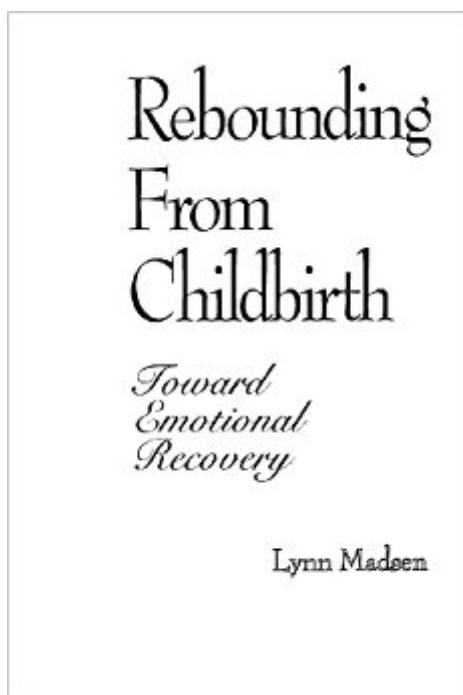


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# Rebounding From Childbirth: Toward Emotional Recovery



## Synopsis

Never mind what you've been through. The baby's here, he's healthy. That's the most important thing, isn't it? Few women planning a pregnancy or anticipating childbirth would dispute that the safe birth of a healthy child is their primary concern. Even when this happy outcome is achieved, however, the process of childbirth itself can wreak havoc on a woman's emotional and physiological well-being--especially when unforeseen medical complications change the expected course of labor and delivery. *Rebounding From Childbirth*--the first book to focus exclusively on the mother's feelings about a difficult birth--shows how traumatic childbirth forces a woman to suddenly relinquish cherished hopes for her experience of actually becoming a mother. Amid the joys of a healthy baby, the mother's feelings of anger, grief, failure and disappointment often get scant attention from family, friends and medical personnel. Drawing from her own life as a professional counselor and mother of three, Lynn Madsen argues that a woman should not underestimate her own need to recover emotionally and physiologically from a violent birth experience. Without true healing, Madsen's analysis reveals, a new mother's suppressed sense of loss and pain can affect her relationships with her baby and husband, her body image, her feelings about going back to work, even her hopes for future pregnancies and births. Through her own story and those of other women, Madsen offers comfort, hope, and an intensely personal perspective to new mothers who feel alone with a range of negative feelings about childbirth. Taking a dual stance as counselor and mother, she structures self-analytical questions and outlines techniques such as journal and letter writing to help the reader begin the healing journey. For obstetricians, nurses, midwives, new mothers and mothers-to-be, *Rebounding From Childbirth* provides moving insight and counsel on a difficult subject.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"A psychologist's moving account of her own birth trauma and an exploration into the process of healing that a woman can experience afterwards. If birth was bad for you, this book can help you work through depression and despair and find self-confidence."-Sheila Kitzinger  
"This book is more than useful: it is necessary in the American context after several generations of medicalized birth. The time has come to consider the healing process millions of mothers need after giving birth."-Michel Odent, M.D. author of *The Nature of Birth and Breastfeeding*  
"This little gem of a book will be transformative for those wounded women fortunate enough to read it, and extraordinarily useful to the therapists who are trying to help women heal from the iatrogenic traumas all too commonly generated by hospital birth."-Robbie E. Davis-Floyd, Ph.D. author of *Birth as an American Rite of Passage*

LYNN MADSEN is a psychologist who specializes in traumatic birth experiences in the Minneapolis area. She is a journalist and writes from her personal experiences as a three-time mother.

Reading this book was highly cathartic after a difficult childbirth experience. All of the new mother 'hotlines' in my area only seemed worried about the baby's safety when I described my feelings of disappointment and disempowerment with my birth experience. To know that I was not alone, and be given some tools for processing what happened helped me get through my postpartum depression.

This is a good book for those who look for healing from previous birth experiences. As a midwife, I have a lending library for mamas who come to me with birth stories that they still cry over. I hope your heart finds peace and healing as you read this book.

