

Sacred Transitions



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Planning Your Birth

There are many things to consider when planning for your birth experience. Below I've listed a few things that you may find helpful. Also in the Birth Resources section there are names and numbers of local Olympia maternity care providers, child birth educators, birth tub rentals, etc. I definitely recommend taking childbirth education classes. It is a great way to prepare you and your support team for the experience; allowing you to practice positions, go over details and ask questions of really knowledgeable teachers. It is also a wonderful opportunity to meet other new families in the Olympia area. For those who are having their second child, there are great sibling preparation classes as well.

Birth Plan Worksheet: This is to help you outline what your thoughts are about your birth- what you are envisioning, what your hopes or concerns are, who you would like to attend, where and how you would like to ideally give birth, etc. The worksheet covers desired and undesired events and helps you think through them. **DON'T GET INTIMIDATED!** This is designed to help you start thinking about your birth and to help you assess what your values and expectations are. It can help generate specific questions for your care providers and it provides your birth team with an excellent framework with which to advocate and support you and your partner while you are laboring. It can be very helpful in a hospital setting as a tool for relaying your values to the hospital staff. Fill out what you can and what is of importance to you.

The Birth Plan Worksheet can also serve as an outline for a more concise letter to the hospital. In this letter, introduce yourself to the hospital staff and list the specific birth desires that are of most importance to you (ie: intermittent monitoring, permission to change positions or desire to not be offered pain relief). Copies of this more concise letter, with a summary of your expectations can be generated to all the nursing staff, midwives and doctors present at your birth.

Questions to Ask your Care Provider: Information is a tool to empowerment. These questions help you get the most out of your care- whether it is in interviewing potential care providers or when confronting a proposed test or treatment.

Recommended Reading List: I've included a list of books (and videos) that other birthing families have found helpful. You can find a lot of them at the Olympia library. Sometimes, you will have to wait a week or two for them to get it back in. The local used book stores are another good resource. Also, I have some books that I am willing to lend out if you have any interest please let me know.