

Blog childbirth processing specialist

After your delivery you suddenly find yourself on a thundercloud. Where's that cloud nine you've been hoping for? Your delivery was intense and difficult. It didn't go the way you hoped at all. You know of course that giving birth hurts, but now it was drastic, you felt panic, fear and powerlessness.

At that moment all kinds of bad feelings went through your body. What now? All those unpleasant feelings and thoughts might lead to a childbirth trauma, postpartum depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This doesn't sound pleasant and so it isn't. You need to process this. Luckily, you're really not the only woman who has to deal with this. Research shows that 10 to 20% experiences their childbirth as traumatic, to a greater or lesser extent.

Do you recognize any of these feelings or behaviours in yourself?

- Reliving things, for example flashbacks or nightmares
- Negative moodswings or thoughts, feeling depressed
- Avoidance or disinterest in everything that has to do with childbirth
- Being easily irritable, getting angry about small things
- Insomnia
- Concentration problems.

These complaints may indicate a childbirth trauma, postpartum depression or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). But even if you don't have these complaints, you can still have unpleasant feelings and thoughts about your delivery.

It is often thought that childbirth is only traumatic if something exciting has happened. Such as excruciating pain, emergency caesarean section, premature birth, medical intervention, a lot of blood loss or a situation in which mother and/or baby were not doing well.

Yet, it doesn't have to be that way. Your delivery may also have been traumatic for you even though it has been a smooth delivery 'on paper'. You have felt unsafe for whatever reason. Or you might feel not heard in your wishes. You might have experienced a lack of emotional support from those around you. For example from your partner, the midwife or the nursing staff. Furthermore, you might have undergone actions without your permission or a proper explanation in advance.



All of this may lead to a feeling of powerlessness, loneliness and fear.

The first step is to recognize that you have these feelings. This can be quite difficult, because others might quickly say “thankfully it ended well.” Therefore, you may feel like you have to move on. But even if it all ended well and you are happy with your baby, that does not mean that your anxiety symptoms should or cannot be present.

Do not try to suppress your feelings, but seek professional help. A childbirth processing specialist can help you with this.

What is a Childbirth Processing Specialist?

A childbirth processing specialist will help you to find out whether you have a childbirth trauma, PTSD or a postpartum depression. It is often thought that this is the same, but it is not. A childbirth processing specialist is experienced in recognizing, treating and processing childbirth traumas. It's possible to do this by talking about it, doing certain exercises and EMDR therapy.

You can seek help on your own, but it may be nice if your partner is also involved. In some cases, the partner also appears to be walking around with unpleasant feelings or thoughts. It's great if you can process this together.

And then?

Hopefully, you have been able to process your feelings and thoughts. You even might want to get more children. This can be, even years later, very exciting. It's good to share your thoughts and feelings with someone who is specialized in this. Discuss with your midwife or coach what is going on inside of you. Don't wait too long and make sure you keep that thundercloud as far away as possible. You deserve to finally take a seat on that cloud nine!

