

# PR **ACT**ICAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR NEW PARENTS

## **C**ONNECTION

### **EX: FEEDING YOUR BABY**

So we looked at being more aware of how we're set up for the things we're doing ALL the TIME; these new habits of parenting. Now, let's look at how we can manage these inevitable stresses. Now habits aren't always bad. Brushing your teeth every day is a great habit! Really a habit is just something that you've done so much it becomes second nature. We don't think about doing it anymore, our bodies just kind of go into auto-pilot mode. Essentially we fall into what some describe as "sensory motor amnesia". A fancy way to say that we've temporarily lost control of (or connection with) our movements.

Enter the dangers of repetitive stresses like holding baby, feeding baby, picking baby up and putting baby down... In reality though, we're not going to feed our babies less right? And it's pretty impossible to carry them less (at least until they're walking) so really we have 2 options:

- 1) Apply preventative strategies whenever possible (ex: make sure babycarrier is adjusted properly for good posture).
- 2) Interrupt the repetitive pattern whenever possible (ex: make a new habit to do a body scan while nursing) to snap yourself out of auto-pilot mode.

Try this next time you're nursing or feeding your baby, it's one of my go-to's to interrupt the pattern:

First I take a really deep breath. Then I do a little body scan starting at my feet. Get them planted on the ground, sit up on your SITS bones instead of slumping into the chair or couch, breathe more fully into your lungs, roll your shoulders a bit, shake your head right and left, tilt it side to side, and then give your jaw a good wiggle. Finish up with another big breath.

It feels pretty amazing and is also incredibly eye-opening to suddenly become aware of tension in so many different parts of your body, right? Now multiply that tension by 10 or 30 minute feeding sessions... multiplied by 5+ nursing sessions a day... multiplied by however long you nurse... yeah, it can really add up.

It might sound ridiculous but, for that 10-40 minute feeding session, staying present to what's going on in your own body can make a big difference in your overall health, happiness, and flow (yes! some women have reported that sitting up taller and breathing more consciously positively affected their let-down).

Let's face it, as parents focus is generally on everything but ourselves. So next time you're feeding your baby, take a big breath, do a quick scan, and remember happy mama (or papa) = happy baby.

**THIS IS ONLY ONE EXAMPLE OF A REPETITIVE STRESS SITUATION COMMON IN PARENTING. THESE ISSUES VARY DEPENDING ON YOUR CHILD'S AGE, YOUR WORK SET-UP, FAMILY DYNAMIC, AMONG OTHER FACTORS. IF YOU'D LIKE MORE SPECIFIC HELP FOR YOUR SITUATION EMAIL:**

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**TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT**