# The Postnatal Period

## Your 6 Ways to Wellbeing

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Pregnancy and early parenthood are often described as joyful but they can also bring exhaustion, overwhelm, loneliness, identity shifts, and anxiety. These small wellbeing steps aren't about having it all together. They're gentle reminders that your needs matter, too.

Whether you're navigating sleepless nights, recovering from birth, adjusting to a changing body, or trying to feel "yourself" again, this guide is here to support you.

You can explore the Six Ways in any order - there's no right or wrong place to start. Take your time, and choose the areas that feel most relevant to you right now. Here, we've included some simple ideas and suggestions to help you build the Six Ways into your everyday life.

Read on to find out more and try them out for yourself.

# Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

**For each of the 6 Ways to Wellbeing, think about how you feel right now. Then choose a colour below:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Red** | | **This is an area I find difficult or I'm not doing much of at the moment.** |
| **Amber** | | **I'm doing some things in this area, but there's room for improvement.** |
| **Green** | | **I feel confident and positive in this area.** |

**Focus first on Red or Amber areas. Small steps-like checking in with a friend or taking a short walk-can grow into something meaningful over time.**

**There's no right or wrong answer. This is just a tool to help you reflect and take positive steps for your wellbeing.**

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# Your Wellbeing Traffic Lights

Feeling in control of money reduces stress. This could mean making a budget, getting advice, or taking small steps to plan ahead.

Paying attention to what's around us helps us feel present. You might notice nature, savour a meal, or pause to breathe.

Building strong relationships helps us feel supported. This could mean spending time with family, friends, or joining a group.

Learning new things keeps our minds active and builds confidence. Try a new hobby, recipe, or skill.

Moving our bodies boosts mood and energy. It doesn't have to be sport - it could be walking, dancing, or stretching.

Helping others gives us purpose and joy. You could volunteer, offer your time, or do something kind for a neighbour.

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# Financial Wellbeing

## If money feels tight, know that help and advice are out there.

Having a baby can bring joy and also financial strain. Nappies, clothes, equipment, and childcare all add up, and it is okay to feel worried or overwhelmed. Money stress can affect your mental health, but you are not alone. Taking small, practical steps and seeking support can help you feel more in control and less burdened.

## Financial Wellbeing

- Keep a note of essential spending so you feel more aware and in control, even if things are tight.
- Look into local support for families, such as grants, clothing banks, baby bundles, or peer networks.
- Use the Children & Families Toolkit from West Lothian Council to identify resources for benefits, income support, childcare costs etc.
- Speak to Citizens Advice, your midwife or health visitor for free advice and referrals.
- Try budgeting in small steps. Do not aim for perfect; aim for doable.
- Swap instead of shop. Clothes, toys, and equipment are often available second-hand or through local groups.

# Financial wellbeing worksheet

## Reminder

**Struggling financially does not mean you are doing a bad job. You deserve support and dignity, always.**

**Use this space to think about ways to feel more in control of your money and reduce stress.**

- What financial worry feels most pressing right now?
- Who or what could you reach out to for help or advice?