I had a very difficult childbirth (back labor, young inexperienced doctor AND nurse, long, LONG labor, botched epidural led to general anesthesia for my emergency c-section, etc.). For months I looked and looked to find something that would address my lingering feelings of loss and trauma. This book is the only one that addresses post traumatic stress after an especially difficult childbirth. I

guess the biggest thing it did for me is showed me I wasn't alone, and I wasn't crazy!! can't say it "cured" me, but definitely worth the read if you're struggling with your birth experience.

Lynn Madsen wrote the book that needed to be written. I, personally, got a lot from this book, and would recommend it to EVERYONE who had a 'less than perfect' birth experience. Lynn made me feel validated. I did get a healthy child from my son's birth, but I didn't get a lot out of it. Thank you, Lynn Madsen for making me feel sane and helping me work through a less than perfect moment in my life!

After experiencing a c section post a failed induction for my first birth and then a second c section after a failed VBAC attempt for my second birth, this book presented itself at the right time for me to begin my healing process, dig out what I had buried for so long and face my emotions!! It took me over a year to complete this book because my emotions were so raw that each page would stir up so many memories, feelings, flashbacks and experiences that I had been denying and did not want to face. With each page my hand would glide across my notebook with random thoughts that would pour out as things were triggered. After getting through most of the book I did seek therapeutic support from a social worker who specializes in birth traumas and did reference and use this book along in my journey. I did appreciate the candid honesty and intensity of this book and that the stories were not "sugarcoated." As others have mentioned, it allowed me validity to my thoughts and feelings and that others experience them too vs. the fear that I was going crazy or abnormal, thus encouraging me to feel "safe" when seeking additional help. As much as I am grateful for having come across this book and it moving me forward and into my healing process, I was a bit sad and jealous when the author spoke of a successful second vaginal birth. This is what I so much wanted and unfortunately did not work out for me, not even the second time.... Overall I do recommend this book to anyone who is struggling with a traumatic birth or a birth that did not meet your expectations. This book reveals that certain thoughts and feelings, no matter how intense, are valid and gives hope that one can truly heal and move forward.

This book helped me work through a traumatic birth when I had a perfectly healthy baby. I had an emergency C-section about a year and a half after my 35 year old husband had an emergency open-heart surgery for a torn aorta. When my baby was born, I was coping with the mixed emotions of feeling incredibly happy and blessed that she was healthy (born at 37 weeks and just over 5 lbs.) and feeling scared and distraught that I and/or she almost died in the process. My friends and family

were telling me that my labor didn't matter, I should just feel lucky I had a healthy baby. I see that a couple reviewers didn't like the personal stories, but I did. I know everyone has a different experience, but there are many common feelings and knowing that others had issues in their labor helped me feel less alone. I am a Mental Health Counselor and I recommend this book to my clients who have also had mixed or confusing feelings about their labor.

This book represents one-of-a-kind treatment of the emotional havoc that a traumatic birth can have on a mother, and in turn her partner and baby. It is particularly effective in utilizing the birth stories of three women (including the author herself), which come from a spectrum of birth-traumatic experiences: the unnecessary cesarean, the absolutely necessary cesarean, and the highly manipulated vaginal birth. Through the accounts of these three women, a pathway is shown for many to follow in coming to terms with their own birth trauma. Perhaps the most commendable aspect of Madsen's treatment of the subject is that she chooses to acknowledge birth trauma and the possible depression that follows as something other than "just hormonal," and even makes a good case for birth trauma being a particular instance of post-traumatic stress syndrome. Besides the much-appreciated acknowledgment (to this reader, at any rate) that birth trauma is not merely unjustified self-pity, Madsen provides very concrete ways of coming to terms with what has happened and pushing on with life. Each chapter has "journal topics" for women to think, write or talk about. She also includes an entire chapter, "Creative Tools for Recovery," which details several more pathways, including art, writing, storytelling, dreams, bodywork, among others. Not only is this book a must-read for any woman who has had a less than ideal birth, it would be highly recommended to people who have contact with new moms, including partners (who may have their own birth stress as well), doctors, nurses, midwives, doulas, counselors, and so forth.

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