



MATERNAL
WELLNESS CO.

HEALING BEYOND SILENCE

COPING WHEN FAMILY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND
YOUR POSTPARTUM EMOTIONS

BY: NEELAM PRASAD | MATERNAL WELLNESS COACH |
FOUNDER, MATERNAL WELLNESS CO.

CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Chapter I The Silent Struggle: Why Postpartum Mental Health Is Hard to Talk About	3
Chapter II The Weight of Family Expectations	4
Chapter III The Pressure to Be Perfect	5
Chapter IV When Care Turns Into Control	6
Chapter V Breaking the Silence: How to Begin Healing	7
Chapter VI Reflection & Affirmation Page	8
Conclusion	9

INTRODUCTION



Dear Mama,

If you’ve ever been told “every mom goes through this,” or “you just need to think positive,” you are not alone.

In South Asian families, conversations about mental health are often whispered — if they happen at all. We’re taught to be strong, grateful, and composed, even when we’re breaking inside.

But motherhood is not meant to be endured in silence. It’s meant to be supported, witnessed, and cared for.

This guide is here to help you understand why it feels so hard to talk about your emotions, and how to begin healing even when those around you don’t understand.

— With compassion and courage,

Founder, Maternal Wellness Co.

CHAPTER I

THE SILENT STRUGGLE: WHY POSTPARTUM MENTAL HEALTH IS HARD TO TALK ABOUT



Healing begins when silence ends.

In South Asian communities, there's a **heavy stigma** surrounding mental health — shaped by cultural, social, and systemic factors.

Women often don't speak about how tired, anxious, or detached they feel after birth. While our culture values family and community support, traditional gender roles often silence women.

Expressing sadness or overwhelm can be seen as weakness or ingratitude.

Research shows that South Asian women are more likely to experience **postnatal depression** when facing:

- Marital conflict or tension with in-laws
- Lack of emotional and social support
- Pressure to meet traditional family expectations
- Dissatisfaction with an infant's gender
- Cultural shame around “not coping well”

The result?

A cycle of guilt, shame, and silence, even though postpartum depression is a biological and emotional condition, not a moral failing.

CHAPTER II

THE WEIGHT OF FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

In many South Asian families, new mothers are surrounded by relatives, well-wishers, and visitors eager to celebrate the baby. While this comes from love and excitement, it can unintentionally harm a mother’s emotional recovery.

“IT’S TRADITION TO HAVE EVERYONE OVER — BUT WHO CHECKS IN ON THE MOTHER?”

Constant visitors, unsolicited advice, and lack of rest can lead to exhaustion and anxiety.



Cultural norms often expect women to:

- Live with or care for in-laws
- Resume household duties quickly
- Avoid expressing distress to “keep the peace”

This can make rest, recovery, and emotional care nearly impossible.

When women voice their struggles, they may be told:

- “We all went through it.”
- “Be grateful — at least your baby is healthy.”
- “Just pray, don’t overthink.”
- These responses — thoughwell-intentioned — create emotional invalidation that deepens postpartum distress.

CHAPTER III

THE PRESSURE TO BE PERFECT

In South Asian culture, motherhood is often seen as a **rite of passage** — something women are expected to handle flawlessly.

“If she finds motherhood difficult, people ask what’s wrong with her.” — Maliha Khan, The Menninger Clinic

From an early age, many South Asian women are raised to:

- Maintain family honour
- Keep emotions private (“don’t air dirty laundry”)
- Strive for perfection — in appearance, home, and motherhood

Perfectionism, combined with social comparison (especially through social media), amplifies feelings of inadequacy.

Many mothers feel pressure to look fine even when they’re falling apart inside.

“Brown girls already grow up with anxiety. We learn to hide it — to keep things looking okay. Motherhood only magnifies that pressure.”



CHAPTER IV

WHEN CARE TURNS INTO CONTROL



These constant comparisons and comments erode confidence and self-trust.

In joint families, boundaries can blur — leaving new moms with little space to rest, bond with their baby, or tend to their emotional needs.

Even surrounded by people, many women feel profoundly alone.

Family provide care — but sometimes it crosses into control.

Many mothers feel watched or criticized rather than supported.

They may hear:

- “You’re holding the baby wrong.”
- “We didn’t need all this rest in our time.”
- “Other moms manage just fine.”

CHAPTER V

BREAKING THE SILENCE: HOW TO BEGIN HEALING

PPD does not make you weak, ungrateful, or unfit. It's a human response to overwhelming change, pressure, and exhaustion.

Here's how you can start reclaiming your emotional well-being — even if your family doesn't understand:

1. Name It Without Shame

Call it what it is: postpartum depression or anxiety — not “just baby blues.” Understanding your experience is the first act of courage.

2. Educate With Compassion

When you can, gently explain that postpartum depression is a medical condition — not a lack of gratitude.

“It's not that I'm unthankful — it's that my mind and body need healing.”

3. Find a Safe Space Beyond Family

If your family can't offer understanding, seek support elsewhere — maternal circles, therapy, or coaching.

“If your family isn't your safe space right now, find your tribe outside of them.”

4. Release the Need to Be Perfect

You don't need to prove your strength by suffering in silence.

Healing doesn't make you weak — it makes you whole.

5. Challenge Generations of Silence

When you speak up, you don't just heal yourself — you open the door for the next generation of South Asian mothers to feel seen and supported.

CHAPTER VI

REFLECTION & AFFIRMATION PAGE

Journal Prompts:

- “What beliefs about strength or motherhood have I inherited that no longer serve me?”
- “What kind of support do I need — and where can I find it?”
- “How can I show myself the compassion I wish I received from others?”

Affirmations:

- “My emotions are valid even if others don’t understand.”
- “I am breaking cycles of silence through courage and love.”
- “I am not weak — I am healing.”
- “I deserve rest, compassion, and care.”



CONCLUSION

HEALING BEGINS WHEN SILENCE ENDS.

Healing begins when silence ends.

You are allowed to need support. You are allowed to rest.

You are allowed to talk about your pain without shame.

When mothers heal, families heal — and communities transform.

— With love,

Neelam, Maternal Wellness Co.



If you're ready to find your voice and reclaim your emotional well-being,
Join my **Maternal Wellness Coaching Program** — where we heal with
compassion, not silence.