

SENT WITH A KISS

FROM MUMMY

TO BABY

Back Cover



MAMMAS.

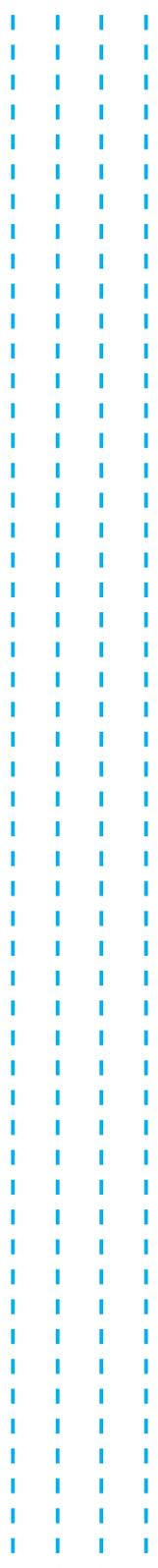
The Chronicles of breastfeeding

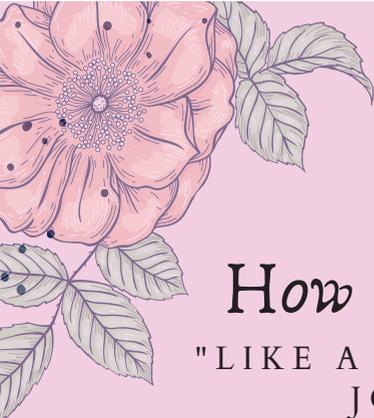


THE
CHRONICLES
OF
Front Cover
BREASTFEEDING



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How it all began

"LIKE A BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY"

After finishing the Breastfeeding ambassadors course with Leicester Mamas, the idea of 'The Chronicles of Breastfeeding' was born!

With an ultimate goal being to raise the awareness of breastfeeding, myself (Iffat), Pia and Katarzyna went through the roller-coaster journey of bringing this project together, with practically no prior experience of publishing, designing or editing a book.

As new mums, it was almost like a breastfeeding journey in itself, with highs and lows (mainly highs) as we juggled our babies and this (baby!)

As you read each mamma's journey, you will notice their journals as being heartfelt, unedited, raw journeys of Breastfeeding.

From the heart - to the heart.

If you would like to share your breastfeeding journey, feel free to write in to us: leicestermamas@gmail.com . Or for any other support for you and your baby.

We would love to hear from you.





CHILDREN: AALIYAH (24) SARA (21) SAFIYYAH (18)
BENYAMEEN(16) UMayMAH (13)

THE SUPPORT OF MY EXTENDED FAMILY WAS CRUCIAL IN ENABLING ME TO BREASTFEED ALL MY CHILDREN. I KNOW THAT WITHOUT THEIR HELP, I MAY HAVE STRUGGLED, LIKE SO MANY OTHER WOMEN, TO FULFIL MY CHILDREN'S BIRTH RIGHT- TO BE NOURISHED AT THEIR MOTHER'S BREAST. THIS IS WHAT INSPIRED ME TO WRITE MY STORY- WE NEED TO RECREATE A SOCIETY WHERE MOTHERS CAN FOLLOW THEIR INSTINCTS AND BREASTFEED THEIR BABIES FOR AS LONG AS THEY WANT, WITHOUT PUTTING UNDUE PRESSURE AND OBSTACLES IN THEIR WAY.



Aayesha
Bhattay

Blissful Breastfeeding

Aayesha Bhattay

My breastfeeding story is pretty straightforward. I always knew I wanted to be a mum and I always knew I would breastfeed, because that's what you do, right? It was only years later, after training as a Mamma and supporting mums to breastfeed their babies, that I came to appreciate all the elements that made my journey a success when it could so easily have been derailed.

When my first baby arrived (24 years ago) it was in a blur of haziness after a long labour involving copious gas & air and pethidine, meds that made me so sleepy and 'out of it' that I knocked out as soon as I'd pushed her into the world. I remember her dad holding her in his arms and looking at her in wonder as I zoned out. There was no skin to skin and I was wheeled into the maternity ward with my daughter in the cot beside me. I later learned (days later in fact) that Aaliyah had cried, and the midwife had advised my mum who'd just arrived on the scene, to give her a bottle. My poor mum duly obliged, not knowing any better. I still feel sad that Aaliyah's first feed was formula and not the protective, immuno-boosting colostrum my body would have provided.

Six hours after her birth, I woke up to the sound of my baby girl stirring and looking for food. I pressed the buzzer for help and a midwife came along, helping dizzy me (my iron levels which were already low had plummeted even further) to sit up and latch Aaliyah on. I now know that pushing babies onto the breast is not a great idea, but thankfully, Aaliyah didn't mind being shoved on and she latched beautifully. I remember being surprised at the powerful suck. She knew what to do even if I didn't. That evening, she did not want to go in her cot. Each time I put her in, she'd stir and want to feed. The midwife who had delivered her the night before came to see how we were doing. She was so gentle and so kind. 'Of course she doesn't want to go in her cot,' she told me, 'she wants to be right here next to you' and she tucked Aaliyah under the blanket next to me, put up the guard rail, and showed me how to feed her lying on my side. Sure enough, when next to me, she went to sleep.

I spent the first 7 weeks after Aaliyah's birth at my parents' house. It was bliss. My gran came to stay and between her and my mum, they looked after me completely. I didn't have to worry about cooking or tidying or anything else. Whilst they mothered me with care and convalescent dishes -porridge with ginger, molasses, almonds and ghee and hearty soups (I was always famished!)- my only job was to recover from giving birth and feed and take care of my baby (which is plenty for any first-time mum). The midwife who came to weigh Aaliyah was surprised to find that she hadn't lost any of her birth weight and had started to gain nicely. With no other worries and a supportive family around me, feeding my baby around the clock was something I didn't question. Everyone encouraged me to sleep during the day when baby slept and that made the long nights manageable.

By the time my husband and I moved in with his parents, breastfeeding was well established, and my dear mum-in-law would always assure me that Aaliyah was my priority and if she needed me, then everything else could wait. I went on to breastfeed four more children, exclusively for 6 months, and continuing well into toddlerhood.

I ask myself if I'm looking back on those years with rose-tinted specs and really, I don't think so. I was incredibly fortunate to have all the support I needed. And the people around me understood the importance of babies nursing at their mother's breast.

This is Us. My, our breastfeeding journey Biography.

Beejal Dudhaiya (mother)

Dhruv (3.5 years old) & Dylan Dudhaiya (11 months)- two
sons.

An open & honest account of a mothers breastfeeding journey through the eyes and perspective of a woman, daughter, wife, but most importantly a mother of two sons.

There have been highs and lows which came and went. Some experiences that were easier than others. Could it have been different? perhaps but would I change it? No. The benefits our sons have received and fond memories we have shared have made the journey worthwhile.

Enjoy this journey for it is what you make of it. We would not appreciate it as much if it wasn't for the bumpy ride.

It began as my journey and it would have been incomplete without my partner in crime, my other half hubby, family support, breastfeeding friends, Mamas and the true stars our two sons This is Us and this is our journey so far.

THIS IS US



My, our breastfeeding
journey

BY BEEJAL

I wanted to share my breastfeeding journey, personal, honest experiences and thoughts which in truth became much more than just bf. It was our journey.

Through this I hope to share how much I love bf. Women are truly inspiring superwomen who in the eyes of their children mean the world to them. To all the mothers out there who have bf I salute you.

If you are having a bad day or moment try to remember that one special moment nursing which stands out and how great you felt. We have been going through a rough time recently with continuous hourly wake ups with our youngest and in turn his brother wakes up. Sleepless nights. Thinking of this moment reminded me of why I bf. We sometimes lose sight of this. It helped me press reset. Guaranteed it will change how you are feeling. Hope you have a smile on your face or like me both a smile and a tear or two.

With my 1st I knew I wanted to breastfeed our baby from the start even before I was pregnant. Mums to be have a birthing plan something that you would like to follow if everything goes to plan along with options personal choices as I like to refer to them. That is how I saw bf as a plan it was natural. I was determined to get my body into that mindset to accept what challenges may come.

I did my research. I set myself targets that were attainable. Such as I would love to bf as long as we can. By this I meant my baby and I. Set small milestones and celebrated them. 1 week, one month, 6 months. After this I just carried on. In my head I knew I could do this.

Beginning

I had just given birth to my 1st. I was shattered and in a lot of pain to say the least. Contractions, labour to birth was nearly 2 days.

Then I had my special moment when the nurse placed my baby on my chest and the first suckle. All the pain, the wait it vanished in the blink of an eye. Wow it is true you will never forget that moment and truthfully why would you want to. Somehow, I had the strength it always fascinates me -must be adrenaline and the natural high of becoming a mother.

In the beginning it was as if time stood still. Nothing else mattered. Like a scene in a movie. All I saw and felt was you, heartbeat, breath and body warmth. My little hot water bottle.

We were in the centre, everything else around us kept going moving. Time passed before I knew it 15 mins had passed. I had all I could possibly need in my arms. You made me feel special when you nursed, the only one - you made me whole. I was providing you with all that you needed.

Fast forward a few weeks

I'm hungry! The baby is hungry. Correction my boy is very very hungry and impatient. To do lists in my head-what do I need to do next? I need to reply to that text that I started about 5 times and it still hasn't been sent. We have all been there right? Other occasions it was nothing I was just lost in the moment. This magic potion of mine helps you fall asleep. It still does but ouch razor sharp nails ouch we only cut them two days.

How you feel for the first few days and weeks is only what I can describe as a pick a mix - feelings can be all over the place, hormonal, your happy, sad, emotional, grumpy and sometimes all this at once. All kinds of emotions in a space of a few minutes. I did feel for the other half!

No one prepares you for this journey and it is not openly discussed. It is such a shame that this is not an area that is discussed. I'm sure that many more women would prefer if they knew more about the ups and downs and benefits. Especially the first few days and hours after giving birth. Women /mothers are not all aware that their milk supply takes a while to come through. Colostrum and how much their new born requires. I'm sure that more would continue if they were given information and assistance before and after birth. This guidance would help them on their journey no matter which path they follow.

Growth, I grew as person when I became a mother. You feel love like no other.

The bond when your breastfeeding is like nothing else I have felt. Knowing that you are providing for your baby and what they receive through the milk is incredible. I had previous knowledge regarding the do's and don'ts along with the benefits. However, during Mamas training I learnt in depth facts and more about the content. Thank you for that! It made me feel emotional and proud.

Bf the first time round I felt privileged, I had never known a connection, a love like this before pure and innocent. Cuddles were just the best. Made my heart burst if that makes sense.

With my first son it was mostly just the two of us at home. We tried different positions, trial and error. It was painful to begin with. I found ways to feed depending where I was, became more confident, comfortable and we continued with what worked for us. It became easier and we just went with the flow.

Other times it wasn't smooth sailing. We persevered and overcame challenges. It became easier and time flew by. Feeding in public was not a challenge for me and if my baby was hungry it did not matter where we were, he would be fed.

*Just the two of us. I've gone and done it I'm only on the first section and you have a song in your head. I hope it's not one that will be stuck in your head all day!!! 😊 *"just the two of us, we can make it if try... I see the crystal raindrops fall
And the beauty of it all
Is when the sun comes shining through
To make those rainbows in my mind
When I think of you sometime
And I wanna spend some time with you".....* okay. ok I'll stop now.

**it was a lot earlier originally, but I added more, more and then more😊*

My favourite memories of feeding both

The way they touch you, smiles, the stare, conversations that don't need to make sense yet do, sometimes there are no words and one of my favs milk drunk. That look never get old. I love it when my youngest tries to find my fingers when he is drinking and hold on to them.

He loves to fidget now he's older. He moves and therefore so do I. Erm I'm not made out of plastic Mr! the pulling of skin and hair. Ouch!!!

He's developing so fast this makes me sad, reminds me how fast it went with his brother. Then there's mat leave will be finishing soon 😊. Lockdown has been emotional and hard, but we would never ever been able to spend so much time together and for that I'm grateful.

This is a snippet of a letter I have wrote to my youngest. Dear Dylan,

Due to the pandemic daddy couldn't attend any of your appointments or your birth. He was at home looking after your brother. He was there in spirit more than he will ever know. He gave me the strength to carry on when I thought it wasn't possible. Through all the WhatsApp calls when visiting was not permitted. What would we have done without WhatsApp?

Holding your finger whilst you nursed, hearing you breathe takes me back to when it was just you and me

How you entered the world and what your father said about holding my hand even when he was not able to.

The 3 weeks or so we stayed at hospital after you were born. Jaundice, scares, blood transfusion, the countless blood tests you had each day and night. How strong you were. How tiny and brave you were. How long you had light therapy. The lights, the dark hospital room and the lovely nurses who cared for us.

You were in the box and I was not able to hold you.
I felt so helpless.

I had to pump if I wanted to bf the Doctors said as you had to remain in the box.

Hearing this made me feel like the world had caved in.

I couldn't believe what I was being told to do but I was determined to continue my bf journey with you.

We achieved 3 weeks in hospital and it wasn't easy. You were only 3 days old when I started pumping to allow you to be fed through the tube.

Your health improved and we were given the go ahead to feed breast milk via bottle as you were not allowed out the box for long periods. You gave me purpose and bf kept me focused.

Your health kept changing not always for the better. There were so many tears along the way.

Thoughts of despair and helplessness. No visitors.

So thankful we had WhatsApp and video calls to connect with home, Daddy and your big brother.

You became stronger and you were bf. It was like you were born again.

No this wasn't part of the plan, or how we envisaged it, but it worked and finally you got diagnosed. We returned home and were finally reunited as a family.

That one moment is much more than bf and searching for my hand. It takes me back to your journey and how important the doctors and nurses said feeding was. It reminds us how far you have come our fighter.

Your journey.

Our journey

My eldest son and family mealtimes. My eldest Dhruvs understanding is great and he surprises me just how much he knows. It is heart-warming how he can translate what he has heard and seen. We have shared with him that just like his brother he was bf. He uses this information when he plays with his teddies and has conversations with them about bf. Role playing in such a sweet way which makes us so proud of him.

Before Dylan was eating solids, Dhru would say it's dinner time for all of us and include his brother. He helps dad bring the food into the room and says to his brother "Don't worry mummy will feed you. We are eating together". "Mummy, Dylan is hungry as well, he wants, he needs milk". "Mummy I got hurt" -there's a scratch on his hand. "Mum please put milk on it for me, it will help". 😊 as it helps heal.

Bf my youngest and having an under 3-year-old is very different. Sometimes I consider it as multi-tasking on a level I never comprehended would be possible. Time goes super-fast with one child and add another to the mix it just slips away. If that makes sense? when you have your second, there is not such a thing as me time especially during lockdown being at home. Cannot believe we have been since end of Feb 2020. As time has passed, we have adapted, played, been distracted, grown, and so have I.

This is us currently.

Side note -This is us, is a US family drama reminds me of my time bf my 1st whilst watching the show. The show reflects on family life and looking at a particular time from different points of view. Whilst writing my journey that's what I have been doing. It's a great watch -full of laughs, special moments, a lot of reflection and gut-wrenching sad bits that have you in tears as well as tears of joy. I was referring to my journey not just the show. P.S the show is def worth a watch if you haven't seen it.

Where was I? oh yes, it has been a roll coaster of emotions and memories.

I'm blessed to have a hubby who is my rock, confident someone who I share everything with and a bf supporter.

He loves me more than I'd thought anyone would ever do. I'll let you into a little secret the feeling is mutual. He made sure on the days I doubted myself or was in pain that I would be able to carry on and that if I could not that he would support that decision. This is us. This enabled me to continue our first journey for nearly two years.

Thank you! Bf is more than just nursing. It brought us closer as a parents.

Struggles and how we are feeling

I have spent all of my pregnancy and maternity in lockdown at home, correction we all have. This has been our world since Feb 2020. Our bubble. It has been hard there's no denying. We as a family keep on reminding ourselves it could be worse. As humans we do that and as mothers, we do it even more so. Hoping and not giving up

How long we continue on our bf journey is very personal and should not be judged. Mothers should be supported. A word to the wise please do not ask when you plan to stop! do not assume just because someone is no longer bf you know why, or if someone is currently bf that it is or has been easy. No matter how long you have bf for, celebrate it.

It is only natural for mothers to have phases where we find changes in babies development may throw us and we look for solutions or what to label certain behaviour. As a 1st time mum bf we question ourselves- is it because he is fed to sleep? Bad sleep association? Good to offer and nurse? is that why he isn't sleeping through?

