**Therapy Tools for New Moms: Support for Your Mental and Emotional Wellbeing**

Becoming a parent is one of life's most profound transitions. It can bring joy, exhaustion, anxiety, grief, love, and overwhelm—often all at once. This handout includes simple, evidence-informed strategies to support your mind, body, and spirit during the postpartum period.

**1. Soothing the Inner Critic**

Your inner critic might say things like "You're not doing enough" or "You're not a good mom." These thoughts are common but not necessarily true.

Try this:

* **Name it:** Give your inner critic a name or image (e.g., "The Drill Sergeant").
* **Talk back with compassion:** "I'm doing my best, and that is enough right now."
* **What would I say to a friend in my shoes?** Use that voice on yourself.

**2. Gentle Daily Structure**

Structure can ease anxiety and decision fatigue:

* Choose **3 small priority tasks per day** (even if that’s "shower," "feed myself," and "rest").
* Let the rest go for now.
* Celebrate completing the basics.

**3. Postpartum-Aware Self-Compassion**

* "This is hard, and I'm not alone."
* "Many new moms feel overwhelmed."
* "It’s okay to need help and rest."

Try saying these phrases out loud when struggling.

**4. Movement Without Pressure**

Your nervous system is more sensitive postpartum. Choose movement that restores, not depletes:

* Short walks
* Gentle yoga or stretching
* Tai chi or deep breathing exercises

Avoid intense workouts if they leave you feeling more anxious.

**5. Protect Your Sleep**

Sleep isn’t just rest—it’s medicine. Try:

* Having your partner or support person take over **at least 2 nights/week**
* Napping when possible, even short rest periods
* Keeping a wind-down ritual at night (e.g., dim lights, no screens, calming tea)

**6. When You Feel Frozen**

If you feel paralyzed or overwhelmed:

* Break the task into tiny steps
* Start with a **"micro-action"** (e.g., open the email, not reply yet)
* Use a timer (5 or 10 minutes only)
* Take breaks between tasks

**7. Join Others**

Isolation fuels shame and sadness. Support groups (online or in person) for new moms can:

* Normalize your experience
* Offer emotional relief
* Provide practical tips

**You Are Not Alone.** You are allowed to struggle and still be a good mother. Healing happens step by step, and you are already doing the hard work by showing up for yourself.

Reach out to your therapist or support team whenever you need extra help.