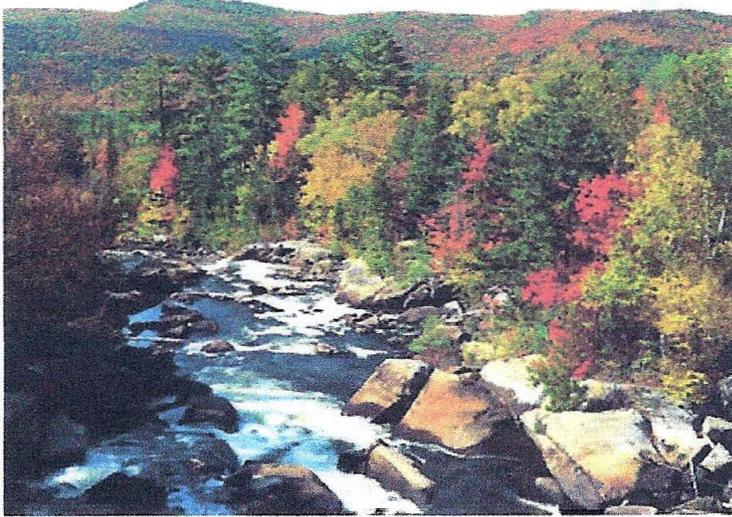


The New Kids On The Block – A Doula’s Perspective From the Last Twenty Years

By Phoenix Rising Star



I wasn't really sure what a doula was when I first met Lisa Cartier of New York.

"I guess I would call myself a birthing associate and energy practitioner," she said. "I also play the role of part time psychologist/counselor, problem-solver and energy worker."

The main role of a doula is to help the family unit prepare for the birth of a baby. Lisa tries to spend as much time as possible with the family, working with the couple to create a fair assessment for each individual. The goal is to lessen or eliminate anxiety prior to delivery. She helps the couple understand how they work together. Code words are developed to quickly communicate where each of them is in the birthing process and to provide support for each other.

And she communicates telepathically with the babies through this whole process.

"In utero, we communicate about the birth, and I dialogue with them about their parents and siblings. I remind them they chose their parents. During the birth, I'm constantly reassuring them they're okay," Cartier said.

Because of the amount of time spent with the family prior to the birth, bonding between the parents and child, and even Lisa is much more intense. The family and infants are calmer and experience less anxiety during the actual birth.

Doulas can work with anyone, but they are limited in what they can do. "We can't do any of the MD stuff, like deliveries," she said. "Although once I facilitated a surprise home birth that happened in twenty minutes."

Loving her connection with families and recognizing this as her path of service, Lisa feels she has always been meant to do this work. "I attended a Huna class, and we studied the chakra system. I found myself knowing all the information without knowing how I knew."

Her first experience as a doula was with her girlfriend. Both were due within two weeks of each other and her friend's husband didn't want to be present at the birth. "So she asked me to attend. It was the first time I was aware I could make a living at doing what I do naturally."

She went on to become certified as a doula, and hasn't stopped since. "I love what I do," she said simply.

Lisa's noticed several changes in the twenty years she's been practicing.

Couples are working with their own energies and choosing a more personalized birthing process. Babies are less of an event and more of a commitment.

More women are choosing non-medicated births and breast feeding. Fewer children are being vaccinated.

More doctors and nurses are leaving them alone during the birth process, trusting more in their presence and awareness.

Babies are calmer and more alert. Sometimes their eyes are open prior to birth. These babies are more content and active and less with-drawn.

In 2008, Cartier had a series of surprising observations and discoveries. January 1, 2008 was her first New Year's baby. And somehow she knew this one was different. That baby and the other 23 babies whose births she facilitated that year showed her a softer, gentler energy. "Especially in the boys. I was surprised."

Not only did these babies seem gentler, but they were more aware. They appeared to already know things without having to learn them.

"And they had a lot of light around them," Cartier added. "I'd never seen such light around the babies. Never."

"I think they are here bringing in the new energy we're shifting to. They're showing us how we are going to be living. Here to help us make that transition, and here to teach us a different way," she said.

Regarding the future, Cartier says she believes there will be more home births. Already she's seeing a trend, particularly in the young parents who are in their twenties, to be more present, more connected as a family unit. Even if the father is not present on a day to day basis within the family.

And more fathers overall are present and participating in the birthing process.

She also sees a trend of using computer cameras and Skype so that family members who can't physically be present at the birth can still be involved in the process.

Cartier recommends that anyone wishing to be certified as a doula investigate the different trainings available and choose the one that resonates most.

Cartier can be reached at info@womensintegrativehealthny.com and is available for phone consultations as a doula at 518-307-9810.

Respectfully yours,
Phoenix Rising Star