The uncertainty of am I doing this right? is my baby drinking enough? why is he not putting on enough weight? Comments thrown around like formula will help him sleep through or he isn't very chubby?

Due to lack of sleep we question things we'd normally never would do. Normal baby behaviour is challenged by what social media says it should be like. Or what a friend or family member has said. We enter another phase of desperation seeking answers. Mamas have been great for so many mums offering mothers support. Its real and factual yet relatable.

The pain of not latching, engorgement, or the fact that some mothers are so tired as they have been nursing every hour during the night and morning. Yet we carry on and provide for our babies. Yes, the house is not as clean and sometimes you do order a few more takeaways than you should. There's no shame in that. We have a content baby.

Other periods through the journey you feel so grateful that your bf and it's great. I was so happy that I did not need to do all the palaver of messing around with bottles , it was milk on tap, and my boys were happy.

During the journey I realised that I needed to trust my instinct. We may go through the cycle of phases above again. There's no shame in doing so. It is all part of the learning. Just remember to talk about it if you can. Ask for help where needed.

Celebrate achievement(s) and milestones.

Look back on how far you have come. Reflect and sometimes we just need to laugh.

Who remembers the newborn phase or later when they are 6 months and you have lost count how many times you have nursed your baby during the early hours? Yes, it has been every hour since 11pm and it's 5 am. And you have not slept a wink! ordering things off Amazon which arrive, and the hubby says another order!!! Somethings I have to admit I can't even remember why I purchased them?!?!

I'm currently blessed to be on my 2nd and final bf journey and one that has been harder in some ways due to this. One that I know will mean no more children and experiencing the special moments one can only describe as magical, the way it was supposed to be for us. Saying that I would be lying to say it has been plain sailing. We've had highs and lows. They came and went.

Even whilst writing this I cannot help but feel somewhat emotional, but would I change it? no it is that simple. Could it have been different? yes. Smoother perhaps but we shall never know. Hindsight is a wonderful thing. All I know is our children are happy and so are we.

Enjoy this journey for it is what you make it. We wouldn't appreciate it as much if it wasn't for the bumpy ride.

This poem is about the breastfeeding bond between mother and child. It wasn't always easy, as I had a lot of pain at the beginning, but it was very rewarding. I was constantly fascinated by the wonder of nature giving my baby the urge and ability to suckle. Giving up breastfeeding was hard but necessary, and was bittersweet. We now share food and comfort in other ways.

*NAME: CATIE
CHILD: MAX (2)*

ee

WHEN YOU FIRST DRANK
I FELT YOU TAKE LIFE FROM ME
I MARVELLED AT INSTINCT
DRAWING DOWN AND OUT

TOES CURLLED, I PERSISTED
YOU WERE INSATIABLE
YOU WERE INEVITABLE
I PERSISTED

WHEN YOU STARTED TO TAKE
FOOD MUCH LIKE MINE
I KNEW A TIME WOULD COME
YOU WOULD NEED ME IN
DIFFERENT WAYS

LIFE, LOVE, PAIN, JOY:
ALL THESE CAME FROM
THE BOND WE SHARED
WHEN YOU WERE AT MY BREAST

CF for mammias.org.uk

Charly Clarke

is 32, lives in Leicestershire in the UK with her five year old daughter Savannah.

Charly runs her own business supporting parents by being a breastfeeding peer supporter as well as an antenatal and baby massage instructor. She has been a Holistic therapist for over fifteen years, though of all her roles loves being a mum the most!

I want to show mums they are never alone and can find common ground with others when we are brave enough to talk about our experiences.

The breast bond

Everyone is so excited by our news,
I'm am too thinking what naplies should I use.
So many choices for parents to be,
So many horror stories about birth old ladies tell me!

I try to imagine my baby here,
Boy or girl I'll hold them dear.
Feeding I'm told is so natural and simple,
like being one of those mums on a bum cream commercial

Today's the day my baby girl has arrived,
I'm asked how I want to feed her, "by breast" I replied.
I couldn't seem to latch her, I didnt know how,
The midwife said 'back soon, I'm off for my break now'.

I tried a many more times though it never felt right,
my baby girl seemed in distress all that night.
It's cluster feeding the midwife said,
It's normal, settle down and get some rest in bed.

It's now day two and shes definitely not mellow,
Infact we notice shes rather yellow.
"Its not your fault, there's no reason you can't feed her breast,
however for now UV light and top-ups are best"

Under the light I contemplate why we're here,
I feel so guilty, she's been starving the little dear.
I've been pumping and I'm dripping wet, It's been three days and I havent slept yet!

All of a sudden I feel the urge for my post birth poo,
and I fear I'll lose my organs down the loo!
Please tell me when motherhood becomes glamorous
I feel it will be quite some time before I'm up for anything amorous!

The time has come, we're allowed to go home
I can't wait to be with my new family all alone
Feeding begins to get better and we fall in love,
Like nothing I've felt before, she fits like a glove.

Weeks pass and we've ventured out and made new friends,
the struggles we had at the beginning have come to an end.
I look back now and see we've traveled miles,
but every bit was worth it for those milk drunk smiles.



It can take time, but it's worth it

I'M EMILY, MUM TO BERNARD, 3 AND EVELYN, 5 MONTHS. I BREASTFED BERNARD FOR JUST OVER TWO YEARS AND AM CURRENTLY EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFEEDING EVELYN. WITH BOTH MY CHILDREN, BREASTFEEDING WAS REALLY HARD TO START WITH AND I AM SO GRATEFUL FOR ALL THE HELP AND SUPPORT I RECEIVED. IT TOOK TIME, BUT ONCE I GOT THERE, IT WAS WORTH IT. I HOPE MY STORY CAN HELP OTHER NEW MUMS WHO REALLY WANT TO BREASTFEED BUT IT DOES GET EASIER AND THAT YOU WILL GET TO A POINT WHERE YOU ACTUALLY ENJOY IT.

During my first pregnancy, I remember being told in an antenatal class that the average new mum stops breastfeeding on day three. I was surprised by this statistic but by the time my son was two days old, I completely understood.

During that pregnancy, when I was asked if I'd thought about how I would feed my baby, I always said that I wanted to try breastfeeding but knew that many women struggled to breastfeed and so would be happy if I ended up bottle-feeding. That's what I said but when my husband reminded me of this a few weeks after my son was born, I wailed back, "I didn't mean it!" I desperately wanted to breastfeed my son.

After a c-section birth, my son struggled to latch in the hospital. The midwife on duty that first night told me I had flat nipples and demanded to know why I hadn't been prepared and packed nipple shields in my hospital bag. Back then I'd never even heard of nipple shields. I didn't know what I was doing and my son was hungry so someone suggested giving him some formula and I agreed; he wasn't even a day old and I felt like I was letting him down. The midwife on duty the next morning was lovely though – I made it clear to her that I really wanted to breastfeed and I got loads of support. Although it's not normally advised, I was encouraged to start expressing to build up my supply, and we settled into a routine: every 3 hours I gave my son whatever I'd been able to express earlier, then tried latching him for 10 to 15 minutes (using the nipple shields my husband had bought in Tesco), then I expressed for the next feed while my husband offered him a formula top up. I can still remember one of the midwives sharing in my delight and pride when I managed to express a whole 10ml of colostrum!

On day three, we were able to go home. In the quiet and calm of my own room, and without any well-meaning midwives holding his head and my boob and trying to force the two together, my son latched (with a nipple shield) perfectly by himself. His weight gain was slow though, so we were told to keep up with three-hourly feeds, latching and then topping up with expressed milk. It turns out babies have to work harder to feed with nipple shields, so feeds could sometimes over an hour, but you count the three hours from when you start a feed. Sometimes it felt like we'd just put him down when we'd have to get up, zombie-like, and start again.

Those first few weeks were hard. Really hard. I think they are for all new parents, regardless of how you're feeding your baby. But we got there. My son regained his birth weight, plus a bit more, and we were able to start feeding on demand instead of waking him every three hours. By the time he was eight weeks old, I'd managed to get him off nipple shields and suddenly a feed was taking much less time. I'm forever grateful for all the support I got during those first weeks.

Over the next couple of months, my confidence increased and by the time he was three months old, I was happily and comfortably feeding him anywhere. I'd always aimed to get to six months and was a bit surprised to discover that babies still need milk even when they're having solid food. But by then I actively enjoyed breastfeeding, so I was happy to keep going. In the end I breastfed my son until he was 26 months old, by which time I was 14 weeks into my second pregnancy.

When my daughter was born, I was fully prepared with brand new nipple shields in my hospital bag and my breast pump retrieved from a cupboard and waiting at home. I had another c-section and once in recovery asked the midwife if I should try feeding my daughter. She said to go for it and, to my surprise, she instantly latched and fed happily before contentedly falling asleep. I had just about everyone check her latch over the next 24 hours and they all agreed it was perfect. I went home the next day and when the community midwife asked about my mood, I told her cheerfully that everything was so much better than when my son was born because feeding was going so well. Five days later my milk came in and everything went downhill.



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I got really engorged and my daughter struggled to latch. One of my nipples was badly damaged to the point where I couldn't have anything touching the massive scab that developed, and I got mastitis. The pain in my right breast was almost unbearable; I dreaded feeding my daughter and, when I did, I would sit in tears with clenched teeth. By now, the country was in lockdown and, although I spoke to my GP and community midwife over the phone, no one would come out and see me. I was prescribed antibiotics but encouraged to keep feeding on my right side using a nipple shield but, although the antibiotics helped, I was still in agony and feeding on that side meant my nipple never had a chance to heal. I was actually glad no one was allowed in the house because I spent a week wearing a dressing gown with one boob hanging out because I couldn't have anything touching it. I tried to feed on that side but put it off because of the pain and developed mastitis again.

Eventually I was referred to the breast care clinic. The nurse who saw me took one look at my nipple and said I should definitely not be feeding on that side. I was prescribed another course of antibiotics and told to only pump on the right side for a week, to give it time to heal. I was so relieved, although it made feeding my daughter much more complicated; there were times when she was clearly starving but rather than simply pop her on a boob, I had to sterilise a bottle and warm some expressed milk first, and I felt awful seeing her in distress while I got everything ready.

But it worked. Over the week, my nipple healed and I could feel the hard, painful lump underneath disappear. I was no longer in pain but I was nervous about attempting to feed my daughter on my right breast again. Every time I thought about it, I anticipated the pain I'd felt before and I put off trying for another couple of days. Eventually, I clenched my teeth and tried to feed her from the right side; we've not looked back since.

With both my children, getting breastfeeding started was anything but easy. I now know that, although breastfeeding is the natural way for mammals to feed their children, it doesn't necessarily come naturally. Both mother and baby have to learn what to do. However, I've also realised that there is lots of support available if you do want to try. With both my babies, it took about six or seven weeks before breastfeeding started to feel easy, painless and something I enjoyed, but I did get there and, when I did, I found it so rewarding.

One particular memory has always stuck in my mind. When my son was about six weeks old, I was feeding him without nipple shields for one of the first times and, when he unlatched, I looked down and saw that milk was just spurting out from my boob into his face. (I had no idea this was a thing that happened!) I started to laugh and said to him, "Oh Bernard, that was really funny and you're the only person here to share it with." He looked up at me and his face burst into the biggest, happiest smile - it was the first time he'd properly smiled at me and one of my happiest breastfeeding memories.

My name is Emily, and I have Roddy - now 25 months, and still breastfeeding (My nephew once told me he smells of porridge - I think that must be the milk!).

I feel like I've been waiting my whole life for him, and I always wanted to breastfeed. There have been some giddy highs and dark dark days since he was born. Sally from Mamas came to visit us at home during one of my blue periods - when I felt like my milk supply was drying up. She listened, and encouraged (and still does).

I never thought I would still be breastfeeding past 2 years, but it is so addictive (for us both!), it is hard to stop... even after all the biting, the clusters of little yellow finger print bruises, the pain and panic of that lumpy, hot, hard, blocked duct.. it can be some kind of bliss. So I wanted to write all this down to encourage others struggling and questioning their breastfeeding to keep on keeping on, if they can.

It is worth it.

Even if my nipples didn't used to look like this.

I had them for 36 Years before Roddy came along.

But I can't remember what they did look like before him- how can that be!?





KEEP ON KEEPING ON

The day Roddy was born, I Felt like I had period pains.I went back to bed, cancelled a friend coming round.

I tried having a bath, thought about shaving my legs, but didn't-thinking this might go on for days.My mum came round, determined to do a bonfire.

I felt irritable with her and stayed in my room.

On the car journey to the hospital I could smell the smoke on her clothes, it was so strong.I didn't want anyone else in the room with me and the midwife (this hadn't been the plan) It felt so undignified, and I was already

Intense is the word I use.

More intense than you can imagine beforehand,but better than I imagined.

I crave that feeling again - of my rosy new baby suddenly here and in my arms(Too fast for pain killers or a water birth)

15 days early (Thank you Roddy)

She (Thank you Lisa) stitched me up carefully,

I watched it backwards in the shiny silver light on the ceiling.





A lot of it is a blur.

I remember thinking “I can walk again!”-
after hobbling in pain for the past 2 weeks.
It must have been the adrenalin, As we
walked down to the ward.

I had to stay the night “just in case”

In case my baby was in withdrawal from my medications.

Does he make a “high pitched” squeal?

(No) More of a blur-

I can hardly even remember how many nights we stayed in hospital

Then some big blood clots.

Roddy didn't seem able to latch on

Several hospital staff tried to show me how
“Have you tried the rugby ball hold?”

We had been to the anti natal class about it
-“Line up his nose with your nipple”



I had to squeeze miniscule drops of colostrum-the
gold bottle top stuff of breast feeding,
onto the end of a syringe my boyfriend held.

It was so hard and took so long to even get 1 ml!That
night I tried and tried.

Several staff offered to take him to the nursery for a few hours so
I could sleep.I carried on for several more hours,
then I pressed the buzzer and asked if they could take him for me

A different nurse/midwife came,
she asked abruptly "Is he not on formula?"She
really upset me.

So through tears in my eyes,

I squeezed and squeezed the drops onto the syringe for 0.5 ml,to
take to the nursery with Roddy.

When I woke up it had been more than 3 hours,

I cried -i felt I should have been there to feed my baby.The
syringe of colostrum I had squeezed had dried up-

They had let Roddy sleep through and not woken him to feed him.

A kind MCA made me a drink and told me to take half an hour to
calm down and relax, becauseRoddy would feel my tension.

She put the TV on,

Amazingly it was a program about cows being milked.



All the time we were timing the next
feed-Was it every 3(?) hours

We set an alarm for every 2 and a half-to wake him up and change
his nappy

Kieran woke him with a gentle tickle.

On the second day he started to latch
and I cried- I was so overwhelmed

The breastfeeding lady was so kind and encouraging,She
came back to see me just as this was happening-just as I
was crying

She said something like "I knew you could do it"

She told us to get on the waiting list at DUDLEY to get his tongue tie
cut -as the waiting list was quicker,

and apparently the doctors in Leicester didn't believe in tongue tie!?

I rang my friend to pick up some nipple shields at her suggestion

(Thank you Clo)A few hours later a doctor came and told us Roddy
was jaundiced , and had to have formula milk now.

I felt devastated - I wanted to breastfeed.I
cried again.

They offered us a choice of 2 brands!?

Kieran chose cow and gate without a pause,
like he knew all about these things!?

Roddy spent 12 hours under a UV lamp in our room.

He had kind of goggles on to protect his eyes,
and looked like he was sunbathing, relaxed, happy.





We were setting the alarm to wake him every few hours to feed him still. Kieran microwaved the bottles sterile and we fed him together.

The nipple shields helped, but had to be sterile

One next to the bed in a little plastic case, one next to the sofa downstairs... A week later we went to the breast feeding clinic

And tried without the nipple shields and Roddy did it on his own

The lady there was so reassuring and encouraging- She said " You don't need to come back"

(We never bothered to get his tongue tie cut after that)



A few hours later we were visiting Roddy's Great Grandma –
down the road from the hospital Everything started to feel surreal,
I felt kind of separate to my body

I could hear my voice but it didn't sound like it was coming from me
I felt like I was starting to lose grip with reality,

I told Kieran we needed to go. Driving
home I felt unsafe to drive, I thought I
might crash the car,

I thought this is going to be the last time I drive for a long time -so
I stopped on the way home at the GP's to register Roddy

My thoughts became so jumbled I struggled to concentrate to fill in
the form in front of me I went to call Kieran- outside in the car

But I couldn't remember how to use my phone!?
Tears were rolling down my cheeks

The receptionist could see I was not ok and offered me a box of
Tissues

I think I told her it was OK -Kieran was just outside in the car with
Roddy

So in the end it was a blessing-mixed feeding

- so Kieran could feed him when I needed to sleep - to try to
keep myself sane I remember flicking lavender oil all over my
pillow, and even listening to the nature sounds on a toy hippo
- given to us to help Roddy sleep to try to calm my racing
thoughts.

