

# **The Comfort in Birth Method™**

**A toolkit for mamas and doulas**

**Sampler edition...**

**2nd Edition Revised 2021 Edition**

**By Julie Larsen**

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About the author: Julie has been a doula for 10 years and sharing her experiences of being a doula and the journey of motherhood. This book aims at helping mothers get a better grasp of helping them through the pain and learn the comfort of birth through this new method! Find us at <http://comfortinbirth.weebly.com>

This is a sample edition of the book and may not reflect the formatting of the original content as we are using 8 x 11 inches here in our sample. The book is 6 x 9 edition. Thank you so much!

## CHAPTER 1: BIRTH LAND!

**Welcome, Mama or Doula! This book is welcoming you to the “birth land”. I hope that you will learn something from our manual for birth workers or doulas. My goal in this book is to create a manual that you can write in, take notes, and learn from. There will be blank areas in the book where you can draw and write your thoughts. This book is meant for doulas to help mamas – so we will be addressing doulas or birth workers mostly in this book and clients as mamas.**

**We will have a question section and then ask you to write down your thoughts. You will be defining terms – that means you get to go look them up. There will be a resource section in the book too.**

**What is the “birth land?” I feel like I got into the birth world with my first child. It is a land of no return as a parent. You experience the birth as a mother for the first time and this “land” is a time or place that you will never forget. I define this “birth land” as a time, place, situation that a mother experiences during her pregnancy, childbirth, or labor that she “never forgets.” It is like a “moment in time” that you go back to and remember for the rest of your life. (See endnote). –**

**Here is an example of one of those moments from a friend (Rosa) used with permission:**

**Rosa was calm as she felt her water “pop”. She had been watching TV with her husband that day. “Ouch!” She exclaimed. Her husband Ralph said, “What’s up?” Rosa said, “I think my water broke.” As they prepared for going to the hospital, Rosa called her doctor, “The contractions are not too bad. Can we wait a bit to go?” The doctor said: “You can wait at the house for a bit but come in when they get stronger.” Rosa nodded. Rosa said to Ralph, “Let me go take a shower.” Ralph nodded and helped her over to the shower. Rosa said, “My back may feel better after some warm water.” So, Rosa took a shower and then she decided to lay down for a bit as things seem to calm down. Ralph prepared the hospital bags and they both went to sleep. Rosa awoke in the morning and said, “Oh, dear, I feel like I need to push.” Ralph was worried, “Shall I call an ambulance?” As he was saying that he knew by the look in Rosa’s eyes that it was too late for that. She pushed out their baby and he caught the “baby” in his arms. Ralph exclaimed, “It’s a boy!” Rosa smiled and said, “His name is Isaac just like the Bible. He made me laugh as he came down. He is such a surprise birth!” Rosa and Ralph went later to the hospital to make sure everything was ok. Rosa said, “This is how I experienced ‘birth land’ by having a surprise home birth unassisted!”**

**Question: If you are a mother, have you experienced “birth land” before? How did this feel to you? Write down your thoughts about “birth land” below:**

**Defining a doula.** A doula (Greek “servant”) is a professional who is trained to be a mother’s birth coach to help her with comfort, physical, and spiritual measures during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum time. A doula does not offer any medical advice or do any medical procedures. A birth doula offers continuous care that is vital for pregnancy and labor. A birth doula spends at least 10 hours or more with her client (mother) in order to gain confidence before the birth. A birth doula does not displace the father/partner or dad. The birth doula helps the father gain confidence at birth and suggests ways he can help the mother.

**Question:** How do you define a doula? What does a doula do?

**Defining comfort in birth.** Comfort in Birth Method™ means the mother is relaxed, comfortable, breathes well, has rhythm, understand baby positioning and births in a way that is less painful (when possible all natural) way during her “birth time.” Part of this method is creating the sacred space for birth as well as understanding certain techniques for labor. In other words, the mother enjoys “comfort in birth” through her own experience or journey and this can vary depending on the mother’s choices at birth! Note: We will go over more about “Comfort in Birth” later.

