inside I was mocking them. Give up control? As if! But now I've learned. Babies emerge from the womb with extremely clear ideas about what they will accept and what they will not. And their banshee cries convince even the most arrogant mommy that she'll do things the baby's way from now on.

Adjusting to the fact that I had to rely financially and emotionally on someone else was difficult. My husband couldn't understand why leaving the working world and staying home with no money of my own was such a trying adjustment for me.

Returning to work was a major adjustment.... Just getting out the door was a chore! I feel that I didn't do my best job teaching my students for the remainder of the school year.... I was stressed from lack of sleep and all the responsibilities of home and work. And I felt like I was not actually spending enough time with my own child. I wanted to be in his life as much as possible, and I wasn't able to.

Becoming a mother has offered me a capacity to love and protect that I had not known before. I remember gently swinging on my hammock in the backyard, my seven-month-old son snuggled sleepily to my chest. As we swayed rhythmically side to side, listening to the birds, smelling the moist earth after a morning rain, I realized that it is a beautiful and satisfying feeling to care this deeply.

I can't be perfect at motherhood. But the well-being of my child demands that I always do my best. I have read that the human personality, and self-esteem, is more or less defined by the time a child is three. So far, I think I am on track. I am proud that my little one has never known a moment without love. As she grows older, she may not always recognize that love comes in a variety of forms: She may gripe about limited TV viewing, or roll her eyes at the thank-you letter that I insist she write. But one day, my daughter will get it.

I would really like to stress how important it is to get out and socialize with other moms and babies. At about 6 months I found the local libraries do story times and it was the best thing I could have done. Having other parents to talk to and hear their stories is so helpful. It lets you know the things you are experiencing are normal and may give a new way to approach a problem.

Other topics

Although I didn't experience "post partum depression", I was very sad and devastated to learn that I had such an extremely low milk supply. I am a huge breastfeeding advocate and had planned to breastfeed until my son self-weaned, so it was especially hard to find out that I was not able to do that. I cried a lot for the first six months. It made me feel so inadequate and like a failure as a woman and mother. I hated having to give my son even a little bit of formula, and to have to give him a lot was just heartbreaking.