In the shower my thoughts
skip and wheel Too fast to
be recorded.

While I wash my body feeling the sensation of the water as if it is
the first time I've ever had a shower



I had to leave m phone downstairs
I tried camomile tea,

A lavender face balm

Rescue remedy drops under my tongue.

Sometimes I listened to music very very quietly ,like Massive Attack
Most radio stations were too overstimulating.

My medication got fiddled about with so many times I had to write it
downand put it in a dossit box

Sometimes I was so distractable id take the wrong
onesOne time I locked Kieran out by accident

I was so zonked I didn't hear my phone, or pebbles thrown at my
bedroom windowKieran had to break the chain on the front door.

This made me worry I wouldn't wake if Roddy was crying

So then I wouldn't take my bedtime meds unless Kieran was home from
work.Roddy seemed such a good baby- he didn't cry much

I wondered if my meds were having a sedative effect on him-
through my milk

I think it was about 9 weeks before I felt like id come back down to earth)
wanted to photograph everything

and write down all my thoughts

I felt like there were not enough hours in the day to do everything!
wrote down every feed and every nappy

and made Kieran do it too,for
weeks and weeks

I think because my thoughts were so skittish I thought I wouldn't
remember thingsI wore a breastfeeding charity band on my wrist a
friend gave me

(Thank you Tracy)

-To remember which boob you had last fed on- to alternate

I was expressing day in day out One day my
milk was tinged pink Was it blood?

I rang a breastfeeding helpline

Apparently eating beetroot could colour it! Bemus
ment and relief.

We had a couple of good, well months Then I felt
like my milk was drying up

Pumping every morning and every evening was getting me down

I was anxious measuring the amounts of milk that seemed to be less
and less “put a baby sock over the bottle so you cant watch it” didn't
make me feel any better I spoke to Sally- she came to see us at home
Why was I expressing? She asked

So I stopped and it was a relief

Getting to baby groups in the morning now seemed possible- as
I didn't have to express first But id also become depressed

Napping with Roddy on the sofa, Him at my
breast

Is partly what got me through. That feel-
ing of closeness.

If I napped upstairs without him I felt a kind of guilt being apart
from him Sleeping with him next to me was allowed
and helped my mind switch off/take a break

I cant remember when Roddy stopped taking the bottle Now it
was just me and him when it came to milk

No more sterilising and counting powder scoops

No more precious milk flicked all down the side of the sofa when
Kieran shook a bottle! But also no more taking it in turns to get up in
the night, I never thought I would sleep with my baby in my bed but
now I dolts not the same kind of sleep

But it is beautiful

Then ironically- How to stop?!

I never heard anyone talk about this before

We all know breastfeeding can be hard, and it doesn't work for everyone, but no-one ever mentioned how to stop before!

You come to realise a lot of people have pre-conceived ideas of when you should stop "6 months"

"I stopped as soon as he had teeth"
"I'm sure I'd stopped by now"

"Oh yeah, time to stop"

"Its no longer a physical need its a psychological habit you will have to break""The longer you do it the harder it will be"

"Oh you're still breastfeeding?!"

Thank you everyone for that unhelpful input

But properly thank you to Claire from
the perinatal team Dr Kestleman

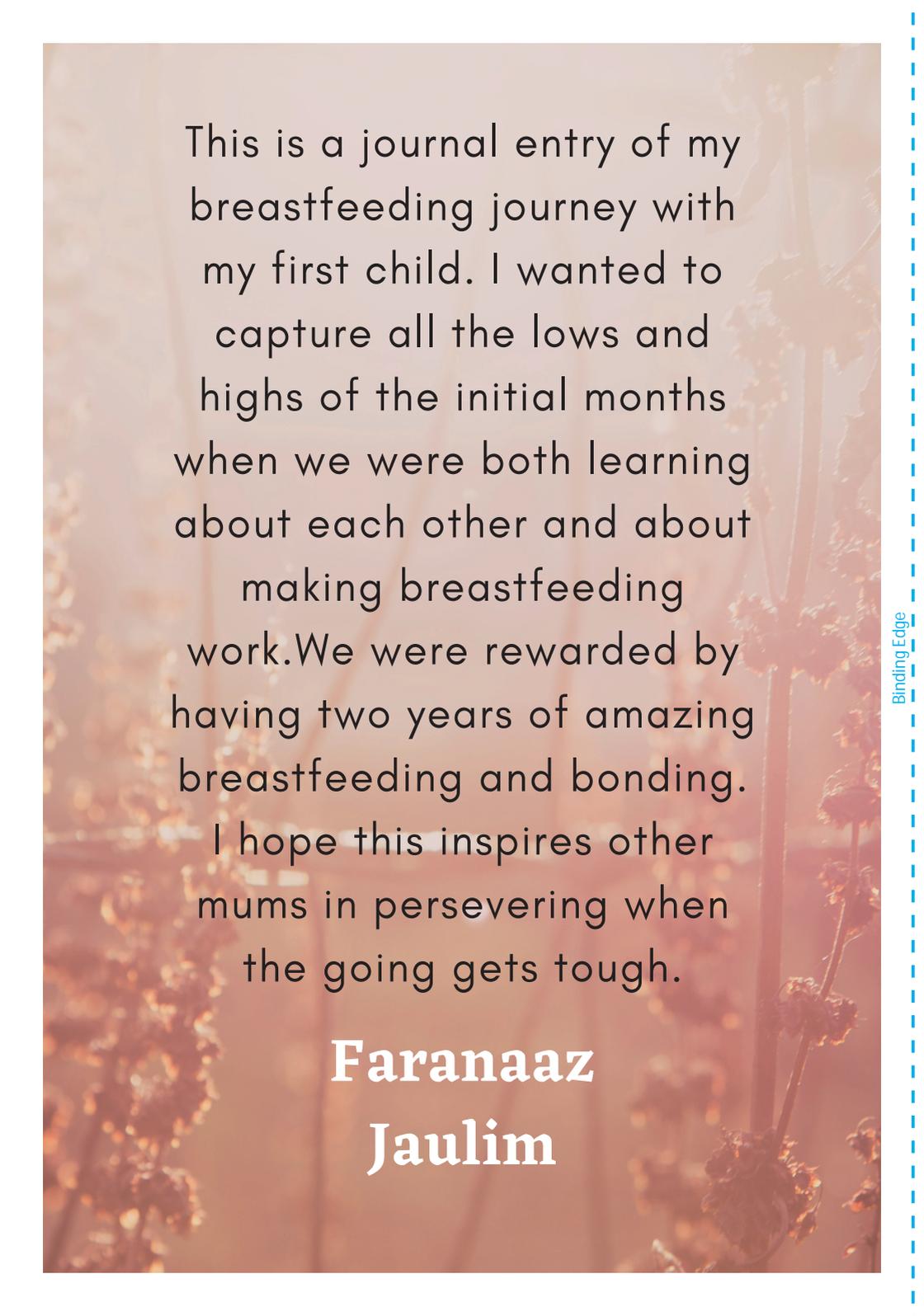
The ladies from the breastfeeding clinic at the
General Hospital Sally from mamas

Kieran-my
morning hero
<3 My mum-
who is always
there

And to all the other mums who recognise and understand
the euphoric good, the challenging bad and the beautiful/
ugly

The peaks and the troughs, and sometimes the whirlwind.





This is a journal entry of my breastfeeding journey with my first child. I wanted to capture all the lows and highs of the initial months when we were both learning about each other and about making breastfeeding work. We were rewarded by having two years of amazing breastfeeding and bonding. I hope this inspires other mums in persevering when the going gets tough.

**Faranaaz
Jaulim**

I had an IV drip in both hands through which liquid was getting into my body, I was in pain, the lower part of my body was almost lifeless from the spinal anaesthetic and I just had the most traumatic experience of my life. But through it all I had only one desire; to be able to feed you. I had to wait for visiting time so that your dad could bring you to me and I tried to sit up. You looked so fragile, like a piece of china, and I held you, wondering how on earth I would be able to bring you to my breast. The needles were digging into my flesh, and I was afraid to hold you. How to get you to latch on, when I could barely hold you? It took the help of your dad and my friend before I could attach you to my breast. Was the latch ok, was the milk coming? I never felt so unsure in my life. I realised then how helpless I felt as a mother. This internal dialogue was what kept me going in my darkest moments.

I've read lots of books before your birth, attended antenatal classes, thought I knew it all. But nothing quite prepare you to the big shock of having a baby, realising that you have this little human depending on you, on your decisions. What if I get it wrong? How come I didn't know what to do? Surely breastfeeding a baby must be the most natural thing for a mum to do? Why then was it not working for me? Did these 3 hours when I was taken from you into the operation theatre make you forget that I was your mummy?

You stayed on my breast only a few minutes that first time and then you fell asleep. I couldn't sleep, I was too full of adrenaline, or was it oxytocin?

The next time I tried to breastfeed was at night, the nurse had brought you to me and it was just you and me in the silent night. And the magic happened, you started guzzling hungrily on my breast. I felt so proud, at last I was being a mum. As if all the pain and hardship I went through to give birth to you did not count. It was only when I felt my milk flowing into your mouth that I felt I had succeeded as a mother.

But this was just the beginning, the road in our breastfeeding journey was going to be a long one, not devoid of pain and tears but also full of laughter and joy. But I was so determined to make it work, I would cross all the obstacles and go the extra miles, but I was going to make sure that you are fed my milk for the next two years. Through the excruciating pain of cracked and bleeding nipples, through the nights of broken sleep, through the days of doing nothing but holding you, having no care whatsoever of the house-chores that was piling! Surely feeding you should be my priority, my life mission, what does it matter that the clothes are not being ironed, or the house was not being cleaned meticulously? Your dad was the greatest advocate for the whole project and supported it with all his energy, even going to the point of learning to cook to be able to give me time to focus on you.

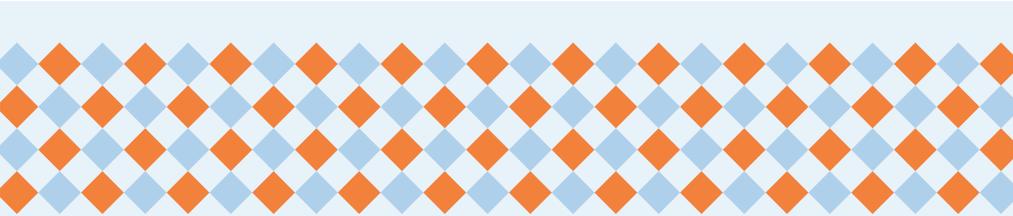
And focussed on you I did, every second of my life,
I cared for you, putting your needs first. I
breastfed you night and day. And at the end it
worked! After the initial months of struggle, of
checking to see if the latch was deep, that you had
a big amount of breast in your mouth, to see if
your jaw was moving, that you were swallowing
even though your eyes were closed, we got the
hang of breastfeeding. It took us both by surprise,
because we thought it will never happen, but here
we were, gaining in confidence as the days went
by, becoming experts at it. Bonded by our unique
relationship that was our breastfeeding journey,
with its highs and lows, we felt like the closest
people on earth, eyes glued to each other, me
pouring my love into you through every single
drops of my milk, we felt like we have finally
reached home.

Faranaaz



My journey as a new mum and being blessed with not just one bundle of joy but 2! My journey was one that was scary, involved patience, support from my husband, mum and sister. I am so proud of my journey which ended just before their 2nd birthday. It has been the best experience, being able to grow my children using what I produced for them as I did whilst pregnant. This is for you my Mikaeel and Malaeeka, my angels .

FARANAH
IBRAHIM



My name is Faranah and I'm a first time mum to twins, Mikael and Malaeeka. Being a first time mum I was somewhat oblivious and naive to how my breastfeeding journey would pave itself. Starting from the moment I was asked "How do you want to feed your babies?" Keeping in mind I had a traumatic birth hooked onto blood and other various drugs being laughed at for my decision was not something I thought would haunt me to this day...

My twins have blossomed and they continue to and all I can say is Thank you, to my husband who cared and backed my decision whilst in hospital, my sister for her ongoing support from the very start, my mum and dad for their encouragement and support (my little cheer leaders and most definitely Mamas who without them I would have given up and never have felt the way I do today.

I am proud and so overwhelmed by what my body was able to do. Not only grow twins but also be able to sustain them for a breastfeeding journey that lasted 21 glorious months.

Faranah Ibrahim



2018
Best from the East



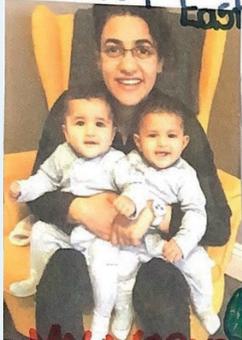
You changed our lives forever...
Mamas Milk Tears Blood



Coming home = feeding time

day	weight	temp	BP	HR
10/2/18	1880g (14.01)			
11/2/18	2100g	36.5	92	120
14/3/18	127g	36.5	92	120

Scared, worried
Ha ha ha! 😊



MY WORLD

The start of a beautiful adventure...
How will you feed your twins?



Anger



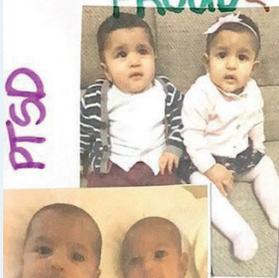
PROUD

I didn't think nor question my ability to provide for my two. You grew inside of me I provided. How would it be any different to when you came...

unp t et



CONFIDENT



PTSD



We grow



HEALTHY

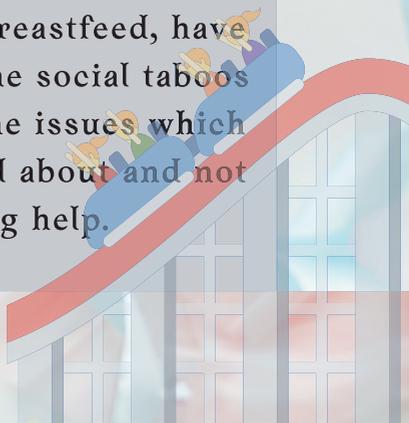


In parks we feed



Holly

My name is Holly, I am first time mumma to my little girl and have been exclusively breastfeeding her since she was born. She is now 4 months old and as I have sat here and reflected on that time of breastfeeding, as you will see from my journal, it hasn't been the easiest of rides, a good comparison would be a rollercoaster! There have been so many unreal highs, fast paced changes with some troughs, bumps and times which made me want to stop, but after everything I am still so passionate about breastfeeding and will be hoping to continue for as long as possible! I hope that by sharing my experiences more new mumma's will choose to breastfeed, have the confidence to overcome social taboos and know more about some issues which might not be widely talked about and not worry about seeking help.

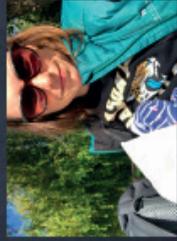


Day 1

Breastfeeding was a top priority for me, knowing all the benefits of it, but as a first time mumma I also had thoughts in the back of my mind about "what if... baby has a tongue tie, or doesn't latch well or I can't produce enough milk" and a million and one other thoughts about expressing, bottle feeding, sterilising - totally overthinking things!!

When our little girl was born she latched really well - it honestly was the most amazing but also surreal moment! Alongside this and the support of the midwives at St Mary's Birth Centre (if you can I would highly recommend staying one night there!), naturally after this I thought everything would go swimmingly!

The next few days I really felt the bond growing with my little one every time we sat down to feed, we were both definitely learning as we went. Although the late night/early morning feeds were difficult whilst being half asleep, being all cosy with little one was so special.



Day 3

I was out for a walk with little one in the ergo carry and I noticed my boobs literally felt like rocks! Turns out my milk had come in extremely fast. I noticed the next morning I had huge red patches which were really hot. Thankfully my GF surgery acted quickly and managed to get me an appointment and some antibiotics to treat for mastitis.