**What if a mother wants an epidural just because? Does this mean this is not part of the method? No, we feel that a mother needs to find her comfort zone for labor. If this means, she obtains an epidural for laboring then that is great. This is still a “comfort in birth” for this mother! So, Comfort in Birth Method™ can have various meaning for each mother. Our goal is to present the relaxation and techniques to help a mother achieve the best birth possible outcome. A comfort in birth can be all natural and have little pain with the help of a doula or comfort techniques. The focus of this booklet is to help the mother achieve the best natural birth as possible. We will explain a little more about Comfort in Birth**

more later as well. **Disclaimer:** We are not attempting or will ever offer any diagnosis – this is up to a doctor or other medical practitioner to determine if a mother needs certain drugs, medications, or advice.

**Question:** How would you define “comfort in birth”? Write this in your own words.

**Define rebozo . A rebozo is a Mexican shawl (other countries make them) that a mother can use as a tool for her upcoming birth. A rebozo can also be used to carry the baby in after birth depending on the size. Doulas will usually learn how to offer these comfort techniques to the mother. Rebozo is also a key tool for our “comfort in birth” philosophy! We will be presenting a couple of techniques in this manual. Students are welcome to take as an extra class “Royal Rebozo Way” Course Level A and B if so desired. That will be an extra cost if signing up for our Comfort in Birth Method as a student or look for special deals on our website sometimes we will include an extra class.**

### ~~~~~Mexican Rebozo Expanded Section<sup>i</sup>~~~~~

**“The Mexican rebozo originated in colonial times and is a piece of clothing extensively used by Mexican women today. The rebozo is square linen that is used to cover the upper body and head. It is used to carry babies in traditional Mexico, and more recently around the world. It is also a luxury garment used for special celebrations.**

**In history, Fray Diego Duran mentions them for the first time in the XVI century saying that rebozos were knitted in Oaxaca with cotton and silk. To this elegant garment, knitters would add metallic threads and other ornaments to make a luxury complement for affluent women of the time.**

**The rebozo is a part of Mexican history. In 1757 there was a law that legislated over the size, knitting, thread class and design. Following Roman Catholic traditions, the Virgin of Angustias was named the saint to advocate for the knitters of rebozos: las rebozeras.”**

**Origin of the Mexican Rebozo – according to online source<sup>ii</sup>:**

**“The most traditional Mexican rebozos used to be from Sultepec in today's State of Mexico knitted with a waist loom as early as 1573 when Diego Cortes Chimalpopoca was Cacique of the region.**

**In Puebla, you can find the famous golden rebozos of taffeta, which is a silk, weave with a specific pattern of threads.**

**In Saltillo, you can find the traditional "saw teeth" design which is the same style used in Mexican Serapes.**

**Classical rebozos are made out of cotton and silk. They are decorated using a technique called marbling (jaspeado in Spanish). This old fashion way of dyeing consists of making knots in sections of the threads so that the color does not impregnate consistently. The technique gives a beautiful irregular marbling or stripe appearance exposing the tint and the natural color of the fiber. After the knitting, the threads from the side are tied making a nice design or maybe a phrase.**

**Today's elegant Mexican rebozos are knitted by:**

- **The Matlatzincas from Tenancingo in the State of Mexico.**
- **The Purepechas from La Piedad, Zamora and Tanganicuaro in the State of Michoacan.**
- **The Nahuas from Chilapa in the State of Guerrero, and**
- **The Otomis from Santa Maria del Rio in the State of San Luis Potosi.**

**In 1951, in Santa Maria del Rio, it was founded the school of rebozo knitting to maintain the tradition that was disappearing. They master the marbling or jaspeado technique, and create authentic pieces of art. For example, the one-color silk rebozo with amazing beauty and elegance.”**

**We will talk more about the “rebozo” in another chapter.**

**What does a doula do?**

**\*She offers prenatal Education: though this should be limited for a doula to offer – if a mother needs more of a fuller childbirth class series – she should either a) sign up with one with you if you have credentials to teach or b) encourage her to find an online or local class to take.**

**\*She offers: Birth Plan, “Birth Wishes” or “Birth Vision”:** A doula needs to understand how to make a birth plan up to help parents. Some seasoned parents will not need this as much – if so then have them consider another type of preparatory class like learning about the rebozo.

