

Talking Points & Resources

Hello Pathways Connect Group Participants,

Preliminary note: There is no wrong way

To run your Pathways Connect Gathering, the steps below are to help guide you. However, we encourage you to embrace the flow of your gathering and allow for your meeting to take on its own momentum in whatever direction it might go.

Step 1: Select topics

Prior to your group gathering, find and select one or more of the magazine articles that you found interesting and want to share. Pick topics that make you passionate, as these are the easiest to talk about and spark discussion.

Step 2: The Gathering

Welcome everyone present in the group and ask each person to introduce themselves and share a little about themselves. Be sure to share about yourself as well.

Step 3: Introduce the topic

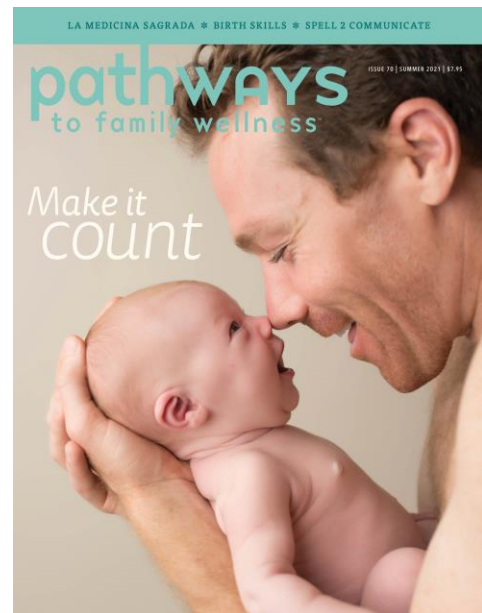
Share with the group your topic and why you chose it, why it interests you, and the importance you see in it. Summarize the article (some article summaries are provided below). You can read the entire article or article summary out loud to your group and share your thoughts at this time.

Step 4: Encourage conversation

We provide questions after each summary section that will help people to engage. Make use of these questions or devise your own.

Step 5: Make the chiropractic connection

At the end of each article summary are notes about how this topic relates to chiropractic. If you utilize these meetings to educate parents on the importance of chiropractic care you will be benefitting your office growth and the health of your community!



PW #70 Introduction

Welcome to the Summer 2021 issue!

Birth skills and chiropractic care for pregnancy make a powerful duo! This issue begins to delve into the fascinating new adventure in birth preparation, which has the power to not only shape the birth profession, but re-define how families face birth. Fathers are now more relevant than ever in the family's journey through birth. With the application of birth skills comes the need for a steady, calm presence to guide a birthing mother from the advantage of an external support. Fathers can provide this rock of support for the mother in her activity of giving birth. Birth is a physiological and natural process that requires our conscious attention. This issue delves into the aspects of how we consciously attend to our births.

Additionally, this issue features chiropractic care as it relates to the future of medicine. The future of chiropractic is bright. Millions are turning to alternative sources for their health and well-being. An entirely new paradigm of health is upon us, one that finally takes into real consideration the importance of human experience, emotion, and perception—aspects that all tie into the state of our nervous system.

Throughout this issue, there are articles that are meant to spark discussion for the future. We are at a time where we can correct past mis-thinkings on a global scale. Thought leaders in the communities of the world are needed. Parents and professionals alike have the exciting task of setting course at this time when the old meets the new. Life at this time is tumultuous, uncertain, but nevertheless it is exceptional. So many possibilities are ahead. Let's make it count!

PW #70 Talking Points, Group Questions, and the Chiropractic Connection

TAKING THE STEP

Men and Menstruation

By Meredith Ashton, C.D.

As one father put it, learning about your partner's menstruation pattern is a game changer. A woman's changing hormones impact just about every system in her body, including her brain, her nervous system, and her reproductive system. Women operate on a monthly cycle, while men operate on a daily cycle. The possibility for renewed relationships is present when men are in sync with their partner's monthly menstrual cycle. This article is about learning the basics of this dynamic.

Just as a 365 day year has 4 seasons, the menstrual cycle of roughly 28 days has four phases.

1. The Follicular Phase (7-10 Days): Inner Spring
2. Ovulatory Phase (4-6 Days): Inner Summer
3. Luteal Phase (10-14 Days): Inner Fall
4. Menstrual Phase (4-7 Days): Inner Winter

When men make themselves familiar with the topics of menstruation (and procreation/birth), their level of confidence rises, bringing calm and assurance that can be invaluable, especially in the most intense moments of these experiences.

Fathers desire to support their women. They need to become skilled to do this. To learn the specifics of women's menstrual cycles and other topics, they become a source of true support eclipsing many of the tensions, often rooted in their own ignorance, before they even arise.