Months 1 & 2

During this time there were plenty of road bumps with the mastitis not clearing up, getting thrush in my boobs, huge lumps, blebs and nipple vasospasm, it felt like I was working my way through the breastfeeding medical dictionary! However, despite all these issues, pain and points where I felt like giving up, strangely it actually improved little ones feeding (as she fed so regularly) and made me more determined to overcome the challenges and continue with breastfeeding. I love the way my little one is always so excited for a feed and the way her beautiful eyes look up at me, just makes me keep falling in love!

Months 3 & 4

I have become a lot more confident with feeding, so has my little one, especially when out and about and with family and friends. Initially I was very shy and fed in another room, but one day I decided to be brave, over come the social taboo and all my friends and family were so supportive.

Even though I still have issues with the lumps and vasospasm I feel confident in self managing with my gained knowledge after seeking support from my health visitor and infant feeding team.

My little summary of lessons I have learnt:

1. Take things as they come and ride the rollercoaster - everything is just a phase! Never worry about asking questions - nothing is too silly!
2. Never be afraid to seek support
3. Be confident in yourself and your decisions
4. Breastfeeding is so convenient when out about! No bottles, sterilising or cool packs needed!
5. Love every minute of breastfeeding as time flies!
6. Remind yourself everyday that you are doing an amazing job!



My



Summed up in one piece - my journey from pregnancy to breastfeeding. A product of channeling my grief of the loss of my father. When I was 7 months pregnant with my first born, my (now nearly 7 months old) son, Muhammad. Teaching myself the art of hand embroidery - this embroidery piece represents an image of how the milk from me has and is allowing my son to push up from amongst the flowers around him and flourish. Standing tall and strong beside me. With an accompanying letter from me- Iffat, to my son Muhammad.





Our bond through breastfeeding



MY DEAR SON MUHAMMAD,

Peace be to you my beautiful son. I am writing to you today to walk you through our breastfeeding journey and this sweet bond we shared together. Summed up in one word? Beautiful.

There's no wonder it has been mentioned in our religion through the Holy Quran. This is the verse from the Quran "Mothers shall breastfeed their children for two whole years, for those who wish to complete the term" (2:233). Also, in reminding people to treat their parents with kindness, the Qur'an says: "His mother carried him, in weakness upon weakness, and his period of weaning is two years" (31:14).

I had moments when it was extremely difficult and I wondered what I was doing and questioned why but it was these verses that kept me going, as they seemed to empathise with me, understand and not question my tears but embrace them. It made me resilient to push through the trials and with support, jump over the hurdles. As I knew "with hardship there is ease."

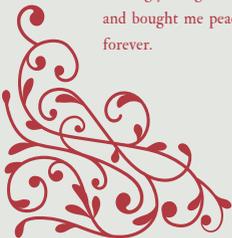
The "ease" for me, was always the serenity it bought me to look at you in all your stillness and calm once you'd taken to your fill. Snuggled up with me all warm and close - I can't think of anything that makes me feel more satisfied, than when I see this amazing transformation (it doesn't always happen but when it does - it's bliss) from you struggling or crying to your complete stillness after I feed you and bring you close - it's the calm after the storm. So calm and still. Me and you. Just the two of us. It's perfect.

After learning more about breastfeeding through Mammias in Leicester, I came to understand this whole new world and the immense amount of holistic benefits including physical, mental and emotional benefits (to name but a few) there actually are to it- for you and for me! I am still amazed to this day, at the beauty of this remarkable connection of Mummy, breastfeeding and baby.

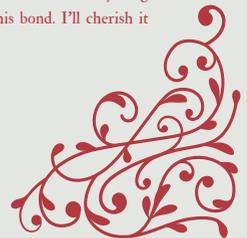
Prophet Muhammad (who you are named after) peace and blessings be upon him, was also nursed by his mother but also wet nurses. My favourite story is of him and his wet nurse named Halima Sadia. Maybe you can look into this yourself.

In our religion breastfeeding is seen as the "right" of the child. I'm grateful I was able to give you what was yours to begin with. Each word in this letter Muhammad, is attached to the process, as I'd work on this whilst holding you close. Just as I did with the hand embroidered piece when you were still inside me- in your first home. That too was created with love. Each thread coming together to encapsulate an image of you pushing up through the seedlings to stand tall besides your mummy as you benefit from the milk that comes from me.

I pray you benefit forever from this journey- as I have. In all honesty, it was a roller-coaster but ultimately, I loved holding you right next to me. Your warmth and your heartbeat against mine is something that overcame everything and bought me peace and calm even on the darkest of days. I'm grateful we could share this bond. I'll cherish it forever.



STAY BLESSED MY BELOVED
WITH SINCERE LOVE, YOUR UMMI



BREAST FEEDING COMPLETED MY LIFE AS A WOMAN.

BIO

my name: Jannat Gao

kids name: Zahra 6 years, Harris 3years

I am from China , my families all leave there , I came to give birth to my daughter on my own , my husband went back to work in Shanghai after 20days she is born , i was leaving with my in laws until she is 2.5months old . with my son , i gave birth in Uk and leave her permanently .

I had no idea about looking after the baby at all , i was surprised i did it .

In most people's mind , to get married , have children is to have a complete life . however , for me, to get married , to be pregnant , to give birth naturally and go through the breast feeding journey makes me feel like an entire woman . because it brought me happiness.

1 love: The 1st night being a mum , me and my daughter stayed in hospital on our own , no one trained me how to be a new mum , no one trained my baby how to drink milk outside of my womb, when i heard her cry, i checked and changed her nappy, when i heard her cry again , i tried to feed her, she drank, then i changed her nappy, then fed her, we coped well the 1st day on our own. It was the very 1st time for both of us . that feeling for me wasAmazing .

2,Strong. As a new mum , i didn't know what's the right position to feed my child , she was crying the whole day , then another day , the family members were worried and wanted to give her formula straight away, as her mum , i learnt , breastfeeding is best for her. I was sure we both need to learn and practice . the 1st time i said no to my senior family and i insisted on trying feed her more .

3,Excited . With some professional help , I was shown how to feed my baby , we did it , she is not cry out of hunger any more and my body produced milk normally .

4 Tired. So many times , during the day when she was feeding , i fell asleep with her, she needed night feeding , i would fall asleep feeding her.

5 Magical. I was a sound sleeper before giving birth , i used to be worried what if i couldn't wake up when my baby needs me , naturally , no matter how tired i was i always I heard her , and was able to get up for her.

6 Angry, I would get angry when she woke up too often as i couldn't get enough sleep .

7 worried , when she got reflux , I was worried , if there was anything wrong with my food? what should i eat , what's better for her ? what shouldn't I eat or drink ?

8,Motivated . no caffeine, no coffee, no tea, no fizzy drinks , no chocolate ,no medicine ,less chilli , less salt ,less sugar , more vegetable , more fruit , eating in a healthy way when i was pregnant and breastfeeding journey .

9,Painful. when I don't know how to feed her, but she keep sucking , my nipple was bleeding ; when i went back to work, with less rest but more stress , my body produced less milk , when she couldn't get enough milk ; when i was at work for too long , both breast were full of milk and when you touch it , feel like a rock; these feeling are painful .

10 Satisfied , whenever she was feeding , drinking with loud sound and even her whole body was kicking and dancing , I knew she was satisfied , and so was I .

11,Brave , are you willing to lift your shirt in public even with a scarf covered ?will you have any concerns if you do so ? with breastfeeding , I just did as much as she needed , as much as I could .

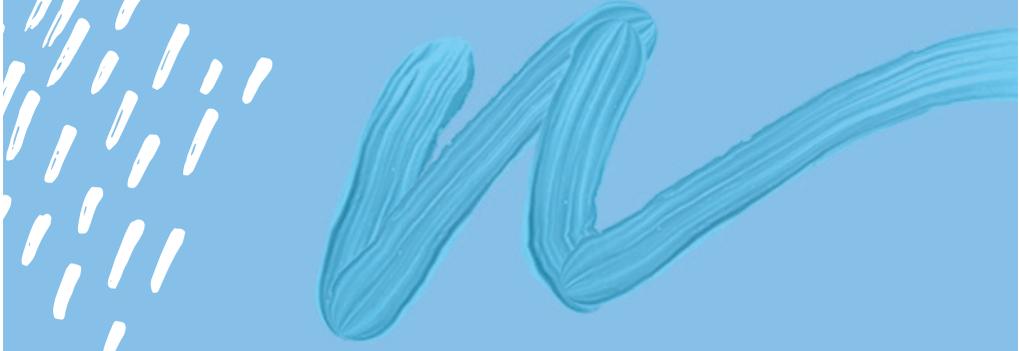
12 Sad . I did feel sad when she needed feeding in public ,I still remember 5years ago , we were on the metro , with so many passengers around and i had to be ready to get off any time. she was crying and crying , i was more sad and still remember the whole trip , what she wore , how she cried and became happy after i fed her when we arrived at our destination.

13.Stressed, when I feel it's time to stop feeding her after she turned 2, I knew it's gonna be good for her sleep , for her teeth , for me to have a good sleep at night , but so many time i tried , she cried , i just couldn't handle, meanwhile , i feel it was an end of a journey with her. until she turned 2.5 and I found out i was pregnant with the 2nd baby , we both did it within one week .

14 Happy Me and my daughter's feeding journey is happily ended and start with my son happily and easily with the experience before.

15 Memory. any with my son's feeding journey , it brought me so much memories with my daughter , i feel i raised her again ,

16 needed and being loved ,the babies need me , i need them ; i love them , they love me . i raised them and give them life , they made my life completed .



Mum of 3 years old Daniel and 1 year old Sofia, former professional musician and logistics administrator, born in Poland naturalised Belgian citizen, nowadays Katarzyna is an ABM Mother Supporter, Mammias Ambassador and peer supporter, involved with Maternity Voices Partnership and ABM Breastfeeding Counsellor trainee.

I have written my journal hoping to convey a message to new and expectant mothers that breastfeeding is instinctive and natural. But more importantly that they should never blame themselves if something goes wrong because birth interventions and other situations can disrupt the fragile instincts. Women should NEVER be blamed for any issues with breastfeeding.



Katarzyna

Breastfeeding: instinctive or a learned skill?

For me breastfeeding was never a choice. This is just what you do. You get pregnant, you give birth and you breastfeed. I guess it's because all the women in my family have breastfed and all my friends did it too; at least I have never seen them formula feed their babies.

When I was pregnant with my first child I thought breastfeeding was easy and instinctive, and that babies know what to do. You just have to bring your baby to your breast and they will latch. How complicated can it be? So I didn't go to any antenatal classes. I tried to read one book about breastfeeding but it seemed so abstract that I didn't continue reading.



My first childbirth was quite difficult. I had pre-eclampsia, long induced labour, many painkillers, haemorrhage, HELLP syndrome and post partum preeclampsia. My skin-to-skin time was very short and I had a lot of interventions. I tried to breastfeed and my son was latching well. But I was very exhausted and had post partum preeclampsia for a few days and delayed lactogenesis 2 (milk wasn't coming in). I had no idea why and nobody was explaining anything to me. They just said my son had to be supplemented (by SNS and cup) and I had to pump for 20 minutes after every feed. I had very sore nipples but the midwives were saying 'Only at the beginning of the feed, then it subsides doesn't it?' but it wasn't. And they were saying the latch was good but my nipples still hurt.

On the 6th day post partum preeclampsia settled and around the same time my milk started to come in. **To be honest until not long ago I thought I was just not good at breastfeeding and that's why it was difficult at the beginning. What a ridiculous thought!** It was all the interventions and stress that made it difficult for both me and my son! But I have only realised it after researching it myself, nobody has ever explained it to me.



My second childbirth was very easy. It wasn't induced; it was fast and with basically no interventions at all. And guess what? Breastfeeding was easy! Of course I was more experienced and I had more knowledge. I knew the baby had to breastfeed a lot at the beginning to establish the supply, I knew how the effective latch looked like.

And I started to wonder: is breastfeeding instinctive or is it a learned skill? And I think the answer is that it's instinctive. All women and babies are hardwired to breastfeed. Complications, interventions, bad advice, impatience, stress, pain, socio-cultural attitudes, undermining women's body etc. they all make breastfeeding difficult. They might make it seem that breastfeeding is a difficult skill that has to be learned. But let's turn it around: no or minimal interventions, good advice, patience, relaxation, minimal pain, support. **Breastfeeding can be easy and instinctive as long as we let it be. And as long as we believe that it is.**

Katarzyna



The midwives laughed because once you found your latch you did not let go. They dared not try to take you away & put you in a crib, so they wheeled us to recovery together.

We were locked down. With no support, I had to rely on you to know what was best. You could feed for hours, days – endless days that are over now – face serene as long as I did not try to remove you from my breast.

I treasured our moments together, and we battled through the early trials of sore, bleeding nipples and difficulties in finding comfortable feeding positions in the hope everything would get easier.

Eventually, we found a rhythm.

I had to work. I had a book to write. You never left my side, so I learned to type with one hand. You got bigger. I finished the book.

My book was published and you are now one year old. We are happy and we still haven't found a routine. I type this with one hand now as you dreamily nurse, your beautiful doe eyes peacefully closed.

I have struggled. I have been frustrated. Sometimes depressed. But you, and Papa, have kept me going.

Now I don't know what I will do when you decide that you do not want to nurse anymore. We will have to find a new way for you to be my muse.

RAINBOW BABY & MAMA

05.05.2020



MY BREASTFEEDING JOURNAL

Mammas Breastfeeding Chronicles



By, Mira Bahadur

Kareem is my first born and only child currently. He is now 19 months old. We have been able to breastfeed since birth and continue to do so. This is because of the immense support I have received from my husband Yasin, my families, midwives, breastfeeding peer supporters and Sally Etheridge.

My journal so far features our early days and how we progressed. I have tried to use pictures to illustrate my feelings at the time. This is the start of my journal and hope I can continue with it as we continue to breastfeed.

Early Days

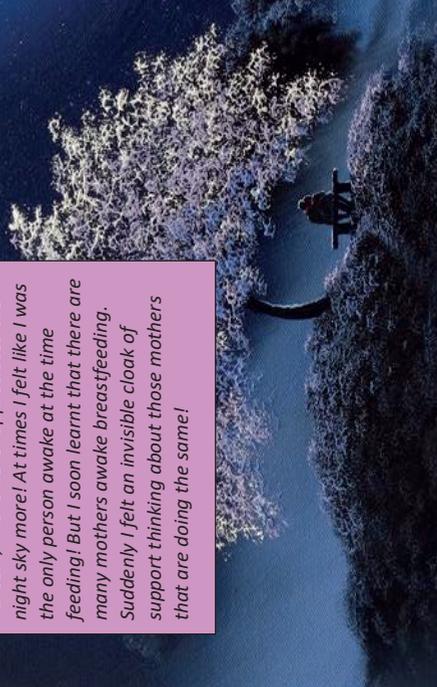
I clearly remember when this picture was taken. A midwife taught me to feed whilst lying side by side with Kareem and I was so grateful to learn this! She also took a video of Kareem feeding to reassure me that he was a good feeder.

It was also a time that I was feeling incredibly low. I was in pain during the start of the feed and nothing I was doing helped. The midwives told me that the pain should settle and to keep trying to achieve a deep latch when Kareem feeds.

I was exhausted and tired. I did not know if I had it in me to do this and at the same time, I did not want it to end. I was craving this connection that everyone was telling me about when you breastfeed. I wanted it to be everything that the books told me it should, and I wanted it to be pain free. I did not want to bleed anymore or dread the next feed.

I spent most my nights awake with Kareem, I have never appreciated the night sky more! At times I felt like I was the only person awake at the time feeding! But I soon learnt that there are many mothers awake breastfeeding. Suddenly I felt an invisible cloak of support thinking about those mothers that are doing the same!

We were forming our roots for feeding in the early days, anchoring, and supporting us for the future. I felt your energy levels climb as you became more alert my Kareem, I was astonished that my body was fuelling yours. Things are starting to look up my baby, we will make this work together. I need this just as much as you do.



Making Progress

“Take it a feed at a time...”

We are getting better at this, you *and* me.

We found at 3 months on, Kareem had a posterior tongue tie. We decided to have it cut, so that it might help him feed better and possibly not cause issues in the future. At first, I thought I put Kareem through the procedure for no reason. I did not know if it had made any difference and Kareem refused to feed for a couple of days unless he was sleepy. I cried a lot, and he did too. After days passed, we slowly got back to our rhythm, and then one day it felt fine. I wish I noted when that happened, but it is in the midst of my blurry memory. Our feeding relationship was blossoming, becoming more beautiful with each passing day. I loved the way you fell asleep during a feed. I began to cherish the feeds more and our feeding relationship blossomed.

