

## **The sufferance of labour and the enigmatic doula: nature's representatives at birth.**

(This article is based on the combined expressions of Liliana Lammers and Michel Odent, please investigate the way of the true nature of the doula <http://www.paramanadoula.com>)

The essence of health-instinct is really the realization of life just as it is this very moment. The idea is very broad and ties into every aspect of human existence because the nature of “self” or the “human-condition” goes with us whatever we do, it forms a pathological expression on top of health. Or one could say that the pathology of the human sense of “I” is really a small percentage of the human being, centered most specifically by the “neo-cortex” where the “higher order” analytic functions of the brain exist in the human adult. This short-circuited region is basically the surface or the outer edges of the human energy field, the upper-most point of the body and also the outer-most point of the brain. Most of the attention of the human's energy is focused superficially in this tiny area, upwards and superficially, rather than in the whole body below it and in the deeper recesses of the brain, downwards and deep (notice how this relates to *everything* in the superficial society in which we live). The sense of isolation or separation occurs when this small part believes itself to be separate from the rest and so forms a “self”. This occurs with most of the planet's population, this website investigates and re-traces how and why this occurred. The level to which this occurs varies from person to person but generally the more intellectual the person the stronger this aspect of “self” will be sensed. However, at certain points of life however there can be such extreme states of health that the power of this aspect can wane somewhat and something else might be sensed through the “self”. For women one of these situations is that of giving birth, which is an extreme state of physical health and so pushes the “self” to the point of fear where it then has to let go for a moment in order to allow life to come through. This is of course how a camel can pass through the eye of a needle but a “rich” man cannot!

So interestingly and obviously, when supreme natural states of health emerge such as in pregnancy for example, the superficial aspects of the human let go and the deeper ones take over. This is the nature of natural childbirth, but as with the process of long-term suffering leading to various forms of dis-ease, it is always the suffering “self” that has to let go in order for life to emerge. Just as the nature of healing really comes down to a provision of a situation or a place at which the person can relax and move into a situation of let-go naturally and without intervention, so the expression of the doula is really a specialization of this with focused interest in childbirth. In any situation where there is a potential for pain there is also a potential for suffering because the “self” is absorbed in the idea that the pain is happening to “me” and so to stabilize the process it tries to focus on stopping the pain or trying to prevent it from harming “me”. Childbirth is not necessarily painful, in the sense of pain that feels “wrong” for the body like a knife wound or aggressive strike, childbirth is a much-needed process, it feels like a fullness of something emptying out and can be like a deep massage, this can be “painful” but not really in the same way. However it becomes deeply painful/distressing when what is going on is adhered to by a separate sense of “self”. That is really the “cross” that is borne by mothers in “labour” and that word exactly expresses what it seems like.

Michel Odent points out that in the book of Genesis there is a key metaphor expressing that the human ate from the tree of Knowledge, and what I will suggest is the hallucination of this experience brings them to believe that “I” is a real thing. There is an immediate sense of separation, this again relates to situations expressed in Genesis, firstly that they feel they are naked and therefore try to cover themselves, and secondly that there is great pain in childbirth. Both of these go together, the fear of separation is a sense of nakedness, or an experience of vulnerability when previously there was none, for example as with infant stages of development and the newborn, and also the whole of the animal kingdom. It is therefore not so much that the nature of the state of pregnancy and giving birth is something that evokes “shyness” or that birthing or sex for that matter is a process that requires the human or other mammal to hide away, but rather that in the human the sense of “self” and 3<sup>rd</sup> person perspective rules, and as a result the whole of nature is perceived as being a threat. Animals in nature have sexual intercourse and also give birth in broad daylight without any covert quality, however for humans this has not been their way for many thousands of years. “Shyness” is a fear of being seen, but if one is within the 1<sup>st</sup> person perspective and there is no “self” on show, there is a total fearlessness of expression. Actual threat is a very different situation. You never see a wildebeest giving birth literally amongst a pride of lions, but this is not shyness, merely expediency. Shyness is a very human emotion and the natural world is not human. Odent also points out that the process of “return” to a situation where labour is seen as being born again is in the New Testament of the Bible, where Christ is born amongst animals in a stable, the animals representing the return to nature, and a situation where the mother experienced no suffering in childbirth. Also “immaculate conception” is likely to be an expression of conception being to do with a connected and non-violent sexual union, a situation again of no-self, which might be called God. The male aspect Joseph, yang, is not in conflict of “self” with the mother-yin represented here as Mary. Virginity here means a situation where no-thing has happened, no-action has been taken, nothing has been intended but everything has changed, similar to an infants perception where every moment is constantly new and for the first time.