Questions for Consideration:

- Have you as women ever broached the topic of menstruation with your husbands or your sons? How did that go?
- What would you like to see in yourself or your husband after he understands the menstrual cycle?
- What are any limitations to involving men in what might be seen as "women's business"? Do you feel that this is something that should be kept apart from men?

Chiropractic Connection:

It is not uncommon for women seeking reproductive support to find success after discovering and using chiropractic care. The reason for this is multi-faceted. When chiropractors care for

women and men prior to pregnancy, they help to re-establish normal flow and physiological function throughout the body. Through the nervous system, all biological functions proceed in accordance with natural rhythms. The nervous system is a mediator between one's body and the external, natural environment. When the nervous system is stressed, or when patterns are acquired that reflect disharmony and isolation, our connection to the natural rhythms of life become inhibited. So many women find chiropractic care to be essential, for more than procreative function, pregnancy support, or birth preparation. For the family as a whole, it is a quality way to keep their bodies in tune with the natural and rhythmic intelligence of life.

TAKING THE STEP*Being There in Labor*

By Lauren McClain

The conscious and appropriate involvement of fathers at birth is a topic sure to excite many families who are looking for that missing piece of the puzzle. Fathers have the potential to bring renewed confidence and support to the birth process. Fathers can provide an invaluable mirror for the birthing woman, so she can stay in tune with the process while knowing what is going on and how things are going. This turns the father into a guide, as well as a support. This article provides a few pointers for fathers who are looking to provide that key supportive role in birth.

There are Four Elements to effective labor support:

- 1) Plan
- 2) Do
- 3) Say
- 4) Be

Each of these elements contain action steps to become involved as fathers. And when fathers become actively involved, they can begin to really support their partners in birth.

Sharing in the birth preparation experience is the first step. Whether this involves going to birth classes or engaging in the material that is learned there. With this, fathers can begin to envision what they will “do” to help their partners on the big day. Much of his ‘doing’ be aligned with the mother’s chosen plan for birth. But much of it will have to do with treading the unforeseen variables. This is where you must be engaged with learning practical birth skills (more on birth skills in a later article).

The third element, “Say”, is an important one to remember. First off, make sure to say something, to allow your partner to know what you are thinking. Remember, she is using you as a mirror. You don’t have to say much. In all that you do, even just a little can make a powerful difference.

Lastly, “Be” involves the real anchor of support that fathers must become. As Lauren McClain says: “Be positive. Be calm. Be steady.”

And when in doubt about what to do... Smile. Put a reassuring hand on her body, and say, “I love you.”

Questions for Consideration:

- Has anyone experienced their husband at birth? How was your experience?

- After birth, were there any things you or your partner wished you'd knew so as to better be able to help? Was there a time in birth where your partner said he felt totally disconnected and unhelpful?
- When things don't go according to plan, how might this affect the father?
- Are there any fathers here who feel they had no idea how to support their partners in labor?
- Have you ever recognized or come across the concept of learning birth skills in preparation for birth?

Chiropractic Connection:

It is so important for pregnant mothers to find support in their journey. Many have sought Webster-Certified chiropractors for exceptional bio-mechanical and physiological support leading up to birth. Many chiropractors have provided their care at birth as well. Chiropractors offer something most fathers cannot—a specialized skillset of restoring pelvic balance and normal physiological function. However, there are so many things that only a father can provide. Mothers and fathers who make use of chiropractic care do excellent for themselves. But when they take advantage of skills-based methods to better engage with the activity of birth, they give themselves a trifecta of support for a better birth.

TAKING THE STEP*Three Births*

By Common Knowledge Trust

This article is an excellent synopsis of the value of self-learning birth skills in preparation for the activity of giving birth. It's a 3-fold story, written from the perspective of one couple. It's as though the same couple experienced the same birth three different times. One story demonstrates their "positive" experience, one a "negative" experience, and a third, a "birth skills" experience. The objective outcomes were each the same: a vaginal birth, and a healthy mom and baby. However, the subjective experiences varied greatly.

Every birth is unique and unpredictable. In many positive birth experiences, we see a couple who goes through birth and at the end feels grateful for the experience. In negative birth experiences, while the outcome may be the same, both the mother and father will feel traumatized, or distant, and more or less untrusting of the process of birth; they may never want to do it again.

Couples who go into birth "skilled" for birth, experience something unique. Rather than feeling grateful for "being given" the experience they had, or conversely, feeling wronged, they feel in control, and responsible and self-directed. Because they not only focused on a desired outcome, but on the activity itself, and using skills to perform the activity in harmony with their baby's efforts, these parents feel empowered from within, and regardless of the outcome, feel encouraged by the experience because they never once felt "helpless."

In summary, this article shows us how we can transcend the subjective experiences of shame, doubt, anger, and guilt in birth by focusing on a new approach to birth—becoming skilled. The reality of birth comes down to this: If we only have a birth plan, we remain in a position of powerlessness if things don't go according to plan. However, if we have skills to navigate, cope with, and maneuver the activity of birth, then mothers and fathers will feel a sense of control and empowerment regardless of the difficulties that arise, because they will remain in a position of being the driver in control of the experience. Having skills to actively focus on and to "do" the activity keeps the power in the birthing couple's hands, and prevents birth from being "an event which just happens to us."

Questions for Consideration:

- Can you re-imagine your birth experience with the addition of birth skills?
- Does anyone know of particular birth skills? Did you do anything in birth that you would consider a birth skill?
- What were some of the things you did which you felt helped give you greater control during the birth process?

- Do you think it's good for fathers to play an active role in the birth by learning skills and then helping to guide or coach their partners during the activity?
- Does the idea of learning skills for birth create excitement, or does it seem a daunting task?
- What was your first impression of the idea of learning "birth skills?"

Chiropractic Connection:

So often, mothers and fathers who utilize chiropractic care for birth credit chiropractic as an integral part of their positive birth experience. Chiropractic has helped women prepare for birth in a most important and relevant way by helping them to open up and balance the pelvis. Babies in the womb appreciate the mother's renewed pelvic balance, and this helps them to engage in their activity of birth with greater ease as well. When fathers and mothers at birth self-learn birth skills to navigate the process of birth in an engaged, practical way, they are furthering the same ideals that chiropractic care offers during pregnancy. Namely, they are learning to facilitate the body's innate, natural ability to open up to ease the birth process.

TAKING THE STEP*Birthing Better*

By Wintergreen

This article presents the new concept that's re-defining many parent's path to birth. It discusses the history of birth in the world, and how there was, as far back as the 1960's, a valuable missing element that has been overlooked. We are talking of the value of birth skills.

In the 60's and 70's in the United States, women and men across the country learned birth skills to better cope with and maneuver through the activity of giving birth. Then this changed, and birth skills for expectant parents became overshadowed by other ideals, often ideals that were focused on the pros and cons of the medical institutions. Birth plans, birth-choices, and conscious, informed consent within the medical model became the dominant (and to be sure, quite essential) focus of the birth conversation since the 80's. For several reasons, birth skills were left out of the equation:

- 1) Birth skills were deemed inadequate, since their "success" was attached to a strange set of goals developed early on by some obstetricians who first advocated the use of skills:
 - a. Pain-free labor!
 - b. No medical interventions
 - c. Vaginal delivery
- 2) Because of these goals, the greatest value of skills was lost to social consciousness—namely their ability to reduce suffering!
- 3) Birth skills, as an idea, was conceived to be contrary to newly arising birth ideals which saw birth as normal, autonomous life events that don't require practice or skill.

For all the things we can say about birth, birth skills seems to be a topic that is left outside of the conversation. The encouraging reality is that birth skills can drastically reduce suffering! In theory, birth skills can help women and men achieve their desired birth plans, but the true beauty of birth skills is in their ability to empower parents in the birth process. When we are skilled for birth, and when we use our skills in the activity of giving birth, we cope better with the pain and intensity of labor. This better coping has tremendous positive effects on the perception and overall experience of the birth—and this applies to all births without exception.

Questions for Consideration:

- Did you know there were birth skills you could learn for birth?
- What's been your primary model for achieving the births you desire?
- If you look at negative birth outcomes, what is the culprit that we regard as being responsible?
- Do you believe birth skills can offer couples the necessary advantage to achieving a more positive birth experience? Do you think they can lead to better outcomes?

- What do you think is the reason society today does not deem birth skills as a central part of birth preparation?

Chiropractic Connection:

For decades, many have felt that there's been a gap in childbirth. Birth skills appears to be at the center of this gap. Where is the mention of the need for birth skills to cope with the pain and intensity of labor, and to be better able to open the body and work with the baby's efforts to be born? Many recognize how chiropractic offers a vital missing ingredient for birth. One major part of this has to do with the fact that chiropractic provides mothers with practical birth preparation for their body and pelvis. A wave of conscious awareness for chiropractic's vital support in pregnancy has grown over the past 2 decades. Now we are seeing the emergence of a new wave of conscious awareness that can fill the gap in a way that leads the parents to even greater levels of autonomy. Birth skills, and the involvement of fathers at birth, can offer an entirely renewed approach to birth, very similar to how chiropractic care has helped reshape parents' experiences of birth. These two pillars, chiropractic and birth skills, can go very well hand in hand.