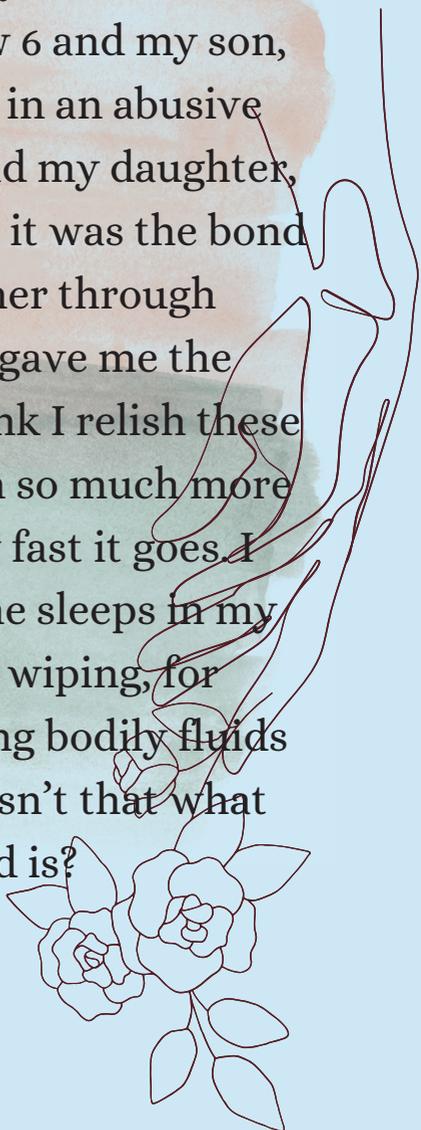


I have had two, extraordinary breastfeeding journeys; at least for me. My daughter, now 6 and my son, now 9 months. I was in an abusive relationship when I had my daughter, and I truly believe that it was the bond

I developed with her through breastfeeding that gave me the strength to leave. I think I relish these moments with my son so much more because I know how fast it goes. I embroider cloths as he sleeps in my arms. They are for wiping, for cleaning, for containing bodily fluids and fluid emotions. Isn't that what motherhood is?

Miriam

BURKE

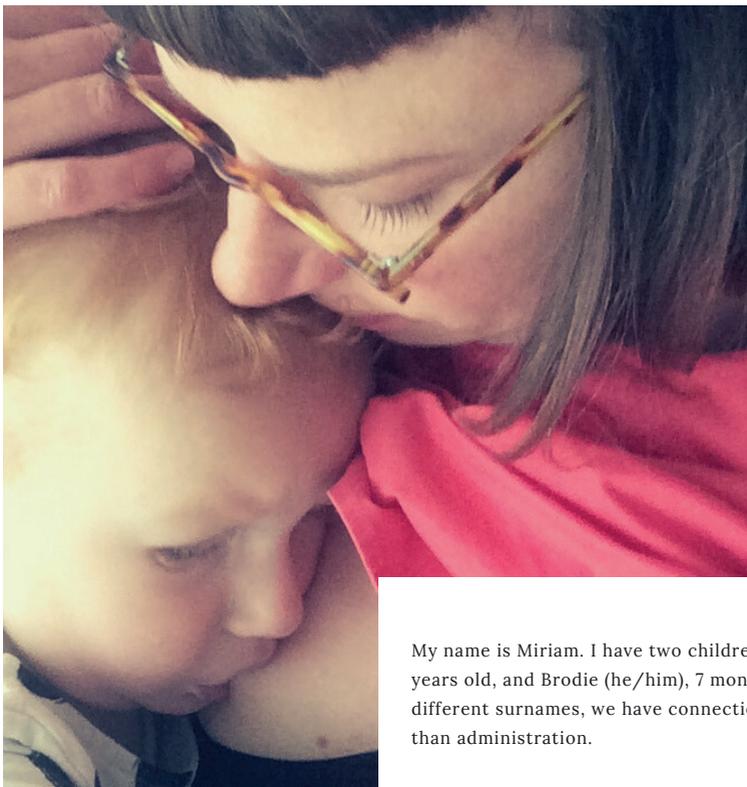




MIRIAM BURKE

MY
BREASTFEEDING
JOURNEY

2021



My name is Miriam. I have two children, Tova (she/her) 6 years old, and Brodie (he/him), 7 months old. We have different surnames, we have connections that run deeper than administration.

Six years ago I was in an abusive relationship. My ex partner governed the clothes I wore, the people I met, the job I did, the food I ate, and the kind of mother I was allowed to be. At my daughter's first birthday he told me to stop breastfeeding. I said no.

It was the first time I had said no to him in years. He tried everything he could to put a barrier between me and my daughter. He thought our bond was too strong. He was insecure and threatened. My daughter was the most important thing in the world to me. And he was threatening her (and my) well-being, health and relationship.

He said if I didn't stop breastfeeding he would leave me (thinking I'd stop). But it was at that moment, I knew mothering was more important than anything he could throw at us. So one day, I gathered my daughter in my arms and all the strength and courage in my heart and I told him to leave.

And to my surprise he did.



Mothering and breastfeeding were the things that enabled me to find the strength I always had. The strength I had forgotten. The strength that too long had been suppressed by gaslighting and bullying. I don't believe I would ever have found this strength any other way. I had been crushed too long.

it was a hard road out. For anyone in it now, it gets better. The other side is wonderful. I feel like a butterfly emerging from a chrysalis. Five years we've been broken up. And I still feel myself unfurling, relaxing into new dimensions of what is possible.

I now have a new partner. He is wonderful, kind funny, beautiful. All the cliches. He is an amazing dad and stepfather, my daughter calls him 'da' the Glasgow word for dad. We are a little mishmash family of 4 now. Little Brodie is the newest addition. I treasure these quiet days of baby snuggles and boobs because I know how quickly they pass. I treasure the unwavering support and generosity of my partner because I know how precious it is.

When my daughter was 3 I graduated from a PhD in cultural geography. I wrote about feminism, environmentalism. I wrote about how crafting and skills are passed through families, generations, how mothering is a craft. I learnt to spin linen from flax plants as I learnt to breastfeed; both feminine crafts, both supported by and passed down from woman to woman; both connections to bodies, places, spaces, histories, culture, ancestors, futures.

MY JOURNEY: BREASTFEEDING & CRAFT

Since breastfeeding Brodie I have returned to sewing and handcrafts. I make things and write my thoughts as he feeds and snoozes. In the quiet times. I post on Instagram. I enjoy the solitary communication, the feedback, the camaraderie.

Here are some of my recent posts and my work. I hope you enjoy them.

@Dr.Miriam.Burke

21.04.2021

I've started making these cloths. What do you think?

I make them while breastfeeding or with the baby sleeping in my arms, across my lap. They are for mopping up sick, tears, snot, milk. They are for using, for the "fleshy, messy, stuff of life" as feminist scholar Cindi Katz puts it. But I want them to be beautiful too. They are skilfully made and intricate, a bit like motherhood perhaps? Practice, patience. I am not skilled in sashiko stitching, but I am learning with the conversation between body, muscles, fabric and thread.

Each one takes hours of sewing. I like the rhythm of the needle, the rhythm of the baby's breathing, feeding, sleeping. The rhythm and conversation of bodies, bodies leaking and regurgitating. I sit cross legged and make them at the same spot on the sofa I gave birth to my baby. The absorption and conversations of material bodies and embodied materials....

#maintenaceart #toastrhythm #sashiko
#breastfeeding #hitomezashi #snotrag



23.04.2021

Work in progress...

more sewing, more boobing. We sit here every morning while the house is quiet, the girl is at school, the boy is snuggled in my arms. Always ready to drop everything, waiting for the inevitable interruption. How long will we work this morning?

#notolandfill #maintenaceart #womenswork #socialreproduction #fleshymessy #sashiko



29.04.2021

If 90% of my mothering is mopping, I might as well make it joyful. And why not? Cloth made with love and care. Cloth to mop up spills, and tears, and emotions. Cloth to hold it all together.

Things made with skill in soft materials are less valued than those made of hard materials - wood, metal, stone - because they are seen as 'Women's Work'.

In making things, in taking time and composing slowly, carefully, it is an act of resistance. With my practice, I take care of taking care.

#womenswork #politicsofcare #sashiko #hitomesashi



12.05.2021

There is something wonderful about people you care about wrapped in fabrics you have made. This is a blanket I crocheted years ago, before I even thought about having kids. Before I met my partner.

It was supposed to be a commission, I was making it for an artist I worked as an assistant for at the time.

It took ages. By the time I had finished it I had grown so fond of it, I couldn't part with it.

The care, love, and affection that went into the piece just didn't seem to be commensurate with the money I would receive for it. I didn't know why at the time, I just couldn't part with it.

Now I get it. As economists say, some things are non-fungible. That is, they don't easily translate into monetary values. This is particularly the case in environmental economics.

Studying masters level economics, I always found it so jarring that a tree, a newt, a whale or a river would have a cash value. These are sentient and important beings in their own right and cannot be subsumed into capitalist logic.

One (of many) problems of capitalist logic is that if something cannot be account for in monetary terms, then it has no value. We all (I like to believe) know this is not true. But it doesn't help when capitalist logic runs most of the world.

These things have huge amounts of value. They have value for the skill in making, the time, the love, the care. The person held in mind while making it. Intended recipients and future recipients that you have no idea about at the time, but when they arrive it just seems right. And all those things just make sense.

#valueofcraft #craft #making #culturalgeography
#phd #smalltoes #fleshymessy
#socialreproduction #fuckcapitalism



17.05.2021

This is my mother.
Can you guess?

.
Her hands are my hands. Her moves are my moves. We have made different decisions. She said yes where I said no. She has tolerances I do not. I have boundaries she does not. We live in different times. This is mothering.

.
She taught me to knit, taught me to sew. Taught me to rub butter and flour together above a bowl with fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs. She taught me love. She taught me silence. My hands are her hands.

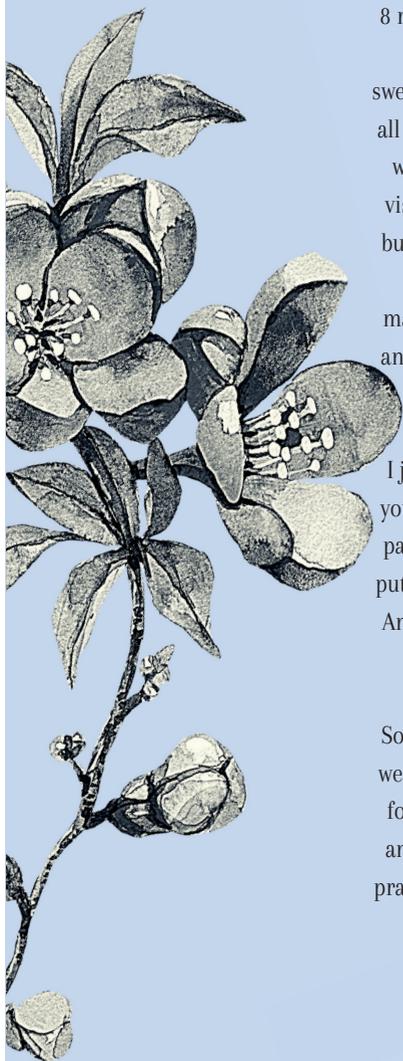
.
#socialreproduction #womxnswork #skill #craft
#intergenerational





My name is Nina, I'm 32 and now a mother. We had our first baby in September 2020, during the pandemic. I'm a skin specialist by trade but by heart I'm an avid traveller and of course I now have these 2 tiny feet and hands that I'm nurturing with my mind and body. Here's my story...

My boy



8 months of feeding you, it only feels like yesterday when I had given birth to you. We were put on the ward at 4am. I was sweating with adrenaline and nerves, how would I look after you, all by myself? I couldn't wait for the sun to rise and to feel like I wasn't alone, as with COVID your daddy had to go home and visit us the following day. You were so alert and I was so tired, but I asked for help and the kindest midwife came and showed me what to do and reassured me that I was doing well. I managed to get you latched on to me, it was the most amazing and natural feeling in the world. Seeing your tiny cheeks move whilst you suckled on me.

I just love your little ways and especially when you're feeding you swirl your finger around on my tummy, pull out my breast pad to fiddle with and rub over your face. You're now trying to put your hand in my mouth and giggle when I pretend to bite it. And of course the smiles you give me after your feed...if you're not milk drunk and having a cheeky snooze!

So, 8 months of feeding you, and we're aiming for 12, longer if we can. No matter how long we have our feeding bond together for, you will always give me a huge sense of reassurance, love and happiness that I never knew existed until I had you. And I pray that I can raise you to be happy, feel loved and to always be kind.

All my love forever, your Mummy x

By Nina Gohil, mother of Rien.

MY JOURNEY TO EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFEEDING

BY PURVI PARMAR

I am Purvi(Pia), first time mum to my lovely son Harvey who is now 10 ½ months old! I am sharing my breastfeeding journey because it's been a fantastic learning experience of a skill and the connection to this little human being. I've had a lot of people really advising me to give a "bottle" and not take the stress during my pregnancy and soon after the birth which made me feel that there is lack of knowledge in people out there and huge range of support that new parents can reach out to, to give a natural and fantastic start to their baby's life. I hope I can inspire many people through my breastfeeding journey, to create theirs and to give a closer to mother earth start to a new life if and when possible.



WHY I CHOSE TO BREASTFEED?

I chose to breastfeed because I felt I needed to use the breasts for what they are made for! Literally! To feed our babies and for the benefits that breastfeeding has, and how cheap it is! I also wanted the baby as much closer to me as possible as becoming a mother in a global pandemic made me feel so lonely in the hospital, I constantly felt insecure. The support I received in my anti-natal breastfeeding class and from the experienced network of breastfeeding mothers of "LEICESTER MAMMAS".

BREASTFEEDING CONFIDENCE

I found my confidence in breastfeeding by seeking help and support and researching the benefits of breastfeeding throughout pregnancy, because c'mon they taught us sex education in school but not how to latch a baby on for breastfeeding, I could go on and on! A few main things I always remember and like to pass on to other mothers are:

Breastfeed for the first six weeks since baby's birth which is baby placing their food order, in the most simplest term!

The more milk that is removed from your breasts will increase supply. "Supply on Demand"

Embrace this breastfeeding journey as it's your baby's birth right to have their mother's milk and this phase doesn't last long!



MY FAVOURITE BREASTFEEDING POSITIONS

I love the **cradle hold!** You know more like the cuddle hold because I love cuddles and I love getting away from people just to be with Harvey for his feeds! The smiles, the cheeky bite and recently we've had some funny noises and you know I am so happy that I don't have to share this with anyone! Thank you lord for making me a Woman! Wonder Woman! ;)

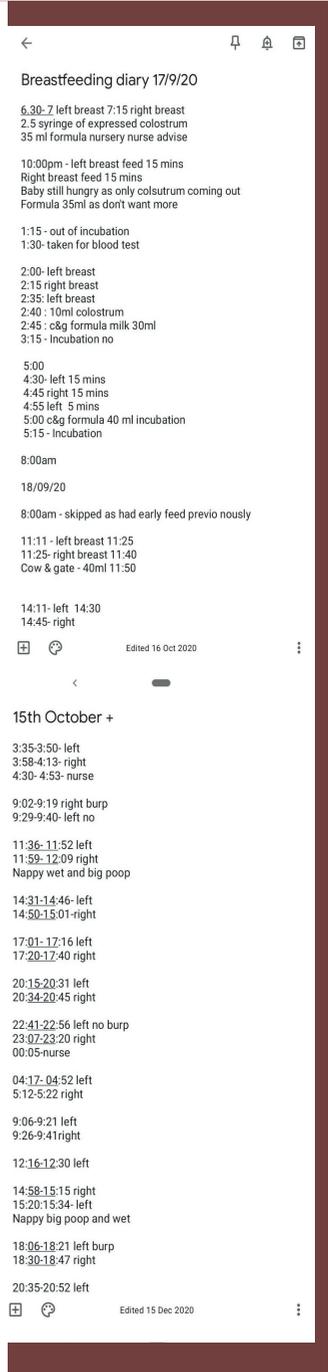
Lying on the side - Sally ran through this position with me on a video call as I came home after 5 days in hospital and couldn't sit for along time due to my episiotomy and a stitch that came out! YES! OUCH! So this natural sleeping position is my favourite and definitely a sleep saver too at night when my husband needs to go to work early morning and Harvey is going through a leap sometimes.

FINALLY, I'D LIKE TO BUST SOME MYTHS ABOUT BREASTFEEDING FROM MY JOURNEY!

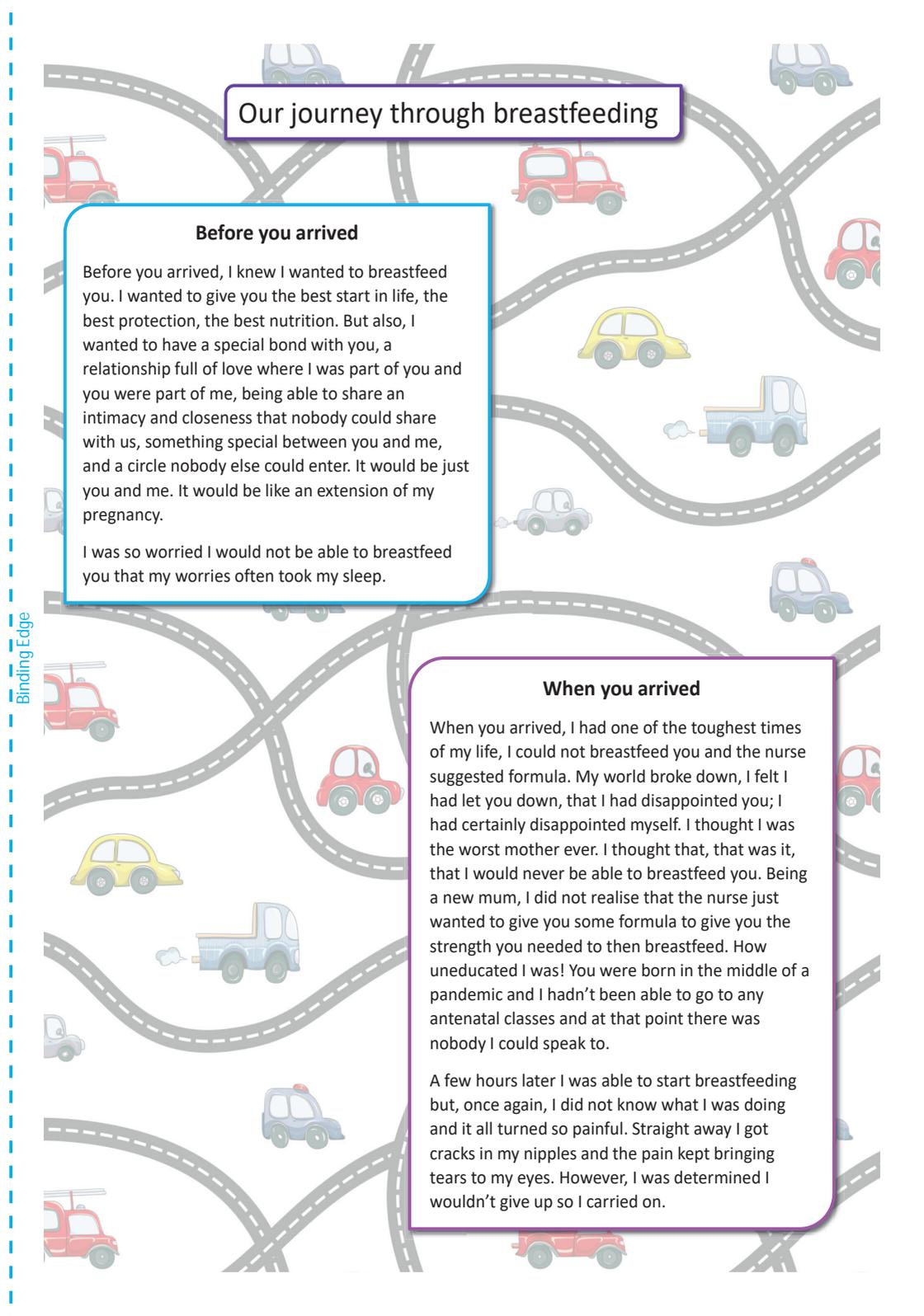
Eating and Drinking whilst breastfeeding - "YOU NEED TO EAT THIS, AND EAT THAT AND FALANA DHIKNA!"

- I'm a veg+eggetarian, I don't like vegetables and I live on lentils, alot of the time! **Thank you to my midwife Debbie** for telling me that I could eat all my lentils and all the foods that my mum said to me not to eat after I got home, due to baby having gas or myself which could also give me problems in bowel movements! My mum was surprised, happy and smiling to see me roll with it!!
- I also am very bad at **drinking water**, and naturally I feel thirsty now and then when I'm feeding Harvey! So, breastfeeding in my opinion can help you drink more water and you don't necessarily have to drink loads of water to make milk for baby.
- **"If breastfeeding starts out difficult, it will just get worse". NO!** Breastfeeding is a skill, you weren't born with knowing how to breastfeed, just like becoming a mother or a father! You learn how to cut baby's nails, change nappies, deal with rashes, deal with Torticollis in my case and just like that breastfeeding! I gave time to myself and with patience and support of my partner, family, my non-judgemental friends and team of **Leicester Mamas**.

P.S. Big shout out to my partner Kewal for his continued support in my breastfeeding journey, from sitting down with me in the middle of the night whilst I feed our baby, getting me midnight snacks, helping me with breastfeeding positions and burping and changing the nappy in between feeds!



The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a breastfeeding diary. At the top, there are navigation icons (back, home, notifications, settings) and the title "Breastfeeding diary 17/9/20". The main content is a list of entries for 17/9/20, including times and descriptions of feeds (left/right breast, formula, colostrum) and other activities like "out of incubation" and "taken for blood test". Below this, there's a date separator for "18/09/20" and another entry for "18:00am - skipped as had early feed previous". The bottom part of the screenshot shows a date separator for "15th October +" and a list of entries for that day, including times and descriptions of feeds and nappy changes. At the bottom right, there are more navigation icons and the date "Edited 15 Dec 2020".



Our journey through breastfeeding

Before you arrived

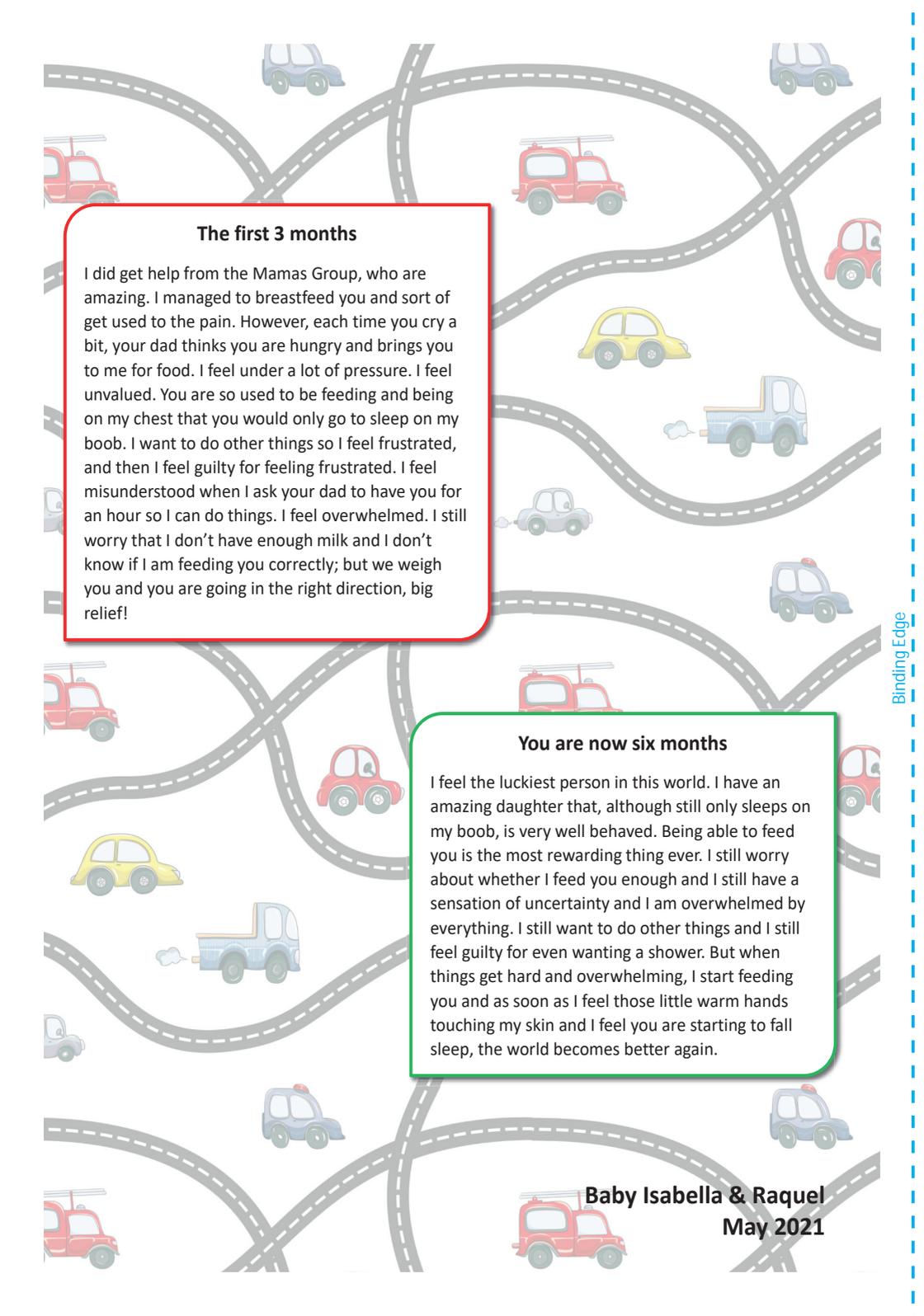
Before you arrived, I knew I wanted to breastfeed you. I wanted to give you the best start in life, the best protection, the best nutrition. But also, I wanted to have a special bond with you, a relationship full of love where I was part of you and you were part of me, being able to share an intimacy and closeness that nobody could share with us, something special between you and me, and a circle nobody else could enter. It would be just you and me. It would be like an extension of my pregnancy.

I was so worried I would not be able to breastfeed you that my worries often took my sleep.

When you arrived

When you arrived, I had one of the toughest times of my life, I could not breastfeed you and the nurse suggested formula. My world broke down, I felt I had let you down, that I had disappointed you; I had certainly disappointed myself. I thought I was the worst mother ever. I thought that, that was it, that I would never be able to breastfeed you. Being a new mum, I did not realise that the nurse just wanted to give you some formula to give you the strength you needed to then breastfeed. How uneducated I was! You were born in the middle of a pandemic and I hadn't been able to go to any antenatal classes and at that point there was nobody I could speak to.

A few hours later I was able to start breastfeeding but, once again, I did not know what I was doing and it all turned so painful. Straight away I got cracks in my nipples and the pain kept bringing tears to my eyes. However, I was determined I wouldn't give up so I carried on.



The first 3 months

I did get help from the Mamas Group, who are amazing. I managed to breastfeed you and sort of get used to the pain. However, each time you cry a bit, your dad thinks you are hungry and brings you to me for food. I feel under a lot of pressure. I feel unvalued. You are so used to be feeding and being on my chest that you would only go to sleep on my boob. I want to do other things so I feel frustrated, and then I feel guilty for feeling frustrated. I feel misunderstood when I ask your dad to have you for an hour so I can do things. I feel overwhelmed. I still worry that I don't have enough milk and I don't know if I am feeding you correctly; but we weigh you and you are going in the right direction, big relief!

You are now six months

I feel the luckiest person in this world. I have an amazing daughter that, although still only sleeps on my boob, is very well behaved. Being able to feed you is the most rewarding thing ever. I still worry about whether I feed you enough and I still have a sensation of uncertainty and I am overwhelmed by everything. I still want to do other things and I still feel guilty for even wanting a shower. But when things get hard and overwhelming, I start feeding you and as soon as I feel those little warm hands touching my skin and I feel you are starting to fall sleep, the world becomes better again.

Baby Isabella & Raquel
May 2021

I remember reading one of the articles that helped me so much when I was feeling very down and wasn't able to manage cooking and cleaning with the baby.

Eventhough I dontremember the complete article but few wise words of that article are still in my memory. This made me write the journal because even if one word from my journal can be of benefit I would feel honoured.

And also it will be an amazing gift for me and my daughter to read and cherish when I become old and when she grows up.



MY BREASTFEEDING JOURNEY

Even before my cute girl was born i did a lot of study regarding the pregnancy and also about breastfeeding but to my surprise I always had a negative feeling in my head that I wouldn't be able to feed her longer because my mum couldn't breastfeed me for longer and even my sister. Also being a Muslim mommy our religion has always emphasised on breastfeeding as all our prophets(عليهم السلام)were breastfed, just this thought gave me so much zeal and enthusiasm to breastfeed my little girl. So I started bf her when she was born ..it was natural..but the latching wasn't good at all and I was a bit shy to feed in front of the HV too....and the bad latching made my nipples very very sore ..then my HV suggested me to use lansinoh which was great...

Also I started looking into the videos of latching and finally learnt how to latch her nicely...but then she turned three months and my flow became fast due to which she started refusing to feed , I was very very upset about it then I remembered that my HV mentioned about the WhatsApp group.

So I picked up my red book looked for the contact details and rang sally and told everything I was going through...it was a very hard time for me because she will only feed when I walk with her around the house and due to that I lost 6 kgs in just 15 days..

Sally was the only person who advised me and reassured me that there will be light at the end of the tunnel soon..She suggested different positions to feed her and also lying down and feeding was the best thing that I learnt..I started enjoying feeding her as I was mostly lying down ...

Even today bf has not just become a means of comfort for my daughter but it is a means of comfort for me too..because am too busy the whole day cooking cleaning and other chores and the only time I sit down and relax is when i feed her sounds a bit funny but thats the reality for me ..

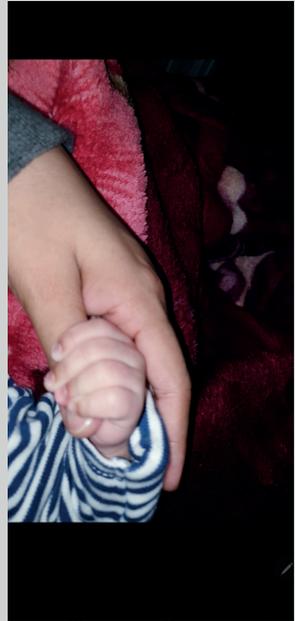
There has been ups and downs but finally we both love that bonding which a man can never experience and my husband is always jealous(in a good way) about it...(chuckles).

Breastfeeding taught me being patient, hoping for the good, time management, made me confident, being more and more grateful, sticking to healthy eating because I will pass her the good stuff through breastfeeding..And the most important thing is my little girl through breastfeeding helped me in treading the path of our prophets mothers which makes me feel more fortunate.

Thinking about the fact that she will stop feeding one day makes me sad but in sha allah Allah swt will definitely keep our bonding strong and help us in finding other ways to keep it going.

Mrs Khan : mommy's name

miss khan : daughter's name



I have had a fantastic breastfeeding journey and I am still fascinated at how I was able to feed Emily exclusively for the first 6 months. I have enjoyed every single second, everything has just felt so natural. I will cherish these times for the rest of my life.

Whilst I will be sad when we stop, I know that I have given Emily the best possible start that I could have in life. I owe this amazing experience to my beautiful, brilliant and absolutely perfect little Emily xxx

Samantha Cheesman
Emily 8 months



Breastfeeding through my eyes is:

BEAUTIFULLY **B**ONDING
REWARDINGLY **R**ICH
ENVELOPING **E**MILY
ALWAYS **A**AVAILABLE
SURPRISINGLY **S**WEET
TIMELESS **T**OGETHERNESS
FOREVER **F**RRIENDS
ENDLESSLY **E**XPRESSING
EMOTIONALLY **E**MPOWERING
DAUGHTERLY **D**EVOTION
INTRINSICALLY **I**NTIMATE
NATURALLY **N**URTURING
GREATEST **G**IFT

Sam Cheesman, written with the deepest love and affection for my beautiful, amazing and adorable little girl Emily xxx



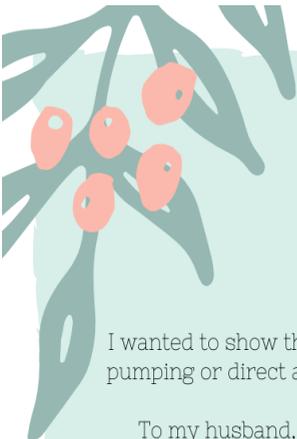
Sam Farnell

Childs Name :- Logan

Age:- 18 Months

These are words that I associate with my breast feeding journey and the ever growing bond that I have with my son.

