

For When

you have negative thoughts about your baby



If you feel parenting is not what you imagined and you have negative thoughts about your life or your baby, they are just that, thoughts. They don't mean you are bad, will hurt your baby, or that you will always feel this way.

- You can love your baby and find them hard in the same moment
- It is perfectly normal to have positive and negative thoughts about your baby
- Remember, it takes time and space to adjust to your new baby
- If giving birth has been difficult, it may affect the way you feel about yourself and your baby
- It is common for parents to have intrusive thoughts about accidentally harming their baby
- Becoming a parent is the hardest work you will ever do. Self-compassion is important
- If you feel resentment towards your baby, you're not alone, there is help available



What can you do?

- Remind yourself you are good enough
- Take a moment for yourself and have a cuppa
- Do something you enjoy e.g. listen to music, gardening, art, yoga, read a book, go for a walk
- Give your brain some downtime and prioritise sleep
- Remember, your social media algorithm can show you a filtered version of life. Try to limit your scrolling
- Ground yourself by going outside and do an activity that requires movement e.g. find a swing, run
- Get in touch with safe, supportive friends and family to build social connection
- Remember, your thoughts are just thoughts, not something you will or want to do

What help is available?

- Talk to trusted friends and family
- Talk to your child health nurse, midwife or Aboriginal Health Worker
- Talk to your GP or other health professionals

Contact ForWhen to help navigate you to the right mental health services and supports for you.

When to get help?

90% of new parent experience negative thoughts. If they are getting in the way of your daily life, impacting your relationships or you feel things you've tried before are not working, it might be time to get help.

Asking for help can feel difficult or shameful, but talking to people who understand your thoughts at this time can make all the difference.

1300 24 23 22

Mon-Fri
9am - 4.30pm

@ForWhenHelpline



forwhenhelpline.org.au

ForWhen is funded by the Australian Government.
ForWhen lived experience consumers co-produced this resource. © ForWhen, 2026.

We acknowledge the Traditional and Continuing Owners of the land and waters of Australia, and we pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We pay tribute to the wisdom, richness, diversity and resilience of First Nations peoples and cultures.

