

Appendix H

X: Um and breastfeeding's just a lovely way to connect, and you you feel this lovely connection, and I remember being upset when someone said 'Why don't you try using bottles?', because I was having a hard time, um, feeding her at one point, and I remember feeling like, 'But if I... if we bottle feed them then what's the point of me? Anyone could feed her. I'm not special any more if we bottle feed her. I'm her mum. I'm feeding her. She is part of me. I am part of her.

AT: Yeah

X: That is an incredibly powerful connection that I'm really glad that I had.

AT: Yeah, um and you mentioned, you mentioned earlier that you went to one of those postnatal groups, with other women,

X: Mm

AT: where you sort of shared your, shared your stories, what's your experience been like of talking to other mums, of friends who have kids, friends who don't have kids about your experiences?

X: Umm, most people are pretty shocked about some of the stuff that happened to me, but.. um.. most women agree that birth is way more traumatic than they were ever expecting, and way harder, because the process has been romanticised um, uh, and I think also, we just don't know enough about it.

AT: Mm hmm

X: And uh.. um. and I uh mostly, mostly I think people talking about it, people are very surprised when I say that there's very little that's... there that I'm offered that would make it better next time.

AT: Right

X: That's the thing I think people are kind of surprised, you know, you I- I can't go in and say, you know, I'm pregnant again, this is the problem I had last time, therefore, you know, when I start contracting every two minutes, you know I'll do it for a few hours, but after that, you need to put me on the oxytocin.

AT: Yeah

X: They just won't do that.. because they know so little about birth, or, because it's women, and we live in the patriarchy, so little investment in it, so little care that, they just, I think there's just this sense of just put up and shut up, that's the lot of women, it's meant, it's meant to be that way... dunno

Commented [AT1]: Breastfeeding facilitating development of special bond.

Commented [AT2]: Discovering birth can often be traumatic after the fact. Becoming aware of romanticised narratives around birth through talking to other mothers.

Commented [AT3]: Understanding own birth experience as a product of the patriarchy.

RUNNING HEAD: THE PROCESS OF RECOVERY FROM BIRTH TRAUMA

AT: Mm

X: Um.. yeah so tal- you know but, so most women talk about their births, people love talking about their births, because I think everyone's a little bit traumatised by it, I think people know that if I talk about it maybe I'll get it out and get it away.

Commented [AT4]: Women sharing a collective sense of trauma and needing to talk about it.

AT: Mm

X: The people I hate talking to about it are the people that have only had good births,

AT: Okay

X: and they just like they have no fucking idea and they're so judgemental and they think that I must be doing something wrong.

AT: Right, yeah

X: Yeah, you know they're those people that are just like, 'Well I just relaxed, and I had it at home', and all these fucking videos on Facebook that are like women, um who the whose partners are videoing them at home and they're just wandering around the house and the, you know, hanging onto a door frame now and again,

AT: Yeah

X: and then smiling and having a little dance to their favourite Justin Bieber track.

AT: (laughs)

X: You just have no idea what other people's births are like,

AT: Yeah

X: , and it is the luck of the draw.

AT: Mm

X: It's just... luck, as far as I can see, anyway, yeah.

Commented [AT5]: Refusal to internalise birth experience as personal failure protective against narratives around 'relaxing and breathing the baby out'.

Commented [AT6]: Understanding birth experiences as 'the luck of the draw' rather than under the woman's control.

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Commented [AT7]: Healing through connection (Connecting with others)

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Commented [AT8]: Making sense of trauma (Internalising to externalising)

AT: Mm hmm

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Commented [AT9]: Making sense of trauma (Internalising to externalising)

AT: Mm

RUNNING HEAD: THE PROCESS OF RECOVERY FROM BIRTH TRAUMA

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Commented [AT10]: Healing through connection (Connecting with others)

AT: Mm

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AT: Okay

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Commented [AT11]: Making sense of trauma (Internalising to externalising)