

Birth Story Processing



- 1.) What was the birth experience like for you?
- 2.) Did you notice any feelings or thoughts bubble up that you were not prepared for?
- 3.) Did you feel heard and supported by those present (family, partner, providers, etc..?)
- 4.) Is there anything you've been thinking about that is lingering or feels unresolved?
- 5.) What did you notice went better than expected?
- 6.) Is there anything you would say to your past self? What about your future self?
- 7.) How have your feelings about your birth experience been affecting you?

Open-ended questions help to facilitate discussion and reflection about a person's birth experience

Birth is evocative. Processing one's story can be an empowering and healing experience

Trauma can occur at any point during the peripartum period. It is essential to listen, validate, & normalize.



Clinical Intersection of PMADs & Trauma

PMADs

- Irritability/rage
- Depression, Anxiety, OCD
- Overwhelm & sadness
- Inability to care for self or baby
- Suicidality & self-harm risk
- Anhedonia
- Poor concentration
- Worries related to health & safety of baby

- Withdrawal/isolation
- Somatic complaints
- Sleep disturbances
- Disconnection from baby
- Fear of loss of control
- Intrusive thoughts
- Low self-esteem & guilt

- Hypervigilance
- Emotional dysregulation
- Withdrawal/numbing
- Flashbacks & panic attacks
- Dissociation/avoidance
- Reluctance to breastfeed

Trauma

Postpartum Support International (PSI),
2022, <http://www.postpartum.net/>.

Considerations for the Birthing Person:

- Refer to OB/Midwife/Psychiatrist for medication
- Search PSI website to access providers for individual therapy
- Use EPDS & PHQ-9 for screening tools