The in-between time for these two birthing metaphors involves a huge period of intense activity of the head and a disconnection from the body a situation which of course is increasing all the time. Christ’s expression is a small gesture of the infinite expression of nature, in a world of humans moving into exponential “selfhood”, which some might call “the devil” meaning “the divider” or the situation of the sense of separation from everything/ God. However the expressions of these stories are key in charting the nature of the human condition from pre-historic Eden to modern-day madness. There is of course no “reason” for this, there is nobody pulling the strings of life. There is an enticing idea that humans are progressing and that we are learning to “love” each other, but this is really a conveniently planned-out mythology which states that the nature of the evolution of the human is to “progress”. But this too is part of the hierarchical ideology of the “self”-orientated science that rules our lives. It is not science that has progressed but rather that scientific language has caught up a little with what is going on. However, scientific language is deeply limited, it doesn’t really express what’s going on in complete terms, just in ways that represent something for us to feel “proves” our

predicament, but the natural world is for everyone to sense and as a result it cannot be boxed-in. Scientific language has to be let go of and a new, or very ancient language has to re-emerge which can encompass the whole of what we see. This is why in these articles of health-instinct I try to look from yinyang expression because it offers an energetic way of communicating. This is not Newtonian based scientific because this language is too limited, this is the language of the energetic which both pre-dates and goes forward into the future, as the old scientific language of physics and bio-chemistry drop away and new-science has to attempt to find a way of grappling with a quantum universe. The situation is not evolutionary, we are not going to a better place, we are just realizing that Eden was already there in the background, it never left. This is really the whole point of medicine at whatever point of life and whatever “specialization” of the practitioner, it actually makes no difference. The same is true, no matter what the situation, we already have everything we need, and as soon as nature is allowed to take over, it does so perfectly. The nature of “self” is resistance, so it is resistance to everything, including birth, and as such the doula is there to present an expression of nature that potentially triggers a relaxation and an utterly silent and internal realization that “it’s okay, “self” isn’t necessary any more.”

The term doula really refers to a kind of specialization of a person, usually a woman, who essentially represents nature during the process of birth. She is a representative and as such expresses what nature is, a total connection, unconditionally, without intervention or attempt to change or fix. This is exactly the same expression as the “healer” or practitioner of medicine who can either be general or can be a specialist. Pediatrics, geriatrics, depression/emotional disorders etc, are all simply specializations to an interest in either a subject area or part of the body, or even grouping of people or an age group. But none of the specializations matter, it is all associated with what we can broadly describe as representatives of health-instinct or simply representatives of nature. As a result what one does in one department one does in the next, because it is all a process of understanding the nature of what is “suffering”, not pain, and the realization of the nature of the human condition and how this affects a particular region of the body, a particular kind of person or a person in a particular state of life. Pregnancy is one of these and the doula has an interest in childbirth so she focuses attention here. It is important not to believe that the doula is some kind of special entity, but to see that in context the doula is one of the multiple expressions of the realization of health-instinct.

One must differentiate the nature of the message of health-instinct, which is one of realizing innately that there is no requirement in fact to be “made better” or “made well”. Hence the whole point is really to effect the sense of “self” to realize its dissolution, even briefly is a relief beyond measure. This can only really occur naturally without any intention on the part of the practitioner, so it isn’t something the practitioner “does” but is a realization that occurs despite the practitioner, when there is in a sense No-practitioner or no sense of there being a separation between practitioner, patient and environment. This is more to do more with “being natural”, which triggers nature, or drops away the resistance or “selfhood” of the patient/pregnant woman, into reality. These situations do exist and this is what is meant by “healing”.

The misconception that when we express the self-less nature of the mammals that we are, we are somehow in a sub-state, is simply an eccentric dualist notion. There was never a time in pre-history when the natural environment functioned and “survived” better by being violent, the nature of human anger is entirely based on the belief that the “self” is real and hence the need to fight for survival! The sense of separation that is the human condition is something that separates us from other animals, or from Eden, it is not something “I” can turn on or off but seemingly “I” is naturally dying away. At one time in their history humans were at peace, as were other mammals, although this does not mean there was no death or pain but it does mean there was no violence, no suffering and no resistance. What seems like violence in the animal world is *not*, it is utterly peaceful. It is just that when the human anthropomorphizes, especially from the colonial-scientific perspective, there is a distorted belief that adaptation is on the “way up”, that nature is “improving” and this is simply incorrect at every level. Nature is and has always been perfect. Change occurs, but it occurs right this moment, now, there isn’t anything else and there is no reason. The whole of nature is deeply impersonal and deeply intimate, it is only the “self” that believes we are “going somewhere” and the human is “becoming”.

