

The Grounded Mother

By Paula Vescio, Registered Social Worker and
Founder of House of Wellness Therapies





To the mom who is smiling on the outside but quietly unraveling inside, this is for you.

You love your baby with a depth you never knew was possible. You catch yourself staring at their tiny fingers, breathing in their newborn scent, feeling your heart swell with gratitude and disbelief. And yet, in the same breath, you're tired to your bones. The kind of tired that no amount of coffee or kind words can fix. The kind of tired that seeps into your thoughts and whispers, "You're not yourself anymore."

You miss her...the version of you who had space to breathe, shower, or simply be. You love this new chapter so very much, but you also mourn the last one, and that's okay. You're not broken for feeling both. You're human for trying to pour from an empty cup, for juggling the joy and the chaos, for showing up every single day even when your mind and body beg for rest and reset.

Motherhood is one of the most beautiful times of your life, but no one prepares you for the emotional challenges that come with it. The nights that stretch endlessly, the tears that fall for no reason, the quiet grief over losing parts of yourself while gaining a love that redefines everything.

You are not alone.

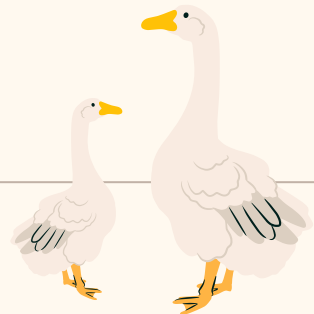


Hi, I'm Paula, a Registered Social Worker and a new mom. I've spent years helping others reach their goals and create emotional balance, but nothing could have prepared me for the transformation that comes with motherhood.

When my son was born, I experienced a love so pure and all-consuming that it changed everything. The first few days were bliss - a quiet little bubble of newborn cuddles and awe. But soon after, the reality set in: the exhaustion, the uncertainty, the endless feeding schedules, and the pressure to 'do it right'.

I've quickly come to understand something deeply: you don't need to be perfect to be a good mom, you just need to be present, grounded, and kind to yourself.

That's why I created this workbook - to offer you simple, therapeutic tools to help regulate your emotions, reconnect with yourself, and find steadiness in the chaos. Inside, you'll find a blend of professional guidance and real-life perspective from someone who's in it with you, navigating the same sleepless nights, big emotions, and beautiful mess of new motherhood.





Postpartum overwhelm is more than just exhaustion - it's the feeling that your mind and body are in constant overdrive. Your hormones are shifting, your sleep cycles are disrupted, and your sense of independence has changed overnight.

Common Signs:

- Feeling emotionally overstimulated or “on edge”
- Crying easily or feeling guilt for needing breaks
- Overthinking every decision (“Am I doing enough?”)
- Comparing yourself to other moms
- Struggling to rest even when baby sleeps



Therapist Insight:

You are not failing, your nervous system is overloaded, not broken. The body interprets constant caregiving demands as “danger,” and your stress response stays activated.



Solutions:

- Name what's happening. Say aloud: "I'm overstimulated right now." Labeling the emotion lessens its intensity.
- Body reset: Apply gentle sensory input e.g., cool water on your hands, a deep exhale, or a weighted blanket to calm the nervous system.
- Simplify your day: Choose one "must do," one "nice to do," and release the rest.
- Delegate small tasks: Allow a partner, friend, or family member to take on a simple chore like folding laundry or prepping bottles to help yourself reduce decision fatigue.

Reflection Prompt:

What moments in your day tend to trigger that "I can't keep up" feeling?

What physical sensations (tight chest, racing thoughts, shallow breath) show up when you're overstimulated?



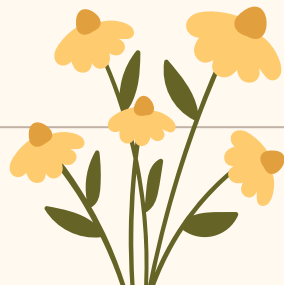
When you feel overstimulated, pause and use this 3-step grounding practice to regulate your nervous system:

1. Notice your body. Sit down, feel your feet on the floor, unclench your jaw, and lower your shoulders.
2. Name your senses. Identify one thing you can see, touch, hear, and smell. This anchors you in the present moment.
3. Narrate kindly. Silently say: “I’m safe. I’m learning. I’m allowed to slow down.”

