



LABOR OR BIRTH OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

ICEA Childbirth Educator Certification Program

Take this sheet with you as a guide for thinking and for comparing each birth experience. For each labor or birth, be aware of and note as many of the following as applicable:

1. How did the length, strength, and interval of contractions change? How did these compare with what you are familiar?
2. What were the physical and emotional responses of the woman and her partner to the sensations of contractions? How did these compare with what you are familiar?
3. What were the coping mechanisms of the woman and her partner, such as touch, relaxation, ambulation, breathing, positioning? How did these compare with what you are familiar?
4. What kinds of interactions did the staff/attendants have with the laboring woman and her partner? What were the responses of the laboring woman and her partner to the staff/attendants? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
5. What supportive measures were given by the staff? How did the staff respond to the woman's and partner's decisions? Were they supportive of the woman and her partner's responses to labor and birth? What verbal and/or nonverbal responses by the staff/attendants led you to these conclusions? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
6. What invasive medical interventions were used? What were the reactions of the mother and her partner to these interventions? What was the effect of the interventions on the labor? What explanations were given by the staff/attendants to the mother for the interventions used? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
7. What alternatives to invasive medical interventions were suggested or used? What were the reactions of the mother and her partner to these alternatives? What effect on labor did the alternatives have? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
8. What were the reactions of the new mother and her partner to the baby? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
9. What procedures were performed on the baby? How did the mother and her partner respond to any "bonding time" with the baby? How did the mother and her partner respond to separation from the baby? How did this compare with what you are familiar?
10. What positive or negative influences on the mother, her partner, or the staff did you note because of your presence?