



AWHONN IDAHO CHAPTER ANNUAL DINNER

BOISE, ID

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SLIDE HANDOUTS AVAILABLE AFTER THE WORKSHOP AT:

[HTTPS://WWW.PENNYSIMKIN.COM/IDAHO-PERINATAL-PROJECT-HANDOUTS/](https://www.pennysimkin.com/IDAHO-PERINATAL-PROJECT-HANDOUTS/)
PASSWORD (CASE SENSITIVE): IDAHO2018

PENNY SIMKIN, PT

WWW.PENNYSIMKIN.COM

PENNY@PENNYSIMKIN.COM

Unhappiness After Childbirth: A Self-Assessment Tool

Please circle the answer that comes closest to how you have felt **in the past seven days**, not just how you feel today.

1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things...
 - a) as much as I always could.
 - b) not quite as much as I used to.
 - c) definitely not as much as I used to.
 - d) not at all.
2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things...
 - a) as much as I always did.
 - b) not quite as much as I used to.
 - c) definitely not as much as I used to.
 - d) not at all.
3. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
4. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
5. I have felt scared or panicked for no good reason...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
6. Things have been getting on top of me...
 - a) not at all; I've been coping very well.
 - b) very little; I've been coping pretty well.
 - c) some of the time; I haven't been coping as well as usual.
 - d) quite a lot; I haven't been able to cope at all.
7. I have been so unhappy that I've had difficulty sleeping...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
8. I have felt sad or miserable...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
9. I have been so unhappy that I've been crying...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.
10. The thought of harming myself or my baby has occurred to me...
 - a) not at all.
 - b) very little.
 - c) some of the time.
 - d) most of the time.

If you have a "feeling" after completing this form that something "isn't right" or if you have any questions, please contact your childbirth educator, doula, or care provider, or a mental health therapist.

Adapted from: Cox JL, Holden JM. "Detection of postnatal depression: development of the 10-item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale," *Br J Psychiatry*. 150:782-786, 1987.

When Will I Get Back To “Normal”?

by Penny Simkin

The birth of your baby represents a sudden disruption in the usual balance of your lives – physically and emotionally. Your basic needs for food, sleep, physical comfort, emotional wellbeing, relaxation, independence, and predictability suddenly are pushed aside by the basic needs of your baby. Your well-ordered life is temporarily thrown into disorder.

As new parents, you may wonder if life will ever be as it was before the baby was born. You sometimes yearn for the simpler, more predictable life you had before the baby came. It takes time for you to physically recover from the birth, and to achieve a comfortable and rewarding new lifestyle that balances the interests and demands of your former life with the joys and needs of your new life with your baby. How long this will take depends on a number of influential factors that can either ease or slow your recovery. For example, your comfort and knowledge of newborns, your physical and mental health, your financial state, the amount of support you have from family and friends, your baby's health and temperament, all play a role in the speed of your recovery. *If all or most of these factors are positive*, your physical recovery and emotional adjustment after childbirth will probably take from four to twelve weeks. It will take longer if you experience more negative factors.

By “recovery,” we mean that life begins to have more predictable patterns, you feel mostly rested, you can take care of life's daily demands, and you are beginning to enjoy some of your previous interests again. Furthermore, your body has healed, and you feel competent in understanding and meeting your baby's needs.

Time Frame for Postpartum Recovery

This figure shows a typical time frame beginning with birth and its accompanying physical and emotional disorder, and ending when you have established a new balance in your life. Just as labor progresses in a predictable or “typical” pattern, so does the postpartum recovery period. Both, however, can be prolonged or complicated by particular factors. When all or most of the factors are positive, postpartum recovery may take one to three months. However, if you encounter many negative factors, your recovery may be complicated or prolonged. If it seems to be taking a long time for you to feel like yourself again, think about the factors influencing your recovery. You may recognize a number of negative factors and realize that it makes sense that your recovery is taking longer. You may also want to get some help to make the adjustment easier. Consult your childbirth educator or your caregiver for resources to assist your postpartum adjustment.

