



welcome

Welcome to Bloom Women's Wellness and thank you for beginning this journey. No matter what the response has been from your immediate friends, families, or inner critic, I believe you are making a good decision. Therapy is an inviting place where every single part of you is welcome, even the parts that are uncomfortable to share. As a therapist, I am honored that you chose this process as your vehicle to healing.

If this is your first time in therapy, welcome. Getting started can feel pretty scary — to talk to someone you do not know about things that make you uncomfortable, sad, angry, overjoyed, or embarrassed — but I would like to reassure you that this process is here to help you grow. There are certain elements necessary in therapy in order to maintain a space of positivity, growth, and healing. Yet, you are not responsible for maintaining those elements. That is the job of the therapist — my job. It is imperative that I maintain a judgment-free space, a space that is challenging but comforting, and a process that is enlightening as well as retrospective. Be open with your therapist about your experience as it unfolds. And if it is not the experience you were hoping to have, I hope you advocate for yourself and seek support elsewhere if no remedy is made.

For those who have been to therapy before and are starting again, welcome back. Whether you're trying a new therapist after a not-so-good counseling experience, or whether you're returning because previous experiences have helped you foster a sense of trust in therapy and its benefits, you are welcome here. I am glad that you have returned to therapy to continue your personal growth. I hope that your time in therapy will be as positive as previous therapeutic journeys, or that it will allow new growth that was stifled by a prior unhelpful experience. Returning to therapy after some time will likely mean revisiting work that you did before and figuring out together with your therapist what your goals are now. It will be helpful to share with your new therapist about your past experiences, so that together you can foster a trusting and beneficial relationship.

Therapy will be difficult sometimes and at others the most enjoyable part of your week. As therapists, we welcome these opposing states and embrace them as a sign of good work being done on your behalf. We ask that you bring your authentic and whole self to each session. We encourage you to allow yourself to experience any emotion or thought freely, for example crying without needing to apologize and voicing your feelings with confidence. If you are not quite there yet, we hope you will allow us to help you reach that point. It is our genuine hope that every client that comes to our office, journeys along their therapeutic path with a renewed sense of understanding and self-appreciation.

The following are a few suggestions to help make your therapy experience the most effective:

1. Before your scheduled therapy appointment, consider writing down questions, topics, or issues you would like to focus on in your session. You will be receiving all your intake paperwork prior to your first session via your email. Please make sure to have this completed 1 business day prior to your session so I have time to review your paperwork and complete a verification of benefits.
2. I encourage you to communicate your expectations to me so that we can work together toward your goals.
3. Please provide ongoing feedback to me so that I know how you are doing and feeling (ie., “I want to focus on my anxiety more,” or “I like doing homework between sessions”).
4. If you feel a need to increase or decrease the frequency of your sessions, or to make any changes, please communicate that to me.
5. If you feel a need to bring a spouse/partner, relative, or friend in with you for your session in order to work on interpersonal issues, feel free to do so. Please discuss it with me prior to their arrival.
6. If you have another professional involved in your care (e.g., family physician, psychiatrist, doula, chiropractor, etc.), I would be happy to coordinate with him/her. It is generally not advisable to have more than one mental health counselor involved in your treatment, at one time.
7. Try to make a commitment to yourself to remain in therapy and attend regular sessions, for as long as you feel necessary. If you wait until you have a crisis, it will be more difficult to build long-lasting coping skills, so we encourage being proactive.
8. If for any reason you would like to see a different therapist, please feel free to tell me. The therapeutic relationship is so important and I would be happy to provide you with names of other therapists that would be able to meet your needs.
9. Please be mindful of our 24-hour late cancellation/no-show policy. I want to be able to work with you to reschedule when life happens, so please stay in communication with me when this happens.
10. Please reach out to me directly if you need anything- We can discuss together the form of communication that works best for the both of us.

I look forward to working with you and I am so happy that you are here on your healing journey! Thank you for taking this step to work towards your best self.

CRISIS RESOURCES

Below is an ongoing list of resources that may be helpful as you work through your therapy journey. This comprehensive list includes emergency telephone numbers, mindfulness and meditation apps and resources, podcasts, books, lactation and medication sources, evidence-based care options, and local group support options. We are thankful for the support of other local perinatal practices for their collaboration with this resource handout, specifically Meadowlark Clinic.