**\*She offers: Birth Preparation:** A doula usually helps with birth preparation in the way that she shows the parents what she is going to offer during labor. She will go over comfort measures and techniques that you learn later on in this booklet. Also, we always encourage doulas that train with us that it is okay to take another doula training. If you want to learn more from another organization, we have no problem with that! We know all organizations have various things to learn. So, feel free to share our information as long as a person knows it is copyrighted.

**\*She offers releasing fears of birth:** We can show you some tips on helping moms release fears as part of being a doula. Many moms have birth fears, and this is normal. If their fears seem to take over their life, then that is abnormal, and they may want to seek a doctor’s help for prenatal anxiety or prenatal depression. \*Ask us for Letting go of fears separate sheet to go through with a mother.

**\*She offers: Home Visits – 2 prenatal, 1 postpartum:** Now that we are in “covid” times – the “home visits” may take place via zoom with a client to be. You may only be going up to the hospital when the time comes if the hospital allows doulas. Many hospitals are now allowing doulas – but you will need to follow their protocols (wearing a mask, being tested, maybe even wearing certain clothes) and that may mean getting a “covid” test that might not be accurate. So, if it comes out “positive” demand a retest as some of those tests are not that accurate; make sure you know your rights as well as the patient knowing their rights. Have the hospital staff “literally read aloud” the patient bill of rights to your client esp. if the client has specific needs. You may want to do is get tested by a private doctor vs. hospital so that you can just have the results before going up to the

hospital. If a hospital does not require testing, then that is great. It may depend on the hospital. Postpartum visit can also be done via zoom if the parents do not wish to have you near them after the baby's birth. Respect whatever decisions they make. It is not your baby. If they want you to visit with masks and gloves on, then please respect that. Working with clients during these times is very trying for everyone. There may be families that do not consider covid much of a threat and will probably not require as much things – besides hand washing, etc. normal things you would have done anyway! Being aware of universal precautions is important too.

**\*She helps with Optimal Fetal Positioning – best position for baby's birth: We suggest looking at [www.spinningbabies.com](http://www.spinningbabies.com) – The Belly Mapping book we recommend for a book review plus you get to learn something fun: <https://www.spinningbabies.com/product/belly-mapping-workbook/>**

**\*She helps with Rebozo techniques: We offer a fuller class you can take separately – please ask instructor for special pricing deal for being a “Comfort in Birth Method™ student.” There will be a few techniques in this book.**

**\*She helps with Birth Story: Sharing the mother's birth story – writing it down is important. What does she want to share?**

**A doula can help with Belly Binding.**

**A doula is not a midwife; so, she does not offer any medical side of things and cannot take blood pressure, measure the fundus, etc. However, if a mother wants to learn how to do this on her own, she should be encouraged to do so. A mother can even learn how to do her own urine samples! We always think a mother should take charge of her own health!**

**Question: What do you think a doula does?**

**Question: What is a doula Not? A doula is not?**

Send to instructor via [comfortinbirth@gmail.com](mailto:comfortinbirth@gmail.com) – all assignments and questions should be sent there.

Explore More! This section of the book – sometimes you will explore a website or there maybe an assignment attached to explore more. For this section, please look over the websites below.