The natural/animal state is beyond the analytical, and many people are perpetually in this state where there is no-self and no-one to “do” anything about anything. It has been said that the human is the main problem in the process of childbirth, human interaction impedes it and this is really the main issue here, not the human-animal but the human disease, the human-condition. In every scenario this is the blocker of life processes, it is also the ultimate inhibitor of all aspects of functionality of life processes, the contraceptive of life.

Hence this brings us to the actual energetic situation that occurs in birth. Let’s look at what happens in a natural human birth today:

Constantly in life the psychological process of the body takes over and the body re-adjusts, this can be the heart beating, breathing out, passing faeces, urinating, everything in fact that is occurring all without a “me” involved, but none so overwhelming and totally encompassing as birth because of the huge physiological change required of it. This puts women in the birthing situation of either simply going with the process and following the body, so to speak, or being constantly re-stimulated into the state of normal-human-function which is essentially a dis-ease, resistance to the instinctive functioning. This creates one of two scenarios, either there is a smooth birth much like a smooth defecation or there is constipation and pain, which tends to be the usual situation of what birth and the literal term “labour” has come to suggest.

As with anything else in the body, the process of birth involves an increase in energy which starts to build up as the baby moves to the correct position for its unique delivery, which could be any angle or format from being squashed up head-first, legs-first or bum-first, the process unravels naturally. The energy builds up more and more and as this occurs the mother can no longer keep the activity of the “civilized” human intact, if she tries to be in this “normal” state of affairs then she experiences massive panic states, fear, situations of the “self” trying to hold on for dear life, suffering is severe. This of course is

very often the case and something that inevitably ends in C-sections, Oxytocin injections, the use of forceps and various other aggressive delivery methods.

If birth occurs naturally at its peak of energy there is a spontaneous reflex action of birthing, much like a perfect stool being eliminated from the gut, for want of a better metaphor, a single full and complete “movement”, and the mother’s body is flooded with the energy focused in giving birth. The energy become more and more concentrated in the uterine area, then at its peak there is an orgasm or a powerful expressive change and as yang reaches its peak it blossoms flooding the body with warmth, just as when there is a blockage in the body which builds up and is then cathartically eliminated. As the woman’s energy reaches a peak the baby is passed quickly and efficiently without a problem and without harming the mother’s body or baby. This can be either very quick or gradual, but births where the mother is in a truly “self-less” state can result in sometimes only an hour or two of contractions. This energy expression post-birth is utterly euphoric and can also last an hour or so, so there is a build-up, a peak and a slow downward direction of the energy as it peters away again, and as it does the “self” returns.

Women who go through a birth where a letting-go occurs experience no-time nor anything of specific value in what people around them say or do, they are within the process which of course is a total shift of reality. It is interesting that women who give birth in such a way can potentially change fundamentally as a result. The “self” may potentially completely let go in this process and remain as a no-self state, although this rarely occurs, it may also be a glimpse of something behind the supposed “reality” of the “normal” madness.

Obviously birth, like any other situation is not a situation that creates enlightenment as no situation can do this but in a similar way to taking drugs that block or stop the function of the analytic “self” like some of the psychedelic drugs, the process of birth is similar. Without speaking about hormonal exchange and interaction and just looking at things in an energetic way we can understand that process of birth as a simple cycle. Either the cycle is let go and it spins or it stops-starts, stop-starts and it's a bumpy ride.

The general observation of the nature of birthing is that when one starts down the route of intervention then one has to continue this route to birth as the natural process has been disturbed. This is expressed perfectly in a 2003 documentary film called “The Story of the Weeping Camel” which shows and idealizes a Mongolian tribal culture who live a very simple life. They live mainly from camels whose milk and hair provide most of their livelihood. The film takes place when the camels are birthing, some of whom seem used to human contact and birth easily near the human settlement. However one pregnant camel decides to move away from the humans, naturally attempting to find a non-threatening, probably camel-inhabited environment to give birth. She is spotted by one of the Mongolian camp leaders who suggests they go and get her. They then drag her back to camp, tether her to a post and wait for her to give birth. Surrounded by threatening human eyes, she moves into delivery stage. The birth is incredibly difficult because intervention has already occurred and she requires humans to help her to birth the baby camel. The mother then promptly rejects this baby, basically as there has been so much

human contact and intervention in her natural process. The Mongolians then go through many numerous ways of attempting to get the calf to suckle but the mother will not have it. Eventually they get a musician from the village to come and play music to the camel mother who goes through what *looks like* (but isn't) an emotional release to the humans and she accepts her calf. The whole process is seen as an example of how well humans and camels adapt and how brilliant the ideology and expression of the musician is, however in so many ways this vividly expresses the root of the problem. Even a very natural environment like this, or other seemingly natural environments such as farms, in reality are far from wild nature and human intervention from the beginning always disrupts a natural process.

