

# Questions to Ask When Interviewing a Doula

## **When choosing a labor assistant, answers to the following questions will help parents find the right support person:**

- ~ What type of practice do you have? Doula, Labor Assistant, Monitrice, Midwife?
- ~ What is your educational background?
- ~ How did you receive your training as a Labor Support Person?
- ~ Do you give care for births in the hospital? At a birth center? At home?
- ~ How many births have you attended? Over what time span? What is your average number of births per month?
- ~ What type of clients have you cared for?
- ~ Who is your backup? When might she care for me?
- ~ What are your fees? When do I need to pay the fee? Do you have a sliding scale? Will you barter for the fee? Will I be able to get third party reimbursement for your services?
- ~ Do you restrict your practice in any way?
- ~ When would I call you? Can I reach you 24 hours a day?
- ~ Will you come to my home when I'm in labor?
- ~ How will you know if a complication arises while I'm laboring at home?
- ~ Do you listen to and interpret the fetal heart tones?
- ~ Do you do vaginal examinations?
- ~ How do you determine maternal well-being during labor?
- ~ What is your relationship with hospital/birth center personnel?
- ~ Have you ever worked with my physician/midwife? What was that experience like?
- ~ Are any restrictions placed on you by the hospital/birth center? If so, what are they?
- ~ Do you get along well with the hospital staff or my doctor? Have you had any conflict with them? If yes, do you think it will interfere with your ability to help me?
- ~ If someone suggests an intervention that you feel is unnecessary what will you do or say?
- ~ How can you help us minimize the need for an episiotomy?
- ~ If I need a cesarean will you be able to accompany me?
- ~ Have you ever cared for anyone with a poor outcome? What was the situation?
- ~ What do you provide that is different from what the hospital/birth center staff can provide?
- ~ What do you provide that is different from what my partner can provide?
- ~ What do you provide that is different from what my physician/midwife can provide?
- ~ Why did you become a professional Labor Support Person?
- ~ What do you like best about your job?
- ~ What do you like least about your job?
- ~ Why do you feel labor support is helpful?
- ~ May I have references of others you have cared for?

## **Feel free to ask the questions that are important to you in your decision-making:**

- ~ How long have you been attending births as a Doula?
- ~ How many births have you attend?
  - How many in hospitals?      How many as homebirths?
- ~ What made you want to become a Doula?
- ~ Are you certified by an organization?
  - If so, what organization? What is their philosophy? Do you agree with it?
- ~ How was your training and what did it consist of?
- ~ Have you received any accolades in your Birth Doula career?
  - If so, would you share them with me?
- ~ About how many clients do you provide care for in an average month?

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- ~ What is the most challenging situation you have faced as a Doula?
- ~ What is the most rewarding situation you have faced as a Doula?
- ~ Do you have a particular Back-Up Doula?
  - Would I be able to meet with her prior to labor?
  - In what situations would your Back-Up Doula be sent to my birth?
  - What percent of your clients' births do you attend?
  - How often is your Back-Up Doula sent to a birth?
- ~ When will you join me in labor?
  - While I am still at home? In early labor? Only in active labor?
  - When I arrive at the hospital?
  - When I specifically let you know that I need you?
- ~ How many births have you done with the hospital where I will be giving birth?
  - How was your experience there?
- ~ How many births have you done with my group of doctors?
  - How was your experience with them?
- ~ How much do you charge?
  - Do you have a contract?
  - When do I have to pay you?
- ~ If someone suggests something that you feel is not in my best interest, what will you do?
- ~ Are you willing to accompany me into the operating room if a Cesarean is required?
- ~ How many visits do you provide before labor?
- ~ How many visits do you provide after birth?
- ~ How will you interact with my Partner?
- ~ Do you have any references of former clients that I may call?
- ~ Can you refer me to other Doulas that I may interview?

**NOTE:**

Because this list is provided as a courtesy only, and does not necessarily endorse the services of any particular Doula, please feel free to:

- ~ Call or check a website of their organization to verify the person's certification.
- ~ Call any references that the person provides for you.

From: Special Women: The Role of the Professional Labor Assistant  
 by Paulina Perez and Cheryl Snedeker, First Edition, 1990, pages 20 & 21.  
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