# Common Thoughts and Feelings of Parents in the NICU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emotion</th>
<th>Description</th>
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| **GUILTY** | - This is my fault.  
- What did I do to cause this to happen?  
- I feel guilty if I leave the hospital. |
| **INADEQUATE** | - I don’t know how to care for my baby.  
- The nurses know how to care for my baby best, not me.  
- What good am I to my baby?  
- I can’t help my baby. |
| **ANGRY** | - This isn’t fair!  
- Why is this happening to me?  
- My doctors were wrong. |
| **DISAPPOINTED/SAD** | - My baby feels like a stranger.  
- I wish I could have had a “normal” pregnancy and birth.  
- I wish I could feel like a normal parent. |
| **WORRIED** | - My baby looks like they are in pain.  
- Will my baby be okay?  
- Will my baby be healthy?  
- How will I take care of my work, my other children, and everything at home, while also caring for my baby?  
- If I leave the hospital, my baby won’t know that I care. |
| **SCARED** | - My baby looks so fragile; I’m scared that my touch might hurt my baby.  
- I’m scared that my baby will die, or not be healthy.  
- The NICU is a scary environment. |
| **CONFUSED** | - Why did this happen?  
- Where do I fit in?  
- Everything that happens in the NICU is so new and chaotic.  
- I don’t understand anything. The nurses and doctors are speaking a new language that I have to learn. |