The same is true of the human mother in childbirth, yet she is actually surrounded by unnatural qualities from the beginning of her life, so the likelihood of her being able to return to a mammalian state and letting go is much slimmer. This is in fact why there is deemed to be a great risk with home births versus hospital births. A society that has formed itself around huge misconceptions of the separate self has formed its own hell into which to attempt to give birth. There are thousands of years of sense-of-separation/ "selfhood" that lie interwoven in the nature of everything we do culturally but there are thousands and thousands more when in fact this was not the case. Prior to the modern era of the last 10,000 years humans were giving birth easily, or much more easily than they do now. This is not proved by modern science or by archeology, there is no way of knowing this for sure other than the fact that there are still indigenous peoples today who have been giving birth for thousands of years in the jungles of the Amazon without the requirement of any childbirth interventions. These people live using stone-age technology and are at peace. The modern human resolutely believes that their approach is the only one in existence and this is why science has such a colonialism attached to it, it cannot see beyond itself. Mammalian birth has not just suddenly come on the scene, animals have been giving birth for millions of years, the whole universe was given birth to in fact.

In the end the instinct of the human being is difficult to uncover from beneath the layers of mental formatting, but interestingly this aspect is in the minority. The majority, over 99.9%, of the human is completely connected to natural function yet the top 0.1% colonizes the body of the human and takes it over, again this is both microcosmic and macrocosmic in application. The "self"-focused state is only a very small aspect but its dominance is immensely strong within the human being. The whole of the human-animal instinct is tabooed into a hidden world of sexual fantasy, ritualized death, birth and change as though they were situations of illness. It is not only that pregnancy is not an illness, but also that in fact there is no-thing at the origin of the dis-ease/ "self". If it is recognized that "I" am not what I think I am, the whole nature of the way we think about all of health changes. The difficulty/ rejection of the paradox of life that it is both impersonal and deeply intimate simultaneously, is the foundation for the belief that "I" need some-one to "fix" me and also to cure "me" of childbirth. While the "self" can be exaggerated and focused on through language and words invoking and sparking its interaction, or through all aspects of the questioning mind in its way of observation and interrogation and fundamentally of its fearful state of being, this doesn't necessarily need to be the only way. The whole of nature is silent, as Tony Parsons points out, "*it's the*

*loudest thing in the room, that no-one is listening to*". Please see <http://www.theopensecret.com>

So what of the role of the doula? There seems to be two combined aspects: The "representative of nature" is the true nature of the doula (yin) the quality of the mother-like calm unconditionally loving connection, the "protector" is the secondary nature (yang), essentially meaning forming a protective shell around the birthing woman that society and all its manifestations cannot enter. Combined, this often means a situation of feeling safe, secure and calm, without intervention from doctors, midwives or other members of the hospital committee penetrating the connection of woman-to-nature which is what the doula bridges. The core yin expression is almost always a female expression although gender doesn't play as much of a role here, as really the essence of the process is that there isn't any intervention, male or female. However in nature the male quality has very little part in the process of birthing and more of a part in the process of fertilization so it is natural that his part is lessened here, although as the yang "protector" role the male is more suited stereotypically. The yin role of the doula follows the natural cycle: eating when hungry, defecating/urinating when she needs and breathing naturally, very much like an animal, a pet dog or cat or even a plant. The process is to allow for a feel of non-intervention and simply of natural-life happening. There is no talking, as talking is not part of the nature of the human-animal, neither is there questioning, as this too is unnecessary, both are modern-human or dis-eased human issues. There is simply sitting, lying down, stretching and being, without requirement for the pregnant woman to "do" anything, everything is a relaxed atmosphere without requirement or expectation, everything is occurring right this moment. The doula behaves this way not as an act but because she truly feels it. This is why in a sense the "experience" of the doula is not really as a midwife but really just as a person who can be as they are, without requiring anything. Constantly there is a total uncompromising trust in this natural process, it just occurs naturally. Because there is no requirement, if the woman is panic-stricken and the midwife and doctors intervene then so-be-it, this is how it has to go. There is no attempt to change any of it, it is simply about being-with, not doing anything about.

