



Adjusting to the new role of mum or dad

Adjusting to this life-changing role can be challenging as a baby impacts just about everything you think, feel and do in the early days. Even if you have planned the pregnancy for years, lots of transition issues can still arise. It's good to know what are considered normal transition issues vs more problematic ones;

Normal themes of transition could be:

- » I can't get used to being this tired!
- » Who is doing the most work around here? (A common one to argue over.)
- » How can we settle into our new roles?
- » How much should we listen to extended family vs doing it our way?

Generally – managing a few of these is fine, but multi-layers of these with no support can tip the balance.

More problematic themes could be:

- » If your partner or you believe that you need to significantly change now you're a mum. (e.g. They said, 'don't dress like that'.)
- » If you are saying things like; 'You're a hopeless breadwinner you are letting us down.'
- » If your partner needs to know where you are all the time – or if either of you believe, 'it's my baby and I'm in charge'.... (unless you are a single parent).

It would be good to talk openly about these transition issues. If you are leaning to these more problematic themes and you don't feel that you can talk openly with your partner maybe try talking to a counsellor either on the phone, online or face to face first to get some tips on how to approach the situation. See the links at the end of this section.

If your partner is open to the idea of counselling talking about this now would be ideal, as the early you discuss problematic issues like these the better your chance of resolving them. Remember that all major life changes take time. There will come a day when parenting feels natural and you don't think about it immediately on waking! Children blend into the family and you learn the best ways of functioning as a group. Try to be patient with yourself and your partner, and acknowledge that big learning curves can be fun too.