DONA International: [www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org)

First doula organization

Evidence Based Birth©: [www.evidencebasedbirth.com](http://www.evidencebasedbirth.com) “Evidence for doulas”

Inspired Birth Pro: [www.inspiredbirthpro.com](http://www.inspiredbirthpro.com)

CAPPA: [www.cappa.net](http://www.cappa.net)

Childbirth International: <https://childbirthinternational.com/birth-doula/>

Questions:

Are there any birth philosophies listed? What is the mission statement if listed? Submit to instructor.

Write down your own goals for your current doula training. What do you wish to accomplish? When do you want to finish? Send to instructor.

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Sources of Chapter 2 will be put at the end of this sampler. Thank you.

## CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF CHILDBIRTH & DOULAS PLUS WHAT IS A MIDWIFE

Birth is as old as history itself. Biblical times to now; we have birthed without doctors longer than having doctors help. Let us look at history of birth from around 1600 to present days. The history of birth is a fascinating subject.

**1600's:** The Royal birth was “attended” by many people in the room. Thus, the Queen was basically stressed out with her labor being watched by so many people. This was done for various reasons – one to make sure that a girl was not switched for a boy. However, in the instance of this article I found, the Queen of France had a boy named Louis France!

**1700's:** Our history timeline begins mid-1700's – the forceps were developed which helped with deliveries that were considered difficult.

Granny midwifery began in our country with arrival of African slaves (so around the time of the civil war era and beyond.) They practiced up until around the 1940's when most of them were ousted because they were not “medical doctors” and hand no training like midwifery schooling. Granny midwives delivered up to 75 percent of the babies in the southwest regions up to around the 1940's or so.

1800's chloroform was used during childbirth deliveries. Another remedy to help during delivery was a mixture of alcohol and oatmeal in a drink. So, you might say women drank "birth beer" during labor! It also helped with healing during postpartum time frame. Sometimes women during childbirth would cook a cake during labor – this cake was called a "groaning cake." This at least kept women more upright during labor and moving around. I could imagine doing this if in early labor. I might need help if I was in deeper active labor, that cake better be in the oven by then!

Midwives attended births way before men ever came on the scene. So, midwifery was common up to around the 1800's. Men started taking over birth pretty quickly. Hospitals when established preferred to have men as doctors.

In the 18th to 19th centuries, women died of "puerperal fever" during childbirth because they did not understand the need for cleanliness at childbirth. A doctor working with the dead would then go deliver a baby! So, many women died during childbirth that they had wills made out before they went into labor. The reason for this "fever" is that the doctors did not wash their hands between handling women and then handling dead bodies. Quite shocking!

Routine handwashing and such did not really become a practice until around 1875, despite a doctor that suggested this needed to be done earlier than that. Also, instruments were also sterilized at around the same time. I imagine you could sterilize them by putting them in a hot stove or heat. Nowadays, I am sure there is chemicals and sterilization techniques.

Early 1900's (specifically around 1914), Twilight sleep was a way of childbirth in Germany (and spread to other countries) where women were drugged with morphine and scopolamine during childbirth, and they woke up with no memory of the birth or what happened. The women would become violent because of the drug, so they were basically tied down to the beds and the doctors would deliver the baby without the mother recalling being tied down and such. Anyway, there is more to this story that we do not have time to share all of this. Research "Twilight Sleep" on your own if you want to learn more. One thing to note – twilight sleep did not take away the pain of labor even though it was called "painless childbirth" by the Germans. The drug that was used to block memory also helped block the mother's memory of being in pain during labor! This movement spread from Germany to USA around 1914 or so. This movement stayed pretty much in USA through the 1960's.

In the early 1970's the Twilight sleep was not used for birth anymore. In fact, my mom remembers giving birth at the hospital and she didn't want any drugs at my birth, but the doctors gave her something where she couldn't see anything- like she blacked out – but she could still hear what was going on. So, she was a bit drugged in a different way when I was born! Anyway, the birth movement started being more natural minded around this time.

