

MYTHS OF MOTHERHOOD

MYTH

FACT

You should enjoy every moment of parenting/mothering.	Not every moment of parenting is enjoyable--some moments are downright miserable, and that's okay! Your enjoyment of any given moment of parenting does not define your worth as a parent.
Moms like their babies all the time.	Children can be confusing and frustrating at times, but feelings in a moment do not represent your overall bond with or care for your child.
Breastfeeding is natural and therefore should come to you naturally.	Breastfeeding requires skill on the part of the parent and the baby and for some can be very challenging. The ease with which breastfeeding does or doesn't come to you and your baby does not determine your worth or skill as a parent.
Asking for help is a sign of weakness	Humans were not meant to parent alone! Traditionally, people lived in close proximity to family or friends that would provide support. Receiving help helps you to be a better parent.
There is a right way and a wrong way to parent.	There are many parenting styles, and all children respond to parenting styles differently. There is no one right way to parent.
We are shorting our children when we take care of our own needs.	Taking care of our own needs allows us to be more present and able to enjoy the time we do spend with our children.
Breastfeeding is the best way to be bonded to your infant.	There are countless ways to bond with your infant. You are not putting you/your baby at any emotional disadvantage if breastfeeding is not the right choice for your family.
A good mom bonds with her baby immediately.	The speed of bonding is variable from parent to parent and pregnancy to pregnancy, and there is no "cut off" for bonding at which point your relationship with you baby will be irreparably harmed.
Mothering comes naturally.	Mothering is a skill just like any other. Some of us may start out with more "skill" than others for various reasons, but these skills can be learned in due time.
A good mother loves being a mother.	Being a parent can be extremely challenging at times, and take us away from other parts of our lives that we previously greatly enjoyed. Good parents don't have to love being a parent all the time.
All mothers are coping better than I am.	Because of shame/stigma, many parents are not up front about the challenges they are facing. Parenting is challenging for everyone. Period. If someone looks like they never struggle, it's just because they're not sharing the hard parts.
The best way to give birth is naturally without medical intervention.	The ideal way to give birth is in a way that minimizes harm to mother and baby, and this is not always possible naturally or without medical intervention.
A good mother knows how to instinctively care for her baby.	All babies are different. They all have different preferences and different cues and some are pretty tricky to figure out! Good mothers do not always instinctively know what their child needs, but they are always striving to understand their baby's needs better, something that requires practice and dedication rather than instinct.
A desire to be an employed/working mother means I am less committed to my kids.	Just like each baby has a different temperament and different interests, so do parents! If a parent is happiest when they are free to pursue their passions outside of the home for work, that is likely also when they are able to be the best version of themselves for their child when they are at home.
A desire to stay at home with my kids means I am better suited to remain outside of the workforce.	Some parents may be torn between staying at home with their children and going into the workforce. However, staying at home is not the default "right choice" for everyone and it is possible to cultivate just as loving and close of a relationship with your children if you work outside of the home.