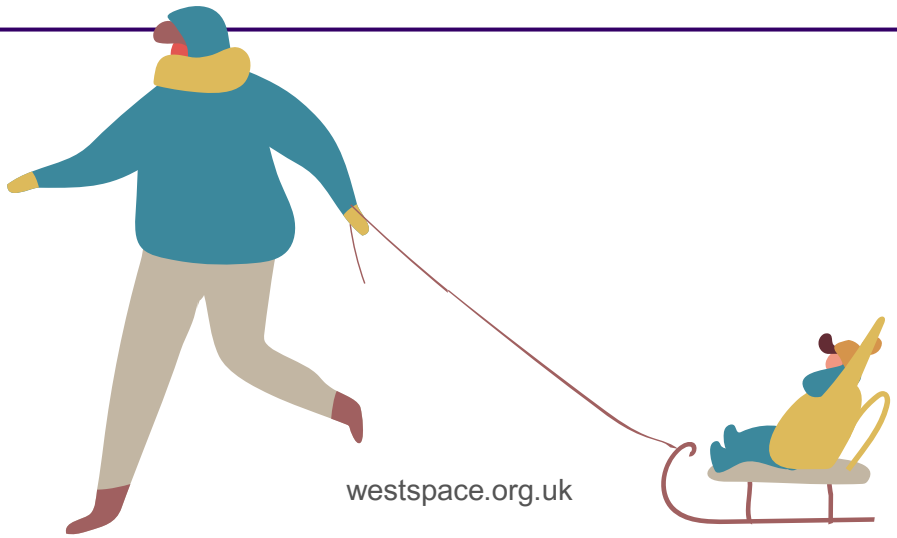
# Take notice

## Pause to notice small moments with your baby and with yourself.

In the rush of feeds, nappy changes, and sleepless nights, it is easy to forget to check in with yourself. Taking notice is about slowing down just enough to recognise how you are really feeling, in your body and mind. It is not about fixing anything, it is about allowing space for what is here, whether that is exhaustion, joy, or both.

## Take Notice

- Notice what you are feeling right now. It is okay if it is joy, worry, boredom, love, or all at once.
- Appreciate small wins with your baby, like a feeding session that went well or a shared smile. These moments matter.
- Take a moment to appreciate something small: a warm drink, your baby's fingers, light through the window.
- Try grounding yourself with slow breaths, or name five things you can see or hear.
- Keep a little journal or use a note on your phone to track how you feel each day.



# Take notice worksheet

## Reminder

**Slowing down does not mean you are doing less. It means you are caring for yourself too, because you matter.**

**Use this space to explore ways to be more mindful and aware of the present moment.**

- What small moment brought you peace or comfort recently?
- How can you make space, even briefly, to notice yourself amid the busyness?

# Connect

## Reach out - you don't have to face new motherhood on your own.

Becoming a parent can feel like entering a whole new world. The changes in your routine, relationships, and identity can leave you feeling isolated, even when surrounded by others. Connection, in its many forms, can remind you that you are not alone in this experience. It does not have to be loud or social; even a small, honest conversation or quiet company can make a real difference.

## Ways to Connect

- Text a friend with a baby, or message someone just to say, "Today's been tough. You?"
- Join a local baby group, postnatal class, or online community. Sometimes just sharing a space is enough.
- Be honest with loved ones about what support you actually need, whether that is emotional or practical.
- If you are struggling, talk to a midwife, health visitor, or GP. Asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Consider peer support groups in West Lothian, such as Home-Start West Lothian, where trained volunteers offer listening, practical help, and company.
- Share experiences with other parents locally or online - you may discover that what feels challenging to you is common, and your insight may help someone else too.

# Connect worksheet

## Reminder

**You do not need a big social circle. One person who listens is enough. You deserve support, too.**

**Use the space below to explore ways you can connect with others. Think about what works for you and add your own ideas.**

- Who helps you feel understood and supported right now?
- How could you reach out, even in a small way, this week?

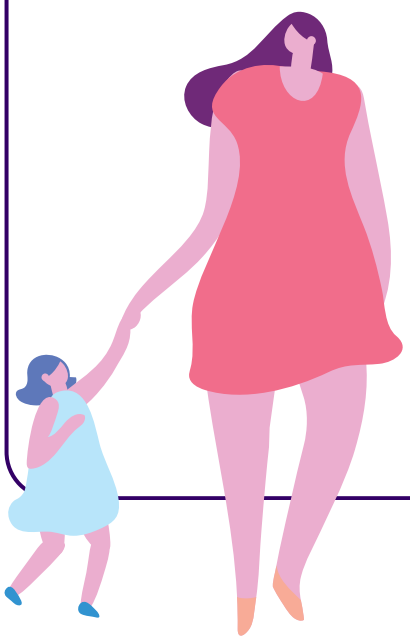
# Keep learning

## You're learning every day - there's no such thing as doing it perfectly.

Early parenthood is a constant process of learning and adapting. From feeding to sleep routines, from figuring out your baby's needs to rediscovering your own, every day brings something new. It is okay to not know everything. Learning in this season of life is not about being perfect; it is about growing, experimenting, and noticing what works for you and your family.

## Keep Learning

- Notice small lessons every day. Each feeding, nap routine, or soothing technique teaches you more about your baby and yourself.
- Give yourself credit: you are learning to meet a new person's needs and your own.
- Try something new for yourself when you are ready, such as a recipe, a book, or a creative hobby.
- Ask questions and share experiences. No one has all the answers, but we can learn together.