- [7 Cups](#) connects you to caring listeners for free.
- [18 Percent](#) is a free, peer-to-peer online support community.
- [Helping children cope with disaster](#) (CDC - with additional links)
- [Speaking of Psychology podcast](#) (several episodes focused on anxiety related to COVID-19)
- [Building Resilience](#) (APA)
- SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline (800) 985-5990 provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.
- If you're in crisis and need support, **please call or text 988** or chat at 988lifeline.org/chat.
- National suicide prevention line: **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**
- Clive Behavioral Health: **844-680-0504**
- Your Life Iowa: Call- **855-581-8111**, Text- **855-895-8398**, live chat: <https://yourlifeiowa.org/>
- Text HOME to **741741**
- The Trevor Project (LGBTQ crisis & suicide hotline): **866-488-7386**
- [Veterans Crisis Line](#): **1-800-273-8255**

RESOURCE NUMBERS: These are not for emergencies, but additional after hours resources:

- PSI helpline: **1-800-944-4773 #1 Espanol, #2 English**
- Text HELP to **800-944-4773**
- Text HELP Español: **971-203-7773**
- National Maternal Mental Health Hotline: **1-883-9- HELP4MOMS**
- PSI's online support groups: <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/psi-online-support-meetings/>
- PSI's provider directory: <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/provider-directory/>
- Chat with mom's: <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/chat-with-an-expert/>
- Chat with dad's: <https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/chat-with-an-expert-for-dads/>

MINDFULNESS & MEDITATION

· *Buddhism for Mothers: A Calm Approach to Caring for Yourself and Your Children* by Sarah Naphtali (2003).

- *Aware: The Science and Practice of Presence — a Complete Guide to the Groundbreaking Wheel of Awareness Meditation Practice* by Daniel J. Siegel (2018).
- *Mindful Motherhood: Practical Tools for Staying Sane During Pregnancy and Your Child's First Year* by Cassandra Vieten (2009).
- *Mindful Moments for Busy Moms: Daily Meditations and Mantras for Greater Calm, Balance, and Joy* by Sarah Rudell Beach (2018).
- *The Miracle of Mindfulness* by Thich Nhat Hanh (1975).

[Mindful Mamas Club](#)

[Mindful Mama](#)

[Daring to Rest Academy](#)

[A Loving Kindness Meditation For Meditation: A Radical Act of Love](#)

Meditation Apps (free and subscription options):

- [Insight Timer](#)
- [Calm](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Mind the Bump](#)

MAMA-CENTERED PODCASTS

[Mom & Mind](#)

Postpartum Depression is real. And it's only part of the story. We dig in to ALL of the stuff that no tells you about, but you NEED to know. Dr. Kat, Psychologist and specialist in perinatal mental health, interviews moms, dads, experts and advocates about how to cope, manage and recover from perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. We talk about postpartum depression, postpartum anxiety and SO MUCH MORE!

[The Balance & Motherhood](#)

The Balance and Motherhood podcast is about putting yourself first in motherhood - giving mamas tools, resources and conversations ranging from topic like sex, relationships, mindfulness, self-care and more.

[What Fresh Hell: Laughing in the Face of Motherhood](#)

In each episode we discuss a sticky bit of parenting- anything from sick days to sleep training. We talk about it, laugh about it, call out each other's nonsense, and then we offer our listeners concrete takeaways.

[The Birth Hour](#)

Whether you are pregnant and looking for inspirational birth stories through your pregnancy, trying to conceive, a first time mom or a veteran mother of multiple children, you can learn, laugh and maybe even cry a little at these moving childbirth stories from women willing to share one of the most intimate moments of their lives.

POSTPARTUM

- ***The First Forty Days: The Essential Art of Nourishing the New Mother*** Hardcover by Heng Ou, Amely Greeven, and Marisa Belger (2016)
- ***Birth in Four Cultures: A Crosscultural Investigation of Childbirth in Yucatan, Holland, Sweden, and the United States*** 4th Edition by Brigitte Jordan and Robbie Davis-Floyd (1993).
- ***Zuo Yuezi: An American Mother's Guide to Chinese Postpartum***
- ***Recovery*** by Guang Ming Whitley and Kai Tsu Easlon (2016).
- ***What No One Tells You: A Guide to Your Emotions from Pregnancy to Motherhood*** by Dr. Alexandra Sacks and Dr. Catherine Birndorf (2019).
- ***Strong as a Mother: How to Stay Healthy, Happy, and (Most Importantly) Sane from Pregnancy to Parenthood: The Only Guide to Taking Care of YOU!*** by Kate Rope (2018).
- ***The Fourth Trimester: A Postpartum Guide to Healing Your Body, Balancing Your Emotions, and Restoring Your Vitality*** Paperback by Kimberly Ann Johnson (2017).
- ***The Postpartum Plan Workbook*** by Erin Huiatt (2019)
- ***Build Your Nest: A Postpartum Planning Workbook*** Paperback by Kestrel Gates (2016).