Additional Tools:

- **Box Breathing:** Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4, hold for 4. Repeat 3–5 times.
- **Progressive Muscle Relaxation:** Tense and release one muscle group at a time, from toes to face.
- **Grounding Object:** Keep a small calming item like a smooth stone or essential oil roller nearby as a sensory cue for calm.

Try these during feeding, rocking, or nap time. It resets your nervous system gently and helps you stay present with your baby instead of spiraling into stress!





Perfection in motherhood doesn't exist.
The goal is not flawless parenting, it's responsive
parenting.

Your baby doesn't need a perfect mom, they need
a present and attuned one.



Therapist Insight:

When you set impossibly high expectations,
ie. “I should always be patient” or “I should enjoy
every moment”, you create chronic guilt.
Replacing “shoulds” with “coulds” invites flexibility
and self-compassion.



Solutions:

Use Compassionate Language: Replace “I’m failing” with “I’m learning.”

Set Micro Goals: Instead of “I’ll be calm all day,” aim for “I’ll take three deep breaths before reacting.”

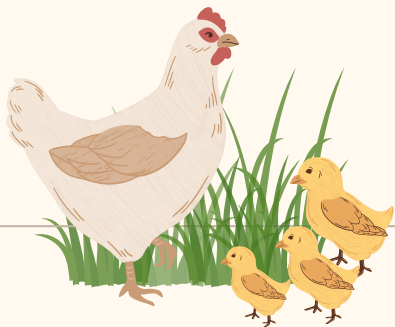
Practice Repair: If you snap or lose patience, calmly reconnect with your baby. This models emotional repair, which is one of the most powerful gifts you can offer.

Reframe Comparison: If you notice yourself comparing, say, “Her path is different from mine and that’s okay.”

Journaling Prompt:

What unrealistic standards am I holding myself to?

How might I redefine success in motherhood this week?





You are still you, you're just evolving.
Small daily rituals can help you rebuild your identity and anchor your sense of self.

Daily Reconnection Practices:

Morning check-in: Ask yourself, “What’s one thing I need today, emotionally or physically?”

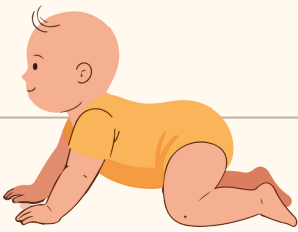
Two-minute mindfulness: Sip your coffee slowly, feeling the warmth and taste without multitasking.

Nature moments: Step outside for fresh air; light exposure resets your mood and hormones.

Connection over perfection: Send one honest message to a friend who “gets it.” Real connection heals isolation.

Body kindness: Replace criticism with gratitude: “My body nourished life and it deserves gentleness.”





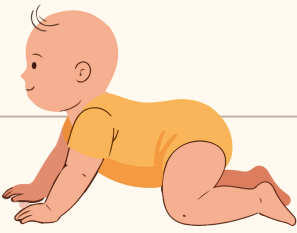
Therapist Insight:

Self-connection isn't about adding more to your to-do list. It's about noticing what already brings you comfort and intentionally leaning into it.

Journaling Prompt:

What simple activity helps me feel most grounded or like myself?

How can I make space for that daily, even for five minutes?



Motherhood is a season of surrender, not of losing yourself, but of rediscovering your strength in new form.

Healing postpartum overwhelm starts with honoring both your needs and your baby's needs as equally valid.

If you take one thing away:

Know you can be a nurturing mom and still have boundaries, ask for help, and need rest. Those things don't make you less loving, they make you sustainable.

If you're struggling, please know you're not alone, and you deserve support!

House of Wellness Therapies offers therapy and sleep support for new parents navigating this exact chapter.

Sending you love and positivity always,

-Paula
