

Postpartum Planning Worksheet

1. **Nourishment.** Feeding yourselves can be surprisingly challenging during the early weeks with a new baby. You can plan ahead by stocking your freezer with pre-prepared meals; enlisting help from friends, family members, and kind acquaintances; and knowing where to call for delivery or curbside pickup.

- We would like to have food prepared and available for the first _____ weeks after baby's birth.
- The following are people who will be willing to bring or order us food if we ask, and we will set this up well ahead of baby's birth.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

- We will also prepare _____ frozen dishes before the birth.
- Nutritious and affordable delivery or curbside options include:

_____	_____
_____	_____

2. **Rest.** Sleep will likely be broken during the early days, weeks, and even months. You can increase your chances of coping as well as possible by fitting in short stints of sleep or rest throughout the day. Aim for as many total hours within a 24-hour span as you would normally require during one overnight period — even if this total sleep comes in many small stretches.

- Ideas for carving out time for sleep:
 - Learn to nurse lying down _____
 - Ask a partner or helper to supervise while I sleep with baby _____

- Delegate household chores so that I can sleep while baby sleeps _____
- Pass off baby to partner or helper so I can nap _____
- Hire a postpartum doula _____
- Empower partner or helper to change diapers at night _____
- Empower partner or helper to bring baby to the nursing parent when baby needs to be fed _____

- The following people are available to help us rest:

During the day

During the evening

At night

3. **Household support.** What activities can you delegate when folks visit and ask how they can be helpful? Often, well-meaning friends, family members and other helpers will offer to hold the baby so you can “get things done.” Does this feel like the way they can be most helpful? If not, what items can you gather from this list, and from your own experience, and pull from when help is offered? *Hint: Make a list, put it on the fridge, and point to it when asked!*

Meal prep/freezer stocking	Light house cleaning
Order delivery or curbside	Grocery shopping
Bring/buy easy-to-eat snacks	Care for other children/pets
Make sure birthgiver has food/drink	Buy or launder diapers
Do the dishes or put them away	Run errands
Run or fold a load of laundry	Lend a compassionate ear

4. **Social Support.** When the going gets tough, who is around for warm support and a listening ear? Do you have any friends or family members who are also parenting babies or small children? If not, where can you find this sort of support? (e.g. neighbors, classmates from childbirth ed classes, parent support groups, breast/chestfeeding support groups, friendly online discussion forums, spiritual, work, or hobby communities, etc.)

- These are people we know with babies/small children of their own:

- Our plan for building a support network of people who also have babies or small children includes the following resources:

5. **Lactation Support.** Who do you know that has breast/chestfed their own children? Who in your circle is supportive of breast/chestfeeding? What allied professionals and knowledgeable community members can you call on if you experience challenges?

- The following people in our lives are supportive of my breast/chestfeeding and I can count on them to cheer me on.

- The following people are not only supportive of my breast/chestfeeding, but are excellent resources for high-quality, evidence-based, up-to-date information regarding breast/chestfeeding and will be available if and when I have questions.

- Knowledgeable local board-certified lactation consultants (IBCLC), certified breastfeeding specialists (CBS) or lactation counselors (CLC), hospital-run breast/chestfeeding support groups, peer-to-peer counselors and support groups (La Leche League, Breastfeeding USA), etc:

6. **Relationship Support.** The vast majority of partnerships feel strained by the early months with a new baby. How can you plan to fill your own cups, both as individuals and as partners? Who can you count on to offer dependable and trustworthy childcare? What activities can you squeeze in as a couple, on a daily basis, to protect and strengthen your bond during this time?

- Friends and family members who we can count on to provide dependable and trustworthy childcare:

- Local professionals who provide dependable and trustworthy childcare:

- Birthgiver's favorite self-care activities:

*Note: "Self-care" doesn't have to be extravagant or time-consuming. Don't limit yourself to things like bubble baths and professional massages. What are quick, 5-minute routines that you can add into your day that remind you to take a breath, feel into your body, and remember who **you** are in your center (aside from being a parent)?*

- Partner's favorite self-care activities:

- Ways we can connect, take a breath, and strengthen our bond as a couple:

7. **Sibling Support.** The addition of a new baby into the family is a big change for everyone involved! Having a plan for carving out time with older sibling(s) is a great way to keep the transition as smooth as possible. Think about balancing your older child/children's need to bond with baby with their need to have special, one-on-one time with you.

- Needs of our older child/children might include:

- Close members of our circle who are available to spend one-on-one time with our older child/children and/or drive them to school, daycare, and other activities:

- Times of day, rituals, or special activities that we want to share with our older child/children include:

- Specific ideas for lovingly blending the new baby into our existing family:
