

Birth **everything**™
T H

**Holistic
Pregnancy**

IN DEEP: 7 WATERBIRTH SECRETS

BARBARA HARPER

BIRTH COLUMN

WHOLENESS IN PREGNANCY

HEALTHY & FIT 4 BIRTH

5 NATURAL HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES

POSITIVE BIRTH STORY

TOTALLY PRESENT & SO WORTH IT!

BONUS FEATURE

YOUR BEST HOLISTIC BIRTH TOOL

REAL TRUTH

PROGRAMMING HEALTHY BABIES

**ASK THE MIDWIFE
EMPOWER ME
PREGGI CUISINE**



DR DIANE SPEIER

Wholeness in Pregnancy

When a woman becomes pregnant, a new chapter in her life begins, whether this is her first child or she has other children.

However, pregnancy with a first child starts a journey in which she is transformed in various ways: she is becoming a mother, and this alters her sense of identity; her couple relationship will shift from partners to parents, inviting a whole new dynamic within the context of a family; her work responsibilities will change, and decisions about maternity leave and what happens afterward are made; the contours of her body will expand dramatically, and this often carries some unpleasant side effects; and creating the next generation activates memories of how she (and her partner) was parented and the impact that has on life.

A holistic approach to pregnancy allows a woman to embrace the life-changing journey she is on from a multidimensional perspective: exploring the uncharted terrain physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

PHYSICAL

Maternity care is usually dominated by a focus on the physical, often to the exclusion of the psychological. When a woman receives prenatal/antenatal care, she is taking responsibility for the healthy development of the pregnancy and her unborn child.

Choices will be made about what kind of care provider she uses – will it be a midwife or an obstetrician?



Midwives are more attuned to the psychophysiological phenomenon that pregnancy is, but obstetricians tend to dwell in the mind set of pregnancy as a physical and medical event.

Finding a healthcare provider in alignment with her beliefs and choices is a key task for a happy embodied experience. Will she consent to various diagnostic procedures that are offered?

Her physical commitment to a healthy pregnancy can be augmented by taking a fitness programme that helps her connect deeply with the changes that are happening to her body.

Whether it is yoga, Pilates, or swimming, these activities can foster a sense of integrity around the changes that are occurring to her body, often helping to alleviate any aches and pains that are common during pregnancy. Combining fitness with healthcare can result in the radiant glow that many women experience during pregnancy.

MENTAL

Mentally, in addition to books, a wealth of information is obtainable through the internet. As someone who taught childbirth education classes for twenty years before the advent of the World Wide Web, I am naturally biased toward information that comes from these courses.

However, preparation for childbirth classes happen later in pregnancy when birth is approaching, so I appreciate how women can now access information long before they attend classes.

Birth preparation is a valuable experience for learning about what happens during childbirth and the best ways of managing the event.

Wholeness in Pregnancy

There are all kinds of childbirth classes: private classes such as NCT in the UK and Lamaze in the US; free NHS classes in the UK taught by midwives; hospital classes that are taught by staff members whose content is about how things are done in that institution;

Hypnobirthing, now popular all over the world; and a variety of independent childbirth education classes that developed over the last couple of decades.

Knowledge is power and when women are well prepared for birth they have a better experience and are better able to negotiate with care providers. A crucial aspect of preparation is preparing fathers/partners for birth so they can participate in meaningful and purposeful ways.

For many women and couples these classes create a sense of community with other parents in similar circumstances, with many social benefits that can continue for years.

EMOTIONAL

Pregnancy is often an emotional time for a woman, exacerbated by pregnancy hormones circulating throughout her body. It can trigger memories of her childhood and her relationships with her parents, and how this has shaped her life, both positively and negatively.

She will be responding to changes in her couple relationship as they anticipate the changes that the baby is going to make to their life. Preparing couples in advance for the reality of what life can be like after birth helps them work as a duet during the postnatal period.

When they are on the same page, they can maintain a resilient relationship against the pressures of new parenthood.

Educating prospective parents on the challenges they might confront, and ways to avoid disappearing into the quagmire of perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMAD), inoculates women and their partners against their devastating effects, helping them to Thrive (the name of our programme).

SPIRITUAL

Pregnancy is the ultimate expression of spirit in manifestation. The sentient unborn child's development is guided by both a genetic blueprint and an energetic blueprint as it makes the transition from the spiritual realm into a new physical body.

The spiritual dimension of pregnancy is an energetic communication between the incoming entity and the parents who are hosting its arrival on the earth plane.

One wonderful way for embracing the spiritual aspects of pregnancy is through ritual, and Blessingway into Birth is a ceremony that marks this rite of passage. It is a powerfully magical ceremony with a purpose – a gathering of participants who prepare the honoured woman and her unborn child for a good journey ahead and for easing childbirth.

AN OPTIMAL PREGNANCY IS A RADIANT ONE!

An optimal pregnancy, or the most favourable conditions for the best result obtainable, is possible when all of these dimensions are addressed during pregnancy.

A holistic perspective facilitates calmly embracing the transformative energies of birth and life while a woman is still pregnant. When the emphasis is placed on just the physical and mental aspects of pregnancy, a woman

can struggle to understand how normal her emotions are.

Normalizing pregnancy emotions encourages women and their partners to come to birth as whole, secure individuals who can transmit that security along to their children. Many childbearing families will not be spiritually aware at this stage in their lives, but for those who are, welcoming incoming spirits

through an optimal pregnancy is one way of nourishing the development of a new generation of peacemakers, from a place of wholeness and connection.

Blessed be.

Dr Diane Speier is a certified childbirth educator since 1978, Diane also started attending births as a doula in 1978, and her passion for helping mothers evolved into the Birth and Beyond Doula service for childbirth and postnatal home care.

Diane is a speaker at international conferences on a variety of subjects including parenting, strengthening perinatal relationships, the postnatal period, perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, and has published articles in journals and magazines on these subjects too.

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