There are both positive and negative words included as my journey hasn't been easy but I am proud of what we both have achieved so far.



From me to you..

I wanted to show that there are different ways of breastfeeding, whether that be pumping or direct and why we should listen to the mothers intuition into why we do what we do.

To my husband, thank you for not doubting me and just being there. To my mother for being my guide and taking care of me. To my sister-in-law for helping me when it was needed. It takes a village to bring up a child and that is what you have all been for me in these journeys of mine.

My first breastfeeding experience was different to what I had expected. Born at 24 weeks they said it was the best thing for him. So, I pumped every 3 hours to give him the liquid gold that was needed. And it helped him – I could see him grow in front of my eyes. My husband was my biggest supporter – always ensuring that I was hydrated and keeping me company. My sister-in-law got me some lovely squares to help with supply.

Second breastfeeding experience was hard. I did not know anything about correct latch. Then came Sally and helped me. I had an aversion to pumping for baby as I wanted it to be direct, so I persevered even though all the negative comments came. I had a lovely support group and thanked god for them as without them I would not have been able to continue until 15 months when I found out I was expecting again. I would have loved to carry on, but it was not right for me.

Third experience so far has been the best. My little lockdown baby came and whilst this time round I knew better I was still worried. But we persevered and as we came out of the 4th trimester, I realized why we need more time to let the mother be a mother and not just see the baby. Breastfeeding takes time and energy and yes, its tiring but this is what I had wanted for my children. Whilst we are still breastfeeding, I can see it slowly coming to an end and I wonder how that will be.

I do not think I would have managed to do this without my support group and to them I am forever grateful.

For all the new mums starting out on this journey – have faith in your body! Yes its tiring in the initial weeks but it does get easier. Eat what you want – educate yourself before listening to everyone.

SAMIA KADRI





One thing I love to talk about: For me, motherhood is a feeling of fulfilment but every stage brings a new challenge. I had too many fears about breastfeeding. I used to dream breastfeeding my baby and it was my fear that something I dream about, just doesn't happen. This makes me more determined to breastfeed, as this time, my dreams were challenging a new version of me: a mother. It was a long, stressful but a meaningful journey I love to talk about as it's about my little universe Lalloonu (baby girl Elham Akbar)

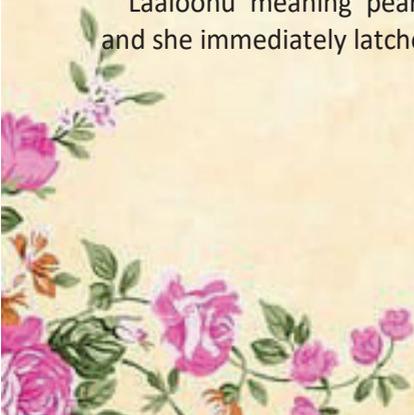


Sara Jabeen

One thing, I love to talk about... By Sara Jabeen

One thing, I love about motherhood is breastfeeding. There is obviously a natural strong bond between a mother and her baby...a newborn baby but for me it was always very fascinating and fulfilling looking at a woman breastfeeding her baby. It completes me when my baby falls asleep on my breast when nothing can comfort her. This is a power that I'm blessed with irrespective of the fact who am I, what my skin colour and religion is. I love it when the Nature doesn't discriminate here.

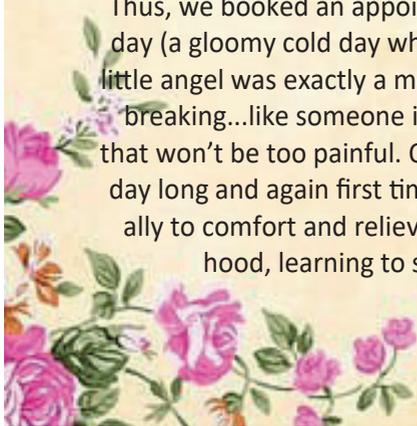
One thing, I didn't know much about, neither had I tried during pregnancy to know and research much nor I got the opportunity e.g. antenatal classes etc. due to pandemic and still I was thinking it would be easy is again breastfeeding. I was believing or being believed that breastfeeding comes naturally. If in the first hours, the baby latches, that's it. Otherwise move to bottle feeding and this is something one can't control, as it's hard to make the baby latch properly and it is something that is independent of previous knowledge and experience etc. So I had this fear what if my baby doesn't want to be breastfed? On the top of that, I have PCOS. In some way I came to know that it badly affects the milk supply. It made me scared more and I immediately called the maternity assessment unit (MIU) and asked them 'do you have any experience of such a situation?' and they kindly said 'no we don't. Just be confident'. I delivered my baby with these fears. In the first hour, the midwife put my baby girl 'Ella' (I mostly call her 'Laaloonu' meaning 'pearls') on my chest for a skin to skin contact and she immediately latched on left breast. It was beautiful and reassuring.



One thing, I struggled with due to pain and extreme discomfort in the first months of motherhood is breastfeeding. After moving to ward within few hours of delivery, it didn't cross my mind even for a while that the next few weeks or couple of months were going to be too hard that it would make me forget about the induced labour. On the first day, my Ella didn't want to feed. A student breastfeeding midwife came, she had some magic in her hands, she tried different positions and Ella started feeding, but mostly she was asleep on the first day. During the second night, Ella started cluster feeding for hours and hours, almost for the whole night and in the morning, my nipples were sore. By the evening they were cracked and on the third day, my nipples were literally bleeding. I told the midwives and they told me to get nipple shields. Although I continued wearing them for weeks but it didn't make any difference. During all these times, I had to regularly take painkillers. I kept calling MIU and tried to contact different groups supporting mothers with breastfeeding. MIU offered me more visits, all the midwives tried different positions and some even checked Ella for tongue tie but they didn't find it. During this time, I got in touch with Sally and Aayesha...directors of 'MAMMAS BABY AND ME' group. They observed me many times via video calls and supported me a lot during this time. They said "you need to be seen by a breastfeeding consultant". On the last visit of a midwife, I just broke into tears when I was feeding my baby and the nipple shield got filled with a pink fluid as my milk mixed with the blood of my bleeding nipples. Finally, they had to recommend me to the breastfeeding clinic.



One thing, I tried like hundred times to quit but still kept doing is also breastfeeding. It wasn't possible for me to continue with breastfeeding anymore and the breastfeeding clinic appointment was too far. There was shooting pain in my chest and even the touch of a soft fabric was making me uncomfortable. I was taking painkillers, applying cold and hot hydrogel breast pads but all these things used to work for a while and that's it. At the same time, I didn't want to quit. It was extremely hard for me not breastfeeding my baby because I was in pain. My husband was feeling helpless too, finally he bought a breast pump etc. Seeing my baby having a bottle was more painful than breastfeeding her. I just quit on that idea and continued with breastfeeding. Also, Sally and the group was really supportive and kept encouraging me to continue with breastfeeding. There were hundreds of women who had the same issue and they told me that it got better with time. So I had a hope at least. At the breastfeeding clinic, the consultant finally confirmed that my Ella had a tongue tie. She said " I don't guarantee that snipping it may help relieving the pain". It was first time for me to know about the tongue tie. When we came back from the hospital, again it was such a confusing and depressing situation because we knew that tongue division would be very painful for our baby who wasn't even a month old then. I discussed it in the MAMMAS BABY AND ME group. They really helped in clearing my mind and introduced me with a couple of mothers (thanks Abi and Anita) who went through the same situation and finally opted for the tongue tie division. What was more convincing that tongue tie might create other speech disorders later in life, too. Thus, we booked an appointment at a private clinic and did it on the day (a gloomy cold day when it was raining inside outside) when my little angel was exactly a month old. It was very quick but again heart-breaking...like someone is tearing my heart into tiny pieces...even that won't be too painful. On that day, we held her in our arms all the day long and again first time in my life, I started singing unintentionally to comfort and relieve her pain...I understood that in motherhood, learning to sing a lullaby also comes naturally.

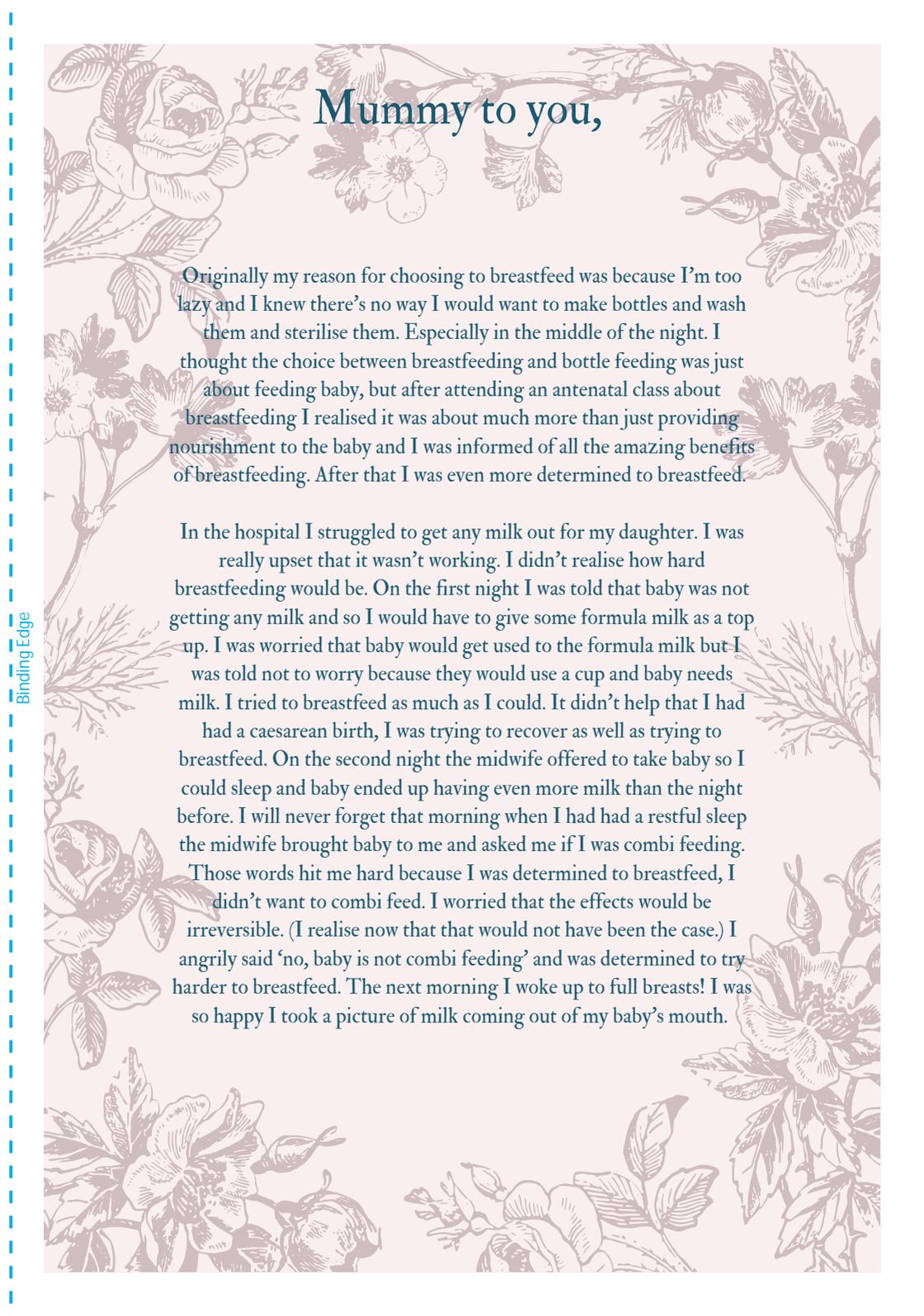


One thing that was really rewarding during all this time was that my Ella was doing really well in term of her health and growth (ma shaa ALLAH). I was really concerned about her weight. I developed gestational diabetes and it was well controlled with diet. At the 35th week scan, it was found that my baby growth had been fell down sharply and she was weighing 2.1 kg. They advised induction at 37th week. If born at 37th week, she would hardly be 2.3 kg with the same growth rate. I shared my concern with the consultant and she gave an extremely confusing answer “well, she may develop jaundice and may not be able to latch and you will have to move to bottle feeding”. I said what if I wait and she said “you can wait at the risk of losing baby” (God forbid). Again, I was left alone at the middle of the road...in an indecisive and inconclusive zone. But there was a scan before the induction and luckily, Ella growth was unbelievably improved. I requested them please let me wait until 39th weeks and there was Dr Natasha at the Leicester General Hospital who was like an angel in my life. She cleared my mind and let me wait for two more weeks after the satisfactory scan. My baby girl was born weighing 2.6 kg, still tiny but unbelievably beautiful.



One thing, I was believed could help my baby do better in terms of health and not getting jaundice etc. was breastfeeding. That's why I was so ambitious to continue it. She didn't develop jaundice and lost 2.3% of her birth weight when measured on her 5th day of birth. She loved breastfeeding and loved to be with me. What was more pleasantly surprising and joyful that her father was keener and love to see her being satisfied feeding and relaxing on my breast. One thing I was told repeatedly that tongue tie division is not a quick solution. The adjustment might still take weeks and it was damn true. It took almost five weeks that the pain was eased somehow and my nipples started healing. The shooting pain disappeared and I didn't have to take painkillers on daily basis anymore. It was such a blessing and for me a miracle that is hard to believe. I consider it a milestone in my life and such a worth-mentioning experience to go through. I learned many things during this journey and learned that the best things are learned in a hard way. I am really grateful to my husband and all the people and organisations for their support during all this time.





Mummy to you,

Originally my reason for choosing to breastfeed was because I'm too lazy and I knew there's no way I would want to make bottles and wash them and sterilise them. Especially in the middle of the night. I thought the choice between breastfeeding and bottle feeding was just about feeding baby, but after attending an antenatal class about breastfeeding I realised it was about much more than just providing nourishment to the baby and I was informed of all the amazing benefits of breastfeeding. After that I was even more determined to breastfeed.

In the hospital I struggled to get any milk out for my daughter. I was really upset that it wasn't working. I didn't realise how hard breastfeeding would be. On the first night I was told that baby was not getting any milk and so I would have to give some formula milk as a top up. I was worried that baby would get used to the formula milk but I was told not to worry because they would use a cup and baby needs milk. I tried to breastfeed as much as I could. It didn't help that I had had a caesarean birth, I was trying to recover as well as trying to breastfeed. On the second night the midwife offered to take baby so I could sleep and baby ended up having even more milk than the night before. I will never forget that morning when I had had a restful sleep the midwife brought baby to me and asked me if I was combi feeding. Those words hit me hard because I was determined to breastfeed, I didn't want to combi feed. I worried that the effects would be irreversible. (I realise now that that would not have been the case.) I angrily said 'no, baby is not combi feeding' and was determined to try harder to breastfeed. The next morning I woke up to full breasts! I was so happy I took a picture of milk coming out of my baby's mouth.

I had a similar experience with my second baby but I was more prepared and I knew I had the support of Mammias group. I ended up giving formula milk while in hospital alongside breastfeeding but thankfully my milk came in after a few days. Also I was taught to express milk in a syringe as soon as I gave birth (caesarean again!) and that was really helpful.

I wish I had known with my first baby that breastfeeding on demand at night will not spoil your baby. It would have saved me the heartache of listening to my newborn baby cry while trying to calm her down, and it would have saved me from the arguments with my husband when he would say 'just feed her!', and I would have gotten more valuable sleep. I feel so much calmer and more relaxed with my second baby because the first thing I do is offer baby breast.



I love the way...

I love the way you rest your head on my breast when you finish feeding like it's your own personal pillow.

And the way you then decide you would like some more milk and so get straight back on the breast. Totally in control.

