

PW #48 Topics/Talking Points/Group Questions**❖ Topic #1: Childbirth:**

While childbirth is a unique and individual experience, it has become ritualized in the highly standardized birthing process that takes place in hospitals in the United States. This ritualistic experience has many symbols that can be disempowering to the mother through our neuro associations.

Wheelchair = Disability

Hospital Gown = Sick

Intravenous drip = Umbilical Cord to the hospital

Routine checks and electronic monitoring = My body doesn't know what to do

Told when to push = I don't know what my baby needs

In contrast many have found homebirths to be an empowering experience

Wear what I want when in labor = My comfort matters

Ability to walk/eat/move/cry/laugh without interruption = This is natural

Choice of laboring position = My body knows what to do

Push when the urge arises = I know what my baby's needs are and how to deliver them. (no pun intended)

Group Question:

1. What symbolic messages did you receive in your birthing process?
2. In what ways did you find your experience empowering or disempowering?
3. In what ways might our birthing experience affect our future parenting? (I.e. Why do I need to rely on a doctor to know what's best for my child? OR I have the ability to provide for and protect my child.)
4. Because the mother's emotional state during pregnancy affects the release of oxytocin and hormones that regulate the birthing process, it is important that the mother feels safe and comfortable as she labors. Whether a homebirth or a hospital birth, what are some steps that can be taken to protect her emotional state during this experience so her body is able to produce the proper chemicals to promote a healthy and natural delivery?
5. When the strongest muscle in the body, the contracting uterus, begins the process of birthing the baby, the mother must decide to go along with the experience or to fight it. What benefits occur when we surrender to nature and embrace the experience of birth as opposed to thinking we must perform the duty of birth?