PERINATAL MOOD & ANXIETY DISORDERS

- Postpartum Support International: postpartum.net Provider Directory: www.psidirectory.com
- Postpartum Stress Center: www.postpartumstress.com
- ***Good Moms Have Scary Thoughts: A Healing Guide to the Secret Fears of New Mothers*** Hardcover by Karen Kleiman and Molly McIntyre (2019).
- ***This Isn't What I Expected: Overcoming Postpartum Depression*** Paperback by Karen R. Kleiman and Valerie Davis Raskin MD (2013).
- ***The Pregnancy and Postpartum Anxiety Workbook: Practical Skills to Help You Overcome Anxiety, Worry, Panic Attacks, Obsessions, and Compulsions*** by Pamela S. Wiegartz, Kevin L. Gyoerkoe (2009).
- ***The Pregnancy Workbook: Manage Anxiety and Worry with CBT and Mindfulness Techniques*** (2021). _Katayune Kaeni (mom and mind podcast host).
- ***Birth Trauma: A Guide for You, Your Friends and Family to Coping with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Following Birth*** by Kim Thomas (2013)
- ***Heal Your Birth Story: Releasing the Unexpected*** by Maureen Champion (2015)
- ***Daddy Blues: Postnatal Depression and Fatherhood*** by Mark Williams (2018).

RELATIONSHIPS

- ***Becoming Us: 8 Steps to Grow a Family that Thrives*** Paperback by Elly Taylor (2014).

- *To Have and to Hold: Motherhood, Marriage, and the Modern Dilemma* by Molly Millwood (2019).
- *How Not to Hate Your Husband After Kids* Hardcover by Jancee Dunn (2017).
- John and Julie Gottman are world renowned relationship experts and have [published many books and other tools](#) (including this [app](#)) to help boots relationship success and satisfaction.

LACTATION & MEDICATION

Sources to review if you are concerned about taking medications while breastfeeding or pumping:

- [LactMed App](#)
- [Infant Risk Center](#) ([app available to download](#))
- [Mommy Meds](#)
- [The Lactation Pharmacist](#)
- [E-lactancia](#)

Hale's Medications & Mothers' Milk by Dr. Thomas W. Hale PhD (2019).

CHILDBIRTH

- *Pregnancy, Childbirth, and the Newborn: The Complete Guide* by Penny Simkin, Janet Whalley, Ann Keppler, Janelle Durham, and April Bolding (2018).
- *Expecting Better: Why the Conventional Pregnancy Wisdom is Wrong and What You Really Need to Know* by Emily Oster (2013).
- *Ina May's Guide to Childbirth* by Ina May Gaskin (2003).
- *Nurture: A Modern Guide to Pregnancy, Birth, Early Motherhood and Trusting Yourself and Your Body* by Erica Chidi Cohen and Jillian Ditner (2017).
- *Babies Are Not Pizzas: They're Born, Not Delivered* by Rebecca Dekker (2019)

Additionally, an online childbirth resource that informs empowers and inspires expecting parents and birth-care practitioners globally, to understand the latest, proven, evidence-based care practices found at www.evidencebasedbirth.com

- *Gentle Birth, Gentle Mothering: A Doctor's Guide to Natural Childbirth and Gentle Early Parenting Choices* by Sarah J. Buckley (2005).
- *Creating Your Birth Plan: The Definitive Guide to a Safe and Empowering Birth* by Marsden Wagner (2006).
- *The Positive Birth Book: A New Approach to Pregnancy, Birth and the Early Weeks* by Milli Hill (2017).

GRIEF & LOSS

Postpartum Support International (PSI) has several VIRTUAL support groups, including a weekly perinatal loss group every Friday. Check out their offerings [here](#).

Local groups (Des Moines & Central Iowa):

- [Every Step](#) (Perinatal & Infant Loss)

- No foot too small
- Fletcher foundation
- Honey Sage Wellness

Books to consider:

- [Empty Cradle, Broken Heart](#)
- [A Silent Sorrow](#)
- [Beyond Tears: Living After Losing a Child](#)
- [Healing After Loss](#)
- [Pregnancy After a Loss](#)
- [An Exact Replica of a Figment of My Imagination: A Memoir](#)
- [Hope for Today, Promises for Tomorrow](#)
- [I Will Carry You](#)

Additional Mental Health Resources/Book Recommendations:

- PSI Iowa: <https://psichapters.com/ia/>
- Central Iowa Community Resource (Provides a detailed list of free and low cost community and health care organizations, services, and resources)- <https://hicsiowa.org/upl/downloads/library/2022-hics-resource-guide.pdf>
- Love and Logic Parenting Online: <https://www.loveandlogic.com/products/love-and-logic-parenting-online>
- Understanding/navigating insurance: <https://www.cms.gov/CCIIO/Resources/Forms-Reports-and-Other-Resources/Downloads/uniform-glossary-final.pdf>
- Mental Health Support Groups in Des Moines, IA- <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/groups/ia/des-moines>