

## The Pregnancy Circle

Pregnancy – Laurel Bay Connell  
Pathways #41, page 56



### Talking Points

- ❖ Laurel Bay Connell addresses the need of emotional and intuitive practice and meditation during pregnancy. Many American women educate themselves through birth classes and intellectual understandings of birth. Connell advocates that, in addition to all of this rational understanding of birth, women should have opportunities to tune in to their intuitive selves, and the changes that are occurring within their bodies as they grow their babies. She created a space for pregnant women called “the Pregnancy Circle.”
- ❖ Laurel shares her vision of a women’s group that would help prepare women from the beginning of their pregnancies through birth – to make friends and build support.
- ❖ There is such an enormous importance to becoming a mother. The body changes, but so does a woman’s inner world. “A dramatic life change is often coupled with fear and mixed feelings about what lay ahead.” Laurel considers how important and helpful it would be to have a community of women with whom to share these feelings, “which often feel taboo when we are preparing for the most beautiful change in our lives.”
- ❖ “Acknowledging and honoring the wide range of feelings helps us prepare for the ups and downs of life as a mother.”
- ❖ We spend a lot of time preparing our left brain, our intellectual brain, for birth. We read, we attend classes, we arrange the environment for baby. But our left brain doesn’t necessarily help us in labor. Our right brain, our primal brain, is the side that governs emotion, creativity and intuition. Pregnancy and birth are rooted in instinct and intuition. Laurel made it her goal to create a space to prepare the right brain, our intuitive side, for the “journey into motherhood.”
- ❖ This space can provide pregnant women the opportunity to slow down and reflect, to be in the moment with her baby and her body. “When we take the time to be still and notice what we are thinking and how we are feeling, we can learn a lot about who we are as well as who we want to become.”
- ❖ Practices like meditation help “cultivate self-awareness, which can really help when we are pushed out of our comfort zone.” It is not about making our thoughts disappear; “it is about noticing our thoughts and understanding how they can influence and create our emotional state.”

- ❖ Laurel's dream is that "Someday, women will be told that we already hold all of our own answers. We will approach childbirth and motherhood from a place of fullness and abundance, rather than from a place of need and want. We will gather in circles of women to bathe in our own innate wisdom while celebrating the gifts that our children will bring. Our transitions into motherhood will be supported, honored and held with great consciousness."

### Resources

If you have a Pathways Connect group that already has pregnant women attending, or women who are planning on having children, consider creating such a space in your own PC Gathering space. Check out Laurel Bay Connell's site and services - <http://www.laurelbayconnell.com/>

A very interesting resource for setting up your own pregnancy circle - <http://www.womenscircles.com.au/Content/manual-for-setting-up-a-womens-group.html>

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