Let us back up a little bit and talk about breastfeeding as this is a part of our history as well.

Breastfeeding was at an all-time low in the 1950's, so Mary White and Marian Thompson founded La Leche League in 1956. This organization is now worldwide. However, the ideas of the organization have changed over time and is more liberal in their beliefs than what the original founders had formed.



**In 1969, Dana Raphael coined the term “doula” to the world. Now, the word doula means “servant or slave” in Greek. This term sticks today to define doulas all over who help mothers in labor, but do not offer medical services!**

**Born in 1930, Michael Odent is still alive at the time of this writing. He is a physician and obstetrician that worked with women awhile back in France. He basically introduced the idea of homebirth in hospital. His hospital was set up much like a home birthing room or like today’s birth centers. The mothers that came to birth there were more educated by him and his staff. Michael Odent believed that babies should have a nice warm bath right after birth and would encourage mothers to give their babies this special bath.**

**Michael wrote a lot of books – the list follows:**

- **Birth Reborn (1984, Pantheon, NY)**
- **Primal Health (1986. Century Hutchinson. London)**
- **The Farmer and the Obstetrician (Free Association Books)**
- **The Caesarean (Free Association Books )**
- **The Scientification of Love (Free Association Books)**
- **The Functions of the Orgasms: The Highways to Transcendence (2009, Pinter & Martin Ltd.)**
- **Childbirth in the Age of Plastics (2011, Pinter & Martin Ltd.)**
- **Childbirth and the Future of Homo sapiens (2013, Pinter & Martin Ltd.), reissued as Childbirth and the Evolution of Homo sapiens in 2014**
- **Do we need Midwives? (2015, Pinter & Martin Ltd.)**
- **The Birth of Homo, the Marine Chimpanzee (2017, Pinter & Martin Ltd.)**
- **The Future of Homo (2019, World Scientific Publishing Co. Ltd.)**

**Biddy Mason was a “slave” in Georgia and was given as a gift to someone for their “wedding gift.” Now, she was someone else’s slave. Her owners were Mormons, so they traveled around for the Mormon Church. We can assume that was probably around Utah area. They were going to settle in California (around 1851); however, they had just passed laws freeing slaves there. So, the owners wanted to move down to Texas. Miss Biddy Mason made her escape and became a free slave and became a nurse midwife in Los Angeles area. Onnie Lee Logan is another famous midwife from Alabama and she was African American. She managed to become a midwife as well and delivered lots of babies. She has a biography book. Margaret Charles Smith is considered one of the last “Granny” midwives. She went to midwifery school in 1949. Most of her clients were poor and malnourished. She delivered thousands of babies. You may want to read her biography: “The Life Story of Alabama Midwife.”**

**Extra reading: <https://blackmidwivesalliance.org/legacy-1/f/what-is-the-legacy-of-black-midwives-in-the-us-and-caribbean>**

**Ina May Gaskin started the Farm midwives in the 1970's and offered natural childbirth options to mothers. Many mothers would travel to Tennessee just to birth with a "farm midwife" in order to experience more natural birth. Ina May Gaskin also wrote a book "Spiritual Midwifery" which is still read today as one of the most popular books. The Farm Midwives do still exist, and they do offer in person classes if someone is interested in learning more go to: <http://thefarmmidwives.org/>**

**DONA International was founded in the 1990's and started training doulas through their organization. [www.dona.org](http://www.dona.org) We actually encourage you to train with as many programs as you desire. We think you will learn something from them all!**

**Question: Name three things you learned about history of childbirth? What would you like to explore more?**

**Timeline History Enrichment Activity A: This is like an assignment for doulas in training to do if taking for our class. Otherwise you can also do for fun.**

**Write up your own timeline history of childbirth. What would it look like? You can start with a certain time frame like 1800 to present day.**

**Second part of your timeline can be your own added timeline, have you experienced birth, what things are important to you as far as becoming a doula? When did you first learn about doula work? Include things like that in the second part if you choose to add that to the timeline.**