- Explore local workshops and groups. West Lothian libraries, community centres, and children's hubs sometimes run free or low-cost parenting, wellbeing, or creative classes.
- Look for local services or apps offering short wellbeing or parenting courses you can explore in your own time.

# Keep learning worksheet

## Reminder

**Learning does not mean doing more. Sometimes it means learning to rest, to say no, or to ask for help.**

**Use this space to think about ways to try new things and keep your mind active.**

- What have you learned about yourself since becoming a parent?
- What are you curious about or interested in exploring, just for you?

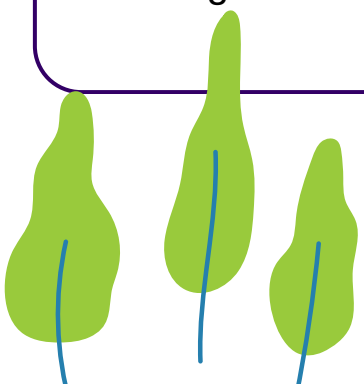
# Be active

## Move when you can, rest when you need - both help your recovery.

Your body has done something incredible. After pregnancy and birth, it is normal to feel tired, sore, or disconnected from your body. Movement can help you reconnect with yourself and lift your mood, but it does not need to be intense or planned. Gentle movement, taken at your own pace, can help you feel stronger, calmer, and more like yourself again.

## Be Active

- Take a slow walk with the buggy or sling. Fresh air can help, even for 10 minutes.
- Try stretching while the baby naps, or simple pelvic floor exercises during feeding.
- Parent-and-baby yoga or buggy-fit classes can be a great way to move and connect with others.
- Use outdoor spaces mindfully. Even a few minutes in a garden, playground, or local green area can reset your body and mind.
- Connect movement with social support. Attend classes, meet a friend for a short walk, or join local walking groups for parents movement and connection together help wellbeing.
- Listen to your body. Rest when needed, and pace yourself. Small, regular activity is more sustainable than overexertion.



# Be active worksheet

## Reminder

**All movement counts. Listen to your body, and do what feels kind, not what feels pressured.**

**Use this space to think about ways you can move more and stay active.**

- What type of gentle movement helps you feel calmer or more connected to yourself?
- What small physical activity could you try this week, just for you?

# Give

## Be as kind to yourself as you are to your baby - you both need care.

Parenthood can be both beautiful and draining. You might feel like you are giving everything - your time, your energy, your love - and still wonder if it is enough. But what you offer, even in the smallest ways, matters deeply. A smile, a cuddle, a kind word to another parent - all of these are gifts of care and connection. Giving is not about doing more; it is about recognising the love and effort already within you.

### Give

- Say something encouraging to yourself each morning, such as “I am doing the best I can.”
- Let someone else know they are not alone. Support is a two-way street and even a text or quick chat can lift spirits.
- Give yourself permission to slow down. Some days will feel messy or unpredictable, self-kindness is giving yourself emotional space.
- If you can, help a neighbour or chat with another parent. Connection often begins with kindness.
- Give recognition for everyday wins. Each feeding, walk, or small routine completed is a form of giving effort that deserves acknowledgment.

# Give worksheet

## Reminder

**You are not failing if you are tired. You are giving all you can. Some days, getting through the day is an act of love.**

**Use this space to explore ways you can help or support others.**

- How have you already shown love or care today?
- What kindness could you offer yourself right now?

# The 6 Ways to Wellbeing

## Final Thoughts

**There is no single "right" way to do this.** Becoming a parent changes everything, including how you see yourself. You are still you - you are simply growing in new ways.
Whether you try one idea from this guide or simply take a deep breath today, remember this: you are doing your best, and that is enough.

**And don't keep it to yourself!** Share this guide with friends, family, or neighbours. We all face challenges, and sometimes just knowing someone else is trying too can be incredibly reassuring. When we support each other, we build stronger, more compassionate communities - and that's good for everyone's wellbeing.

**For more ideas, local resources, and community support for parents , visit:**

# Your thoughts...

**This space is yours. Use it to jot down ideas, reflections, or anything that comes to mind as you explore the Six Ways to Wellbeing.**

**There's no right or wrong way to do it. It's simply a space to pause, reflect, and capture whatever feels helpful in the moment.**

# Your thoughts...

# Stay in touch

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