

PROMOTING EMOTIONAL STABILITY

Emotional stability refers to a person's ability to remain stable and balanced. Having emotional stability means that you can withstand the whirlwind that life throws your way, and still be productive and capable through it. Emotional stability enables a person to develop an integrated and balanced way of perceiving the problems of life.

Take note though that emotional stability doesn't mean that you ignore or suppress your emotions. It's acknowledging that whatever you feel is there, but still moving forward and being productive despite those. And because of the gravity of the influence of emotions, it's important to not be swept away with it, and be emotionally stable.

Emotional stability allows you to have a greater ability to focus, confidence, have a positive outlook, and benefits your mental and physical health.

WHAT EMOTIONS DO FOR YOU

EMOTIONS PREPARE US FOR ACTION

- They prepare us for change: body changes, life changes, labor and delivery, for the baby (nesting).
- They save time in urgent situations: illness, safety, pregnancy complications, labor and delivery, postpartum needs or complications, infant illness.
- They help us overcome obstacles (strong emotions): perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, medical challenges during pregnancy, loss and infertility, first 3 months postpartum (while exhausted), labor and delivery.

EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO OURSELVES

- They signal or alarm us that something is happening.
- Gut feelings can be intuition, but remember to check the facts.
- Emotions are reminders of our wants, needs and values.

Caution: Emotions may or may not represent facts (i.e. If I feel like a bad mom, I must be a bad mom).

EMOTIONS COMMUNICATE TO (AND INFLUENCE) OTHERS

Emotions are hard wired (Biology)

- Facial expressions are hard wired. They communicate faster and without words (this allows us to understand our infants' needs).
- Emotions signal for help. They let others know we need them.
- Emotions allow for bonding with our babies.

FACTORS THAT MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO REGULATE EMOTIONS

HORMONAL IMBALANCE

Low frustration tolerance, social isolation, intense feelings

SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Exhaustion and poor concentration, reactivity

BREAST AND BOTTLE FEEDING CHALLENGES

Negative self-talk, social isolation, difficulty relaxing, lack of support

CHANGING SENSE OF SELF

Harsh self-criticism, social isolation, changes in role and perception of self

PHYSICAL DISCOMFORT/RECOVERY

Healing after delivery, discomfort during pregnancy, breast infection, labor and delivery

LACK OF SKILL

You do not know what to do to manage your emotions or you do not know what you are feeling

THOUGHTS AND BELIEFS

Myths of motherhood, treating thoughts as facts, beliefs that keep us stuck in emotion

ENVIRONMENT

People or events reinforce high emotion only, limited resources, lack of knowledge