STAYING THE COURSE*La Medicina Sagrada (Sacred Medicine)*

By John Ohm

This article begins the conversation of a fascinating new discovery that reveals a fundamental driver of the cause of disease in the body. But be warned! It turns most of what we thought we knew about health and disease on its head. The discovery underlying the new paradigm is simple: there are detectable brain formations visible on a CT scan that correlate precisely to the presence of diseases in the body. This means that someone with just a brain CT scan, can know with great accuracy what, if any, medical conditions exist in the patient's body.

The cause of these brain formations are perceptual, traumatic experiences, unexpected conflicts that take us by surprise. The process runs like this:

- 1) A stressful, unexpected life experiences takes us by surprise.
- 2) The body responds with the fight-or-flight response, as well as with an organ-specific adaptation that's directed from a particular part of the brain, visible on a CT scan.
- 3) This adaptation is designed to give the organism an advantage to overcome the unexpected life experience, but the consequences of the adaptation, especially when long lasting, are the manifestation of organ-specific diseases.

Disease symptoms, from bronchial coughing to diarrhea—any symptoms or diseases not caused by poisoning, mal-nutrition, or physical injury—have as their cause an underlying unexpected life stress that initiates a biological adaptation. Often times, the symptoms of disease come after the stress is gone, *when the body can begin to repair the adaptation*.

The scope of this discovery is extensive. In fact, there are 5 major biological laws that have been revealed by what many are calling "The Sacred Medicine" of our time. These 5 biological laws represent a foundation for a new medicine. They provide us with a blueprint for addressing the cause, and therefore, the holistic navigation of diseases, and most importantly, these laws offer us a way to expel the fear-based models which have done great damage to society. In the Sacred Medicine, we recognize the real underlying cause of organ-related diseases to be biological adaptations to specific stressful encounters in life, and therefore, the cause of disease is not some evil or maliciousness "out there" in nature. The cause of disease is much more simple, and beautiful... purposeful even, and aligned to our individual life experiences.

Questions for Consideration:

- Knowing "disease" represents a purposeful healing process in the body, how can we change our view of what symptoms mean?

- Does this view of the cause of disease (an unexpected shocking event) come naturally to you, or is it hard to grasp?
- When you get sick, do you think of it originating from inside or outside the body?
- How can we learn to appreciate symptoms as an intelligent biological process occurring for our benefit rather than a mistake of nature?

Chiropractic Connection:

Chiropractic has always been at the forefront of new approaches and models to understanding health and well-being. Today, chiropractors are some of the leading pioneers in the new model of health presented by the Sacred Medicine, also called German New Medicine. Chiropractic has been working with the nervous system for over a century and a half. They are well equipped to understand what these new discoveries in biology are telling us: that the nervous system truly is at the basis of disease manifestations, just as D.D. Palmer suggested over a century ago.

STAYING THE COURSE*Spell 2 Communicate*

By J.B. and Jamison Handley

For the majority of people, severe Autism has been understood as a mental or psychology debilitation indicating a stalled maturation early in life. This is no longer accurate! The inability to speak or communicate demonstrated within the autistic population is not the result of psychological retardation or maturation stop, but is the result of a motor coordination defect that prevents a person from communicating! In other words, a 20 year old autistic individual who cannot communicate words or gestures, is still a 20 year old! Her or she is NOT a 2 year old living in a 20 year old's body.

This article demonstrates one man's journey to this discovery, and to the fascinating approach that can lead an autistic individual to discover, for the first time, his or her ability to communicate language to his loved ones. It's called Spell-2-Communicate, and it is a little know, but growing awareness of the possibilities that await all autistic children and their families. This could be perhaps the greatest resolution an autistic individual and his or her family can experience. And it provides the basis for exceptional healing, growth, and further development.

Questions for consideration:

- Do you know any autistic individuals personally? Do you have an understanding that they are in fact developmentally and psychologically equipped? Or has your interactions been, like many, situated on the assumption that they are developmentally delayed?
- Knowing that there is a motor defect inhibiting their fine-motor abilities to communicate language, what are the ways you can begin to reconnect with autistic individuals?
- Has anyone here heard of this topic and Spell-2-Communicate?

Chiropractic Connection

Autism is a growing phenomenon, and we are beginning to discover that its origin is in a brain-injury, or some other effect which has prevented fine-motor cortex function from developing normally. Chiropractic has long had great success caring for and supporting the well-being of the autistic population. Many families recognize that with chiropractic support for the nervous system, they can achieve a renewed sense of coherence and calm. Knowing that the underlying feature of autism is a brain/nervous system motor cortex injury or inhibition, allows us to better relate to and care for autistic individuals. With spell-2-communicate, we can now present a future for non-speaking autistic individuals—a world where conscious, intelligent communication with others is a viable part of life. This is truly a miracle!