

**On Becoming a Father**  
Conscious Path – Pam England  
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**On Becoming a Father**

By Pam England, M.A., C.N.M.

**I**n Ancient Rome, to be a father, it was not enough to conceive the child. In fact, biological lineage did not matter. A man had to publicly declare his intent to become a father to the child's grandfather. Later on, the father's role was to provide for the child's education. The Roman father was particularly proud of his son's education, and he was often the one to teach his son. In fact, it was not regarded as the father's duty to be a father, but to be a good father.

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What is needed now more than ever, are fathers to receive and receive fathers. In some, listening those who are fathers to be listening to a father's search for his roots and future as a father. This is not a simple task, but it is a necessary one. It is a search for the roots of the father's search for his roots and future as a father. This is not a simple task, but it is a necessary one. It is a search for the roots of the father's search for his roots and future as a father.

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**Talking Points**

- ❖ Pam England starts this article by giving a short history lesson on what it meant to be a father in Ancient Rome. Our word father comes from the Latin “pater,” and this word meant more than lineage to the Romans. To be a “pater” meant to publicly declare his will and intention to assume responsibility for a child for the duration of its life.
- ❖ The word father means “to feed.” This does not only mean to literally feed food to your child but to nourish – to feed – their minds, and to model the “inner Divine Masculine qualities of psyche, in both boys and girls.” (6) Knowing the where the word father actually comes from and what it means, how does society today honor, or not honor, the role of the father? What are ways we can improve this?
- ❖ We no longer have formal rituals that prepare a man for fatherhood. “Sadly, paternity has been reduced to a man’s part in conception or a DNA test; this definition of fatherhood diminishes the cultural and relational importance of parenthood.” (6)
- ❖ “Fathering is indeed less about biological ties than it is an emotional and social relationship with a child, a relationship that arises unconsciously from long-held images, assumptions and conditioning from his own father, step-father, grandfathers and society. It does not help men when we idealize the role of father. Rather, let us have compassion and resolve to humanize the father, even our own fathers, in our exploration.”(6)
- ❖ Birthing classes should be about more than just birth. They can be “portals to parent preparation, and not just to labor and birth.” (7) Each parent has a different perspective (and role) in labor, birth, postpartum and parenting.
- ❖ We need to invite fathers to talk about their own relationships with their fathers, and deeply listen to what they share. “The heart-opening healing begins when the new father and the listener investigate, and possibly challenge, the assumptions he made during his childhood.”(7) We, as listeners, should help fathers to bring assumptions and patterns into awareness, so they can make conscious choices on what to do similarly and differently from other fathers in their lives.

- ❖ The news that a child has been conceived, or the act of witnessing the birth of a child, does not initiate a man into fatherhood. We cannot expect an uninitiated man to initiate himself as a father. If we want the new father to be present to his child, and present to his family, we must acknowledge and nourish his gestation process as a father and his birth as a father.” (7)

## Resources

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

A useful site that supports fatherhood and mentoring <https://www.fatherhood.gov/>

Pam England’s website, Birthing From Within: <http://www.birthingfromwithin.com/>

Great tips and instruction on listening with intention and how to suspend judgment:

<https://www.boundless.com/communications/learning-to-listen-and-helping-others-do-the-same/enhancing-your-listening/be-an-open-minded-listener-suspend-judgment-and-exercise-empathy>

Patrick Houser’s, founder of the non-profit Fathers-to-Be, website <http://www.fatherstobe.org/>

Patrick Houser’s role of men during the birth process specifically

<http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Pregnancy-Birth/the-dad-factor.html>

Patrick Houser talks about his journey and situations he encountered when creating a Fathers-To-Be-Class

<http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Parenting/go-ahead-use-the-f-word.html>

An interview with Patrick Houser on Fathers as the Foundation of Family Wellness at our 2010 Freedom

for Family Wellness Summit [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yYJ9\\_Yb9Ew](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yYJ9_Yb9Ew)

Leo Babauta’s “Tiny Guide to Being a Great Dad”

<http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/Inspirational/the-tiny-guide-to-being-a-great-dad.html>