

Healing Birth, Healing the Earth

By Sarah J. Buckley, M.D.
Pathways #40, page 62



Talking Points

- ❖ Connecting the increasingly medicated human experience (from pregnancy on) to the increased separation of humans from our interdependence with our environment, Sarah Buckley asserts that, “[t]he havoc that we wreak through waste and greed has many parallels with our treatment of mothers and babies, and of our primal environment---our mother’s wombs.” But Buckley does see a way through this loss: “My belief is that we are suffering in birth from lack of passion, of love, and of surrender, and from a misunderstanding of our own power. I believe that these qualities can provide us with a way of healing Birth, and at the same time, healing the Earth.” (62)
- ❖ Passion, Buckley reminds us, is often what brings us into life in the first place. It is the first, powerful, creative act—one that involves peak hormone levels that repeat in our bodies at birth. “In other words, giving birth is, inherently and hormonally, a passionate and sexual act.” (62) The hormones at work are oxytocin, endorphins, adrenaline and noradrenaline, prolactin – a “hormonal cocktail” rewards birthing mothers with “the experience of ecstasy and fulfillment.” But, unfortunately, today “the passion of birth is neither recognized nor accommodated.” It has become a medical event.
- ❖ The effects of a reawakening of passionate birth would be astounding. “If we give birth and are born in passion, how different would our primal emotional imprint be? And what about our brain chemistry, which is being set even as we are born?” (63)
- ❖ Drugs, especially the ones intended to mimic human hormones, like Pitocin, can interrupt and interfere with a laboring woman’s own production and reception of her own oxytocin. The short-term consequences can make women vulnerable to hemorrhage, but the long-term consequences are unknown.
- ❖ Sarah Buckley reminds us that we “cannot birth our babies through sheer force of will. We need to learn the more subtle—yet equally powerful—path of surrender.” (64) She acknowledges that some of our inability, as modern women, to surrender in birth comes out of a lack of confidence, and overall distrust of our bodies. We are told everything that can possible go

wrong (and told of the various technological fixes that can rescue us), but we are forgetting the natural power of our human bodies. A guide is available to us – midwives! “A good midwife can remind us by her presence that we carry genetically the birthing success of all our foremothers and that we know already how to give birth.” (64) If we can surrender to the inner rhythms of birth and of our bodies, we can gain trust in our bodies and in our babies.

- ❖ “Birth is dying, but like cells in her body, we each have the power to enliven her and to resurrect her in all her glory. What is needed, I believe, is the collective passion, love, surrender and power that we pour into the ether as birth our babies. And in healing birth, we will heal ourselves, our babies and the Earth.” (65)

Resources

Full references for each article are available at <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html>

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In *MotherBirth* Sandy Taylor tells her compelling story of a natural, ecstatic, and orgasmic birth once the psychological impact of her own birth trauma and subsequent infertility was healed.

www.motherbirth.net