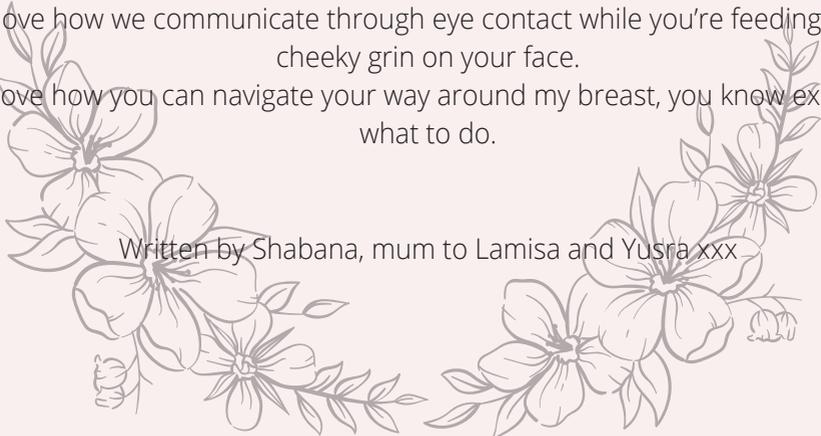
I love the way you look at me after a feed, I see the satisfaction in your eyes. You look so relaxed and at peace.

I love the way my breast has so much power that it can instantly calm you. I love the way one second I can hear the satisfying gulp gulp of you drinking and then the next I can hear you snoring because you've fallen asleep.

Nothing could prepare me for how powerful the effects of skin to skin would have on both of us.

I love how we communicate through eye contact while you're feeding, the cheeky grin on your face.

I love how you can navigate your way around my breast, you know exactly what to do.

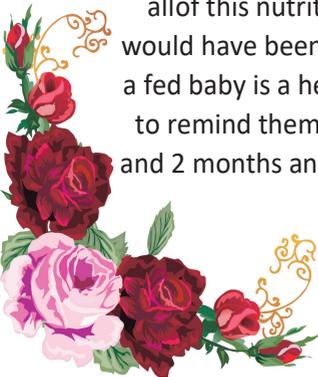


Written by Shabana, mum to Lamisa and Yusra xxx

Breastfeeding and My Battle with Mental Health

By Tyra Florence Johl

It all started when my waters broke 7 weeks too early for little Micah. After a very traumatic birthing experience, I held in my two hands a tiny 3.5lb baby. It was not like I imagined – no instant love connection. In fact, I had feelings of guilt, helplessness and sadness. I wanted to love this baby so that he could thrive and grow into a strong boy someday. He stayed in the NICU for just 5 days before being discharged which showed us just how strong he was. I was determined to breastfeed and give him all the good stuff. But no milk was coming, it was painful, and most of the time he was too weak to attach. The doctors said he must be formula fed. This also added to my post-partum depression as I felt like an utterly useless mother. Despite crying constantly and even feelings of wanting to give up, I persisted with the breastfeeding via syringe, spoon, bottle, you-name-it! By some miracle, with my perseverance, Micah was off formula and exclusively breastfeeding. It took months to fall in love with him though. But with each nursing session my bond with my baby boy became stronger and I had less feelings of guilt and sadness. My boy was thriving! After about 6 months I began to feel much happier and I knew it was my milk, my body that was able to provide all of this nutrition to my son. I can't even imagine how low I would have been if I was unable to breastfeed – yet despite this, a fed baby is a healthy baby and that's something mothers need to remind themselves. Little Micah was breastfed until 2 years and 2 months and is now 4.5 years old, strong and a cheeky little monkey!



Mothers You Are Strong!

Remember how strong your bodies are. Remember how you were able to grow such a miracle and birth them into the world no matter in which way. Remember that breastfed or bottle-fed You are your baby's everything and they'll love you unconditionally. So don't forget to love yourself for the life you have given to your child, your miracle.

Feeding my baby boy Micah in 2017



Feeding my baby girl Norah in 2019



By Tyra Florence Johl



BREASTFEEDING BEEN A JOURNEY IN IT SELF, AN INSIGHT TO MY EXPERIENCE

By Vishna

BEFORE I GAVE BIRTH

I questioned myself whether I would be capable of breastfeeding as I only leaked colostrum from one side

AFTER BIRTH

My c section wasn't planned, however as soon as he arrived I placed him on my chest and it happened naturally. I did lots of reading during my lockdown pregnancy so I was aware that baby only needs a little bit of colostrum in those first few days before milk comes in.

AT THE HOSPITAL

I did get a bit overwhelmed at the hospital and I just wanted to leave, I gave him some formula milk, not knowing what I was doing. But he was crying so I thought he was hungry. I guess now I'd just put him on the boob, calm him down and settle him. But you don't know these things straight away. As I said it's a learning journey. It will definitely be easier the next time.

GETTING COMFORTABLE

At the beginning I found it difficult. Night time feeds after my c section was difficult. My tired body and my aching back. I couldn't do it. But I carried on. We gave him a bottle a few times. But deep inside I wanted to ebf. So then I began to pump some so that my husband could feed him in the night

By pumping we noticed that my milk was slowly increasing and this made me feel so happy. It honestly did.

From questioning myself to now being able to and seeing an increase as he grew. That was satisfying.

LATCHING

I'm not going to lie, as a first mum, for me this was really difficult right. Why? Because I didn't latch him on properly the first few times and it really did hurt, it hurt so bad I screamed. It's true. There I was sat in the bedroom on my own. Babies crying, I'm scared. I don't want to feel that pain again. But my baby is hungry. Dad. First time dad. Didn't want to see his baby crying. He wanted to help. Try a different position he said. I became more and more anxious. Wanting to do what was best. And then with a few weeks we got there. The skill was learnt! And it became second nature!!

MIDWIFE VISITS AT HOME

Our lovely midwife came home a number of times to check our babies weight. The last time she came, she said everything was fine, and that she doesn't need to see us again. But when she got to her office and placed the number on the graph, she rang us to make an appointment at the clinic and we had to arrange an appointment with the doctor.

Now this is when I began to question myself. Am I doing a good job? We just just into a good routine, he latches on well, he feeds well, I'm producing enough, he's calm and content after feeds. Doctor, what does he know? He's not with us 24/7 to know what happens here at home.

So I spoke to him over the phone. Which we thought was ridiculous anyway, because he can't see our baby. Infact he is a locum doctor, he's never seen our baby.

When he rang me, he advised me to continue night time feeds, and to pump in the day time. This frustrated me. How inconvenient this was. I told my partner that I am not going to listen to this. We've just got into a good routine, he's feeding well, it was difficult but both me and my baby are doing so well. But he told me to listen to the doctor I said but what does a man know about breastfeeding

but still kept doing is also breastfeeding. It wasn't possible for As upset as I was, I tried to pump some that afternoon, and try to keep my baby calm at the same time. How ridiculous. How inconvenient. I rang Shifali. I told her what happened. She gave me confidence that I was doing the right thing. She said you produced this baby, your body will know how to nourish it. She added a male doctor can't give advice on breastfeeding because he hasn't experienced such a thing. Which is so true!!!! She told me to carry on and she reminded me how healthy my baby looks in his photo. She asked me a few questions, does he seem healthy? Yes. Is he producing enough wet and dirty nappies? Yes. Well carry on what your doing she said. I felt empowered. And so I continued what I knew best.

My partner, who was working at home, over heard my conversation and he came to understand and agreed that I didn't have to pump. Thank god. Because it's only us at home. I wanted to shower, cook, clean whilst baby was asleep. Not sit there pumping out the whole day oh gosh, can you imagine!

That day, I began to think what I could do differently, he feeds well. What could it be???? I thought I thought. And then it became clear mornings are tough. Especially after waking up numerous times in the night thst sometimes I don't want to get out of my warm bed and stand up to burp him. I can no longer ask hubby, as he's started work again. So I try the best as I can. But he pukes up quite a bit in the morning, and that's when the milk flow is heavy. Could it be this? I made more of an effort to learn the skill of burping. And we got there eventually. He held it in yay!

THE DAY OF THE APPOINTMENT

The day was there. Was I going to be questioned why I didn't listen to the doctors advice? Is it going to look bad on me? Has his weight gone up? What if they judge me? Are some of the thoughts that went through my head.

When we got there, I explained to the midwife what the doctor said, and I told her what I decided to do, she laughed and agreed with me and said I was doing the right thing.

She had a look at him and said he looks healthy. She weighed him and said that his weight has gone up and she has no concern.

Trust your body. You produced this amazing beautiful baby, you are more than capable of feeding him/her. Carry on and trust the journey. Trust your body.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY

We go to our inlaws house every week. It's been amazing because they always tell us that he's put on some weight. He's out growing his clothes so quick. He was 4 months old when he started wearing 6-9 clothes. He's 5 months and his 6-9 outfits fit him and he's beginning to wear 9-12 month clothes.

This brings so much happiness to my heart. I'm doing it right. I'm doing it well. I've done a fantastic job. I'm gonna use my motherly instincts and carry on. I trust myself. I trust my body. And I trust my baby to tell me otherwise.

BREASTFEEDING AND FOOD

People like to give advice don't they. Based on their own experiences they like to advise you what to do. Have you started feeding your baby yet> 6 months. You lot are doing it so differently, we started feeding at 3 months. Some of my questions thrown at me at the dinner table. My partner supported me. He said how did you feed your babies, they replied bit of both, bottle and bf. He said well that's the difference, mums milk is more nutritious and he gets everything he needs from it. Well done hubby. Well done. You do me proud. We openly had conversations about these topics so he stepped up as we was more aware of these topics. I always sent him the literature that I read online. We enjoyed it. Anyways. I added to that conversation, he's grown though hasn't he? I don't know if they heard me. Dinner table was full. My father inlaw stepped up and repeated, he's growing well though hasn't he. Look at him he said.

Yes dad. Yes. You make me proud! Yes he has grown. Yes I'm doing a good job. And I am going to carry on using my own instincts. I know me. I know my baby.

Trust yourself ❤️

Trust your body ❤️

Trust your baby ❤️

Women empower women ❤️

SLEEP AND FEEDING

I sleep with my baby. It works for me. I think it's so natural.

See I used to rock feed him to sleep and tried to put him down in the bedside crib. I'd do it as quietly as I could and he'd wake up. Which started the whole cycle again. It was exhausting for me as it meant that I had to stay up longer than I wished and hoped for.

Watching my partner snore away enjoying his sleep. Yes I was envious. I wanted sleep like a baby. I needed it.

I told hubby. And he saw how drained I looked. He suggested that I lay next to my baby, in a natural position, and let him feed so that I can relax and go sleep. I tried it. It worked. Fantastic.

This is how we fall asleep at night. He's happy. He falls asleep around 9pm. He wakes up for a feed every 2-3 hours by kicking and nudging without fully waking up. This allows me to have a good night's sleep. I wake up fresh, energised, ready to kickstart my day.

Now this is how I put him to sleep every afternoon as and then I sneak out of bed to get a few bits done before he wakes up.

I'm really enjoying feeding my baby. I feel so connected. I rock feed him to sleep in the afternoon when I'm at my in-laws, and I enjoy some quiet time alone with just me and my baby.

I enjoy snuggles, I enjoy holding his hand while I feed him. And now he plays with my hand, touches my face it's so cute. He makes cooing sounds before he falls asleep. He's so happy. He sleeps well.

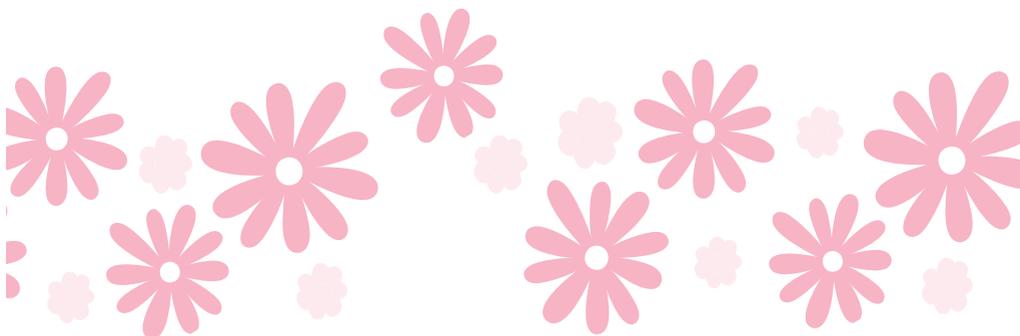
WEANING FEELING

My baby turned 5 months on Saturday, people said that time would fly by, and soon we'll be planning his first birthday

I do feel emotional, obviously I'll still be breastfeeding him while weaning him, but I can see it coming to an end. I've loved it so much. I really have. It's the most precious gift.

A mother's honest breastfeeding journey

Vishna Joshi





How Mammas was born

(The story of Mammas)

Sally Etheridge IBCLC
Founder and Coordinator of Mammas

In 2002, La Leche League Leicester had monthly breastfeeding support meetings at the Friends Meeting House on Queens Road. These were lovely meetings, with lots of wonderful mums and babies.

But as a fairly new La Leche League Leader, taking helpline calls from around the city, I quickly realised that many new mums were not likely to join the meetings. Many calls came from women living in Highfields, who really wanted to breastfeed, but needed support. Getting to Clarendon Park was not easy for them, and most were not sure about attending a Breastfeeding Group

“Isn't that for women who are fine with breastfeeding? Would it mean everyone sat round in a circle breastfeeding? Or maybe it's only for those with 'problems'? No, it's not really for me...”

One day a mum called Sumayya called. Her 7 month old baby was refusing the breast.

Then another mum, Halima called. She'd got my number from Sumayya. Her 4 year old had been hit by a car and was in hospital, and she was really worried. She had a 9 month old who was breastfeeding. Everyone was telling her to leave him with relatives and go and be with her daughter. How could she choose between being with her daughter, and caring for her baby? I wrote to her and suggested she take her son with her; she'd feel happier and more able to focus on her daughter knowing her baby was safe and close. He could breastfeed and be with her.

A few days later Assiya called. She'd got my number from Halima. Then another Assiya – she had seen the baby carrier Halima was using, where could she get one? She'd just had her fifth baby and he was at risk of getting trodden on by the others!

And so it went on. Clearly a new group was needed, but in Highfields. Four of the mums and I met up at Sparkenhoe School and made some plans. I wrote a couple of letters. I was pointed in the direction of Wesley Hall Community Centre, who hosted community antenatal classes led by local midwives.

In November 2003 I started Spinney Hill New Mothers Group, meeting on Thursday mornings alongside the antenatal classes. It was a slow start, but it kept going. But it was lonely – me in a room every week, waiting for the occasional mum to come along. They came for advice and occasionally came back, but we were a select few!

Then in 2008, the Head of Centre kindly offered me £4000 to really take things further. I knew exactly what was needed.

La Leche League Peer Counsellor Programme – LLLPCP – was brought to the UK by Sarah Gill in 1991, as a way to help put back into communities what had been lost over the years – a network of mums who had breastfed their babies, and who could support others in their area who may not have ever seen breastfeeding succeed. There were many LLLPCPs across the country by 2007, as breastfeeding was finally given a little bit of a boost by Gordon Brown's funding and government targets to increase breastfeeding rates.

I **joined the LLLPCP team in 2007** and saw how powerful it could be in empowering women and increasing the knowledge and understanding to health professionals too. This was exactly what Highfields needed! We already had some great PCPs in parts of Leicester and the county. But Highfields was not seen as a priority, because so many women did breastfeed. But of course, we all hit challenges; get poor and conflicting advice; worry about our milk supply, etc etc. We all need that mother to mother support – and having women on board who understand your culture and live in your neighbourhood makes so much difference. I also took my IBCLC Lactation Consultant exam in 2008.

Fourteen mothers signed up for the first Wesley Hall based peer supporter training I delivered, in 2008 - 2009. Between us we had around 50 babies and children, spoke eight languages, included six nationalities, and four faith groups. We had a fantastic time and basically we all fell in love!

So Mammias was born! We still needed a name, and an official launch. We set up meetings to consider logos, policies, constitution, helpline. Lots of discussion, energy, laughs, and babies! The name was Aayesha's brainwave –

**Mothers
Advocating
Mother's
Milk
And
Support**



Mammias 2011 - Highfields Children's Centre

Since then over 180 women have completed Mammias peer supporter training, and now our Ambassadors training. and we have supported many many mothers, and helped ensure many many babies have received their mum's milk. We also of course support pregnant and new mothers and families in many other ways too.

We have become a Community Interest Company, are commissioned by the NHS, and now have our Starting Well funding from the DHSC to support many more families too.

Our fundamental principles of being a Women-Led, Specialist service; Speaking for babies, Engaging with our communities, and Respecting diversity and equality....these are our strength, and what guide and unify us.

Mammas is a fantastic community of women, that reaches across city and beyond, and from one generation to the next.

