

## Things to Consider....

Being a doula can be exciting and personally rewarding. However, whether you have two clients per year or two per month, each client you accept will involve significant responsibility and a commitment of your time. Please give careful thought to the following questions. If you have difficulty answering "Yes" to one or more of them, you may need to reconsider whether being a doula is best for you and your potential clients at this time in your life.

Each time you accept a client:

1. Will you have the stamina and willingness to provide an unpredictable number of uninterrupted hours of support?
2. Will you be able to arrange prenatal time (one or more home visits) with your client to help establish rapport, confidence, and preparation for labor and birth or postpartum?
3. Do you have a cell phone or pager that allows you to be reached at any time...24 hours a day?
4. Will you be able, on short notice, to make arrangements to be away from daily responsibilities (work, childcare, school, elder care etc.) for extended periods during both day and night hours?
5. As a birth doula, can you be "on call" 24/7 at least 2 weeks prior to your client's due date and until her labor begins (as much as 2 weeks after her due date)?
6. And can you tolerate the smells, sounds, and medical nature of attending birth?
7. Will you have access to reliable transportation with short notice?
8. Do you have caring support for yourself....help after long or difficult birthing or postpartum experiences?
9. Will you be truly supportive of the personal and individual desires and choices of your client, even when they differ from your own?
10. Are you prepared to suspend personal opinion/judgment about medical decisions made by your client, her partner and caregivers (doctors, RN's, CNM's) and work as a team member with all involved?
11. Will you establish relationships with other doulas and always have a back-up doula, in case you are not available when your client needs you?
12. Will you keep continually updated in the field of doula practice and childbirth and postpartum trends by reading, attending workshops and networking with other doulas?

I have considered the above questions and acknowledge their importance in being a good doula.

Your signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_