However the modern/adapted doula has found that there is a secondary requirement, the role of being "protector" of the female from the intervention of on-looking medical teams. It is realized that the woman needs protection from other human beings at this time in order to prevent triggers back into the "normal" world of self-hood. This however is complex task where she has to organize a birth-plan and strategy beforehand with the husband or partner in order to "manage the situation". This part is not really the role of the doula but has become necessary in dealing-with the mad-male-dominated-world and scientific-medical approach. In this way with healthy women 99% of births would occur without intervention and without a problem while around 1% or a very small minority would require medical attention and first-aid. Unfortunately this is far from the doula's everyday experience. Because the intervention route is the most widely-accepted it is actually only a few women who have doulas and will give birth naturally, dependent on the nature of the doula, how sturdy they are against the world coming in and how intimate yet impersonal they can be with the woman inside the "bubble" they have created. The pregnant woman's sense of "self" if closed and bound, cannot allow for

natural birth no matter what the experience of the doula. These are the main factors that outweigh the balance of possibilities for a natural birth.

There are so many factors in the misconception of how natural births occur, but in their work Michel Odent and Liliana Lammers explain all the factors that arise. The overall picture is that intervention leads down a slippery path of further intervention, which inevitably leads to C-section births resulting in an unnaturally-organized society and an over-reliance on drugs and medicines (please see “The Autistic Society”, the next article after this one). Overall the doula’s task is impossible other than for a minority of women who sense deeply that what they will be subjected to in childbirth is “wrong”. However as fuel in the world runs out and life changes dramatically to force a re-sensitizing of the way in which we can actually cope with the demands of society, the doula will come into its own, as will the whole of the health-instinct sense-based understanding.

The problem is that the expression of silence and doing no-thing is really deeply anarchic to society. It is incorrect to suggest that we need to be bi-lingual, both instinctual and analytical, this is to be useful in a society that is sinking faster than it can float. The doula is part of a new wave which comes along with the neutrino and other “discoveries” of the modern era, that everything we based science and culture on was incorrect because the basic premise that “I” and “you” are separate was an illusion from the outset. Sometimes there’s no point in trying to work backwards or get into egoic positions of saying “yes, but science is processing” instead we need to let go of what is really unnecessary and rather than trying to hold things up with matchsticks simply allow things to die that need to. The old has to die for the new to be rediscovered.

Michel also points out that at the point of death the human being does not want the threatening questioning and analytical thought-processes, as soon as this surface tension of people crowding around a bedside waiting for death, of wanting or praying for death or even the opposite to occur, when this goes then usually death comes as soon as the people leave the bedside. The nature of life is to follow the path of least resistance, to pass when it is time, to give birth when it is time. The human condition is organized in stasis, it wants to hold onto that which is in constant motion, or one could say it wants to pin down something that is absolutely form-less. This is the message of the Tao, 2500 years ago and herein lies the doula:

## Chapter 11

*Thirty spokes share one axle hub.*

*It is the hollow space of the axle-shaft, that allows the use of the cart.*

*Knead-clay in order to make a vessel*

*It is the empty-space within the clay that makes the vessel useful.*

*Cut out doors and windows in order to make a room*

*It is the empty-space therein that allows one use of the room.*

*Yet what we gain is some-thing, yet it is by the Innate-perfection of no-thing that this can be put to use.*



## Chapter 38

*That which is an expression of Innate-perfection does not have a “self” image*

*Therefore this is called: Naturally virtuous*

*A person who “tries” to be “good” never strays from this path of “self”-image*

*Therefore this cannot be called Naturally virtuous.*

*The former expression cannot pre-intend action, and so leaves nothing left undone*

*The latter expression makes willful intention to act, yet leaves much undone.*

*That which is an expression of unconditional love acts spontaneously without motive,*

*A person who acts in accordance with the law acts with ulterior motive.*

*A person most knowledgeable in discipline acts, but when no one responds, he rolls up his sleeves and resorts to persuasion by force.*

*Therefore when Naturalness is not perceived, there is at least acknowledgement of Innate-perfection*

*When Innate-perfection is not acknowledged, there is at least a sense of unconditional-love.*

*When unconditional-love is not felt, there is legality*

*When legality is not perceived, there is disciplining.*

*Disciplining is the wearing thin of a sense of Oneness*

*It is the beginning of estrangement, suffering and confusion.*

*Divining or foresight of the future is an embellishment of the core expression of Naturalness*

*It is the beginning of illusion.*

*Hence wisdom is in that which is simple and real, less easily accessed by its refracted reflection on the surface.*

*Nourishment is in the fruit, not the flower*

*Therefore the Natural-human draws towards the one and lets go the other.*

In great thanks to Liliana Lammers and Michel Odent who's course at <http://www.paramanadoula.com> is one that is not limited to people who wish to become doulas but has the key message for the whole of the nature of what any kind of healing interaction is truly about.

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