**What is a midwife? A midwife means "with woman". A midwife prepares a mother for birth and assists at the delivery of the baby when it is time for labor. The midwife does not usually offer drugs or epidurals to a mother seeking a natural delivery. The midwife only offers the most natural birth possible.**

**A midwife does:**

**Blood pressure checks**

**Urinal analysis**

**Palpitations of the uterus**

**Leopold's maneuvers**

**Optimal fetal positioning**

**Cervical checks**

**Pap smear (usually after birth or before pregnancy)**

**Hemoglobin checks**

**Blood tests**

**IV's for fluids (possibly antibiotics if she is working under a doctor)**

**Oxygen**

**Neonatal Resuscitation**

**Pitocin – synthetic – this is only if she has permission in her state to do so.**

**Other ways to stop bleeding after birth such as herbs, homeopathy, etc. Remember to look up definitions and terms and write them down in a notebook and review them so you will learn them!**

**Question: What is the difference between a doula and a midwife?**

**Question: What does a midwife do?**

**Question: Who coined the word doula? (Hint: In history section).**

**Enrichment B: What is the evidence for doulas? What does this mean? Evidence for doulas means we are looking for statistics on how hiring a doula can reduce the rate or scale of mother getting into trouble during labor. Look this up on the Internet and write down this as a flyer or one page informative Word document and send to instructor for grading (if taking for our class).**

## Would you like to read the whole book?

Great here's some places where you can find our book:

1. Lulu Press: This will be the best place for the “recent” edition: <https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/julie-larsen-and-julie-larsen/the-comfort-in-birth-method-a-toolkit-for-doulas-and-mamas-2nd-revised-edition/paperback/product-2d7pn8.html?page=1&pageSize=4>
2. Older Edition (First) Available on Amazon: [https://www.amazon.com/Comfort-Birth-Method-Techniques-birth/dp/B087L6VHX9/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+comfort+in+birth+method&qid=1628806903&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Comfort-Birth-Method-Techniques-birth/dp/B087L6VHX9/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=The+comfort+in+birth+method&qid=1628806903&sr=8-1)
3. Digital Editions available: <https://books2read.com/u/mZenaJ>

Let us know if you have any questions.

If you are interested in the doula training, it usually costs around \$250 (limited time low price) – but we are offering a \$50 off for limited time till December 31, 2021 to take the training with our program. Ask for Confluence50 off – we usually arrange payment via PayPal. Thanks so much. 😊

Sources for the book articles: - We did not put any pictures in this free edition.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.mexican-clothing-co.com/mexican-rebozo.html>  
<https://www.mexican-clothing-co.com/mexican-rebozo.html>

<sup>ii</sup> <https://www.mexican-clothing-co.com/mexican-rebozo.html>  
<https://www.mexican-clothing-co.com/mexican-rebozo.html>

Other sources: article here if you would like to read it: <https://www.history.com/news/royal-birth-traditions-marie-antoinette-meghan-markle>

(<https://www.whattoexpect.com/pregnancy/labor-and-delivery/history-of-childbirth/> )

If you would like to read more about the history of granny midwives go here: <https://www.lamaze.org/Connecting-the-Dots/black-history-month-the-importance-of-black-midwives-then-now-and-tomorrow-1> )

(Source: <https://www.mother.ly/life/pregnancy-tests-have-existed-since-1350-bcand-6-other-insane-facts-on-the-history-of-childbirth#> )

Same source as above (Motherly article)

Same source – Motherly article.

(Another source: <https://www.bellybelly.com.au/birth/twilight-sleep> )

(Source: <https://www.lli.org/about/history> )

<https://doulatraininginternational.com/brief-history-black-midwifery-us/>

<https://www.nursing-midwifery.tcd.ie/postgraduate/assets/img/hdip2.jpg>