

Freestyle Note:

1 - 3 WEEKS PREGNANT

Surprise! Okay...wow - You've just come into prison & after all the health checks you've now found out that you're pregnant. What a wild roller-coaster ride your feelings & emotions are on right? Firstly, **congratulations**, because **you & your** baby both deserve to be celebrated. Just so you know, I've been in prison & while I wasn't pregnant when I went inside, I was a mum. While you're adjusting to your pregnancy & being inside, you need to focus on looking after yourself. **Rest** when you can, **eat**, even though you might not be hungry & **walk** as much as you can because it'll help you relax. & never ever forget that:

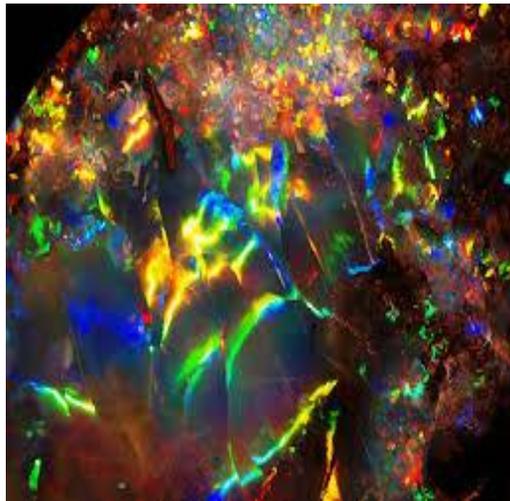
You are a strong Opal woman & the child you are carrying is precious.

From your Opal friend, Darly - Founder of The Opal Place.

If you've ever seen an uncut or unpolished opal rock, it doesn't look very impressive & is often easily overlooked. But when the time & care is put into polishing & nurturing that rock, the result is always the revelation of the most beautiful & totally unique gem...

an Opal

Darly Royan Paraha



Every Opal is unique to itself & has such a depth of beauty that this world sorely needs.

You are that precious Opal.

Beautiful

Precious

&

Unique

Never doubt yourself or wish that you were someone else.

Instead, take the time to start reclaiming who you truly are.

Prison is going to be just a part of your life-story, but you & this child you carry are eternal.

Stand Strong.

Darly Royan Paraha

The Opal Place - Our Place of Inspiration

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1 - 3 WEEKS PREGNANT

The first signs of pregnancy won't occur right away—in fact, many women miss their period at week 4 before they even feel “different.” But some common early signs of pregnancy in the first weeks after fertilization include breast soreness or tenderness, nausea, fatigue, and frequent urge to pee.



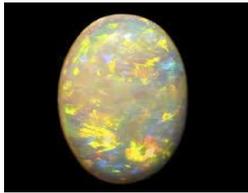
EARLY PREGNANCY SYMPTOMS

When you're 3 weeks pregnant, symptoms may not have appeared yet either. That's because most early pregnancy symptoms are caused by pregnancy hormones, and you probably don't have a very

high level of those in your body yet. Some signs of pregnancy in the early weeks could be some of these:

- **Implantation bleeding.** If your little soon-to-be-embryo has already made it to his or her new home, you may see a bit of spotting as the fertilized egg burrows into the wall of your uterus.
- **Nausea.** As the pregnancy hormone hCG begins to make its way through your newly pregnant body, you may notice some feelings of queasiness, or nausea so bad it makes you puke. Morning sickness should really be called all-day sickness since it really doesn't discriminate by time of day.
- **Breast changes.** Your boobs can start to get sore and your nipples may darken as your body starts prepping to make milk.

Do you have any of these symptoms? If you do write or draw about your experiences & feelings:

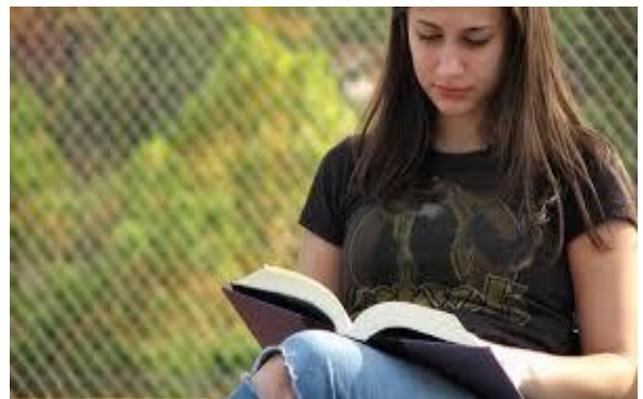


The Importance of writing a journal for your child

I never really knew my birth mother as a person. The reason being is that during my child hood my only contact with her was during visits which I found traumatic. My birth mother had mental health issues and that only added to my miss-understanding about her. My beloved foster mother, also caused me no end of sadness by never openly telling me how proud she was that I played hockey for my country. Instead she always chuckled and said something along the lines of "oh what is it you play Darly..soccer, hockey or smockey?"

Later when I was in my early 40's I finally got hold of my full childhood social welfare records. In amongst this huge pile of documents I found many hand-written letters from my birth mother to the social welfare enquiring about my wellbeing. I was touched by the obvious effort she took in writing these letters during my entire child-hood. There were also countless letters written from my foster mother informing the social welfare of my successes with hockey.

What I'd like (love) you to consider doing is this. Start a journal now for your child to read when they are older . In this journal capture your hopes and dreams and importantly put into words the struggles you are working on over-coming. Write out your feelings as you carry your unborn baby and then through the years you are incarcerated. In your journal, write, draw, create lyrics, make plans and importantly when your filling in your journal, create each page and entry with love.



Many of us Opal mums miss out years of our children's lives and sadly some of us never get to spend any time with our children at all.- So tell your story directly from your heart to your child. Say everything you want to say because it's really important that they know you and of your love for them.



Any woman or man is made stronger by the pure love of a mother.

Have no doubt that you WILL be that loving mother.

Darly - Founder of The Opal Place

Point is, if I had never got to read the letters that had been written so long ago I never would have got to appreciate my birth mother as a parent, or understood that my foster mother was actually really proud of my achievements. The effect of these letters on me was simple - they helped to heal me.



I am a Strong Woman

Protective & Wise as a Lioness * Blessed is the Fruit of my Womb

My Diary Note: