

Grow With Flo

Holistic Doula Services

Mindfulness Exercises

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Mindfulness is a part of creating a holistically healthy system for your baby to develop in - mental wellness is often overlooked but has long-lasting and deep impacts if neglected.

Practicing mindfulness now can help empower coping through birthing, prevent and alleviate perinatal mood disorders, and improve bonding

HOW?

Try to select a time you can dedicate 4-5 times a week to. Start with 5-10 minutes and see if you can work up to 30 minutes, or even an hour.

Get cozy! Find a comfortable quiet place with soothing lighting. Wear clothes that don't constrict or bind you, that breathe but feel warm. Take a blanket with you, and make sure your bladder is empty.

Get in a position where you can recline without laying back completely - head and shoulders and knees gently and comfortably supported. As your baby gets bigger you may find side lying more comfortable.

- **Movement** - Walking, hiking, yoga, biking - with each downward movement or out breath think of something you want to release (anxiety) and with each inhale or with any upward movements think of something you'd like to bring in (strength, trust)
- **Journaling**- set a timer for 5-10 minutes and literally don't stop writing - it can even be "I don't know what to write" or "I hate doing this" just get all those thoughts out. Create affirmations that are present tense - "I am strong." "I trust my body" take time to make them very specific and personal to your unique goals
- **Birth Art** - see Exploration Exercises handout, but also feel free to get out any sort of art supplies and aimlessly (not for others to see or to be "pretty") doodle, paint, mold clay, collage, etc.
- **Pendulum meditation** - find any weighted object and attach to a string, or if you are working with me, use your pendulum. Set an intention that clockwise spins bring in and counter clockwise takes away. Begin spinning the pendulum clockwise and think about one thing you'd like to bring in (unconditional love, peacefulness, health, etc.) either set a timer or set the intention that the pendulum will stop spinning when it needs to (let your body intuitively control how long you sit) and then reverse directions and do the same thing with something you'd like to put out. This can be negative or positive - ie you can release anxiety or you can send out love
- **Tensing and Relaxing** - alternating areas of focus on your body (head, neck and shoulders, each arm, stomach, bottom, legs) practice breathing in, tensing (without straining), holding breath for a few counts, and breathing out relaxation and looseness into just the area you are focused on.
- **5 senses** - take a breath with each sense - just seeing if you can notice everything you hear for one breath, taste, smell, see, feel, etc. Alternatively, set a timer for 1 minute and focus on one sense for that entire minute.
- Exercises I can teach you in person if we are working together: Basic PEAT, Universal Process, End of Words
- See pain coping techniques and exploration exercises handouts for additional practices that will support mental wellbeing