



NHS Fife Department of Psychology

Self Help Books for
Pregnancy &
Post Natal
Problems

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“Antenatal & Postnatal Depression. Practical Advice and Support for All Sufferers” by Siobhan Curham

This self-help book discusses emotional difficulties during pregnancy as well as after the birth.

It offers excellent practical advice and support for sufferers and explores possible causes. It also includes real-life stories of women who have suffered from antenatal and postnatal depression. The author suffered from antenatal depression but was unaware of it at the time.

She was determined that other women would not go through what she went through.

“Surviving Post-Natal Depression. At Home, No One Hears You Scream” by Cara Aitken.

The author, Cara Aitken has two daughters and suffered from postnatal depression after both their births. This book starts by telling the stories of ten women who have suffered from postnatal depression. “Their stories told honestly and informally, will be a source of strength, hope and understanding for other sufferers.” The book also includes a chapter for “the Other Half” which talks about “Men behaving sadly – not badly.” The book offers excellent practical advice from women who have suffered from postnatal depression and ends with an interesting discussion about “the myth of perfect mothering.”

“Postnatal Depression. Facing the Paradox of Loss, Happiness and Motherhood” by Dr Paula Nicolson.

Paula Nicolson discusses the many paradoxes of being a mother:

“Happiness and joy and the pride of being a mother may go hand in hand with depression, weeping and seeing the world as a pointless place.” With the help of 24 women, she presents their stories about becoming a mother.

The book talks about the many losses that come with becoming a mother (loss of sleep, time, looks and a sense of ‘self’) to help women who are unhappy after childbirth to understand, accept and survive the many different emotions they experience.

“Feelings after Birth” by Heather Welford

This book is produced by the National Childbirth Trust. It is a fairly short book which describes postnatal depression, its causes and suggests how to get support. It also includes four stories from mothers who have suffered from postnatal depression.

“Eyes Without Sparkle. A Journey through postnatal illness.”

By Elaine A Hanzak

This is a powerful medical autobiography describing the author’s journey into, through, and out of puerperal psychosis, the most severe form of postnatal depression. Puerperal Psychosis is a rare illness (approximately one or two in every 1000 births) which includes psychotic experiences, such as hallucinations and delusions. “With great courage Elaine Hanzak shares the story of her battle with a rare, but potentially life-threatening illness ... describing in intimate detail the unravelling of her mind ...”

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