

Mendy Thijsen

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PROFILE

I am an experienced doula, prenatal yoga instructor, and childbirth educator in the Birthing From Within modality. I've been leading group workshops and classes in various subjects relating to pregnancy, childbirth and early postpartum since 2002. I am a long time volunteer, and on the board of directors at Blossom Birth in Palo Alto. I believe that there is no "right" way to give birth or to parent and that this time in people's life is a rite of passage that challenges each individual to discover things about themselves and ultimately what is going to work best for them. I am a wife and mother of 2, with a very visible presence in birth professional organizations and peer reviews in the Bay Area. I have a passion for working with all things birth and parenting.

EXPERIENCE/SKILLS:

Creating syllabus, lesson plans, learning objectives, and monitoring individual student progress for each of the following part time positions. Specific skills of each position listed below.

Childbirth Mentor, Blossom Birth, Palo Alto, CA

2003-present

Mentoring groups of parents in childbirth preparation, during 6 week and Weekend Immersion sessions. Providing a detailed description of the physical process of childbirth to help parents understand what happens during labor and early postpartum. Using solution focused group dialogue, creative teaching modules, and different pain coping practices, to help parents build a solution focused, pain/chaos-coping mindset to deal with the unexpected twists and turns of labor and early parenting. Encouraging parents to discover their own individual pain coping mechanisms, building confidence in their ability to labor and parent.

Whole Birth Prenatal Yoga Instructor, Blossom Birth, Palo Alto, CA

2003-present

Leading 1.5 hour sessions of prenatal exercise combined with a themed group discussion at the beginning of class. Advanced preparation of topic for discussion relating to pregnancy, birth or parenting. Impromptu changes in prepared topic sometimes occurring, based on the needs of the group. Guiding prenatal and postpartum specific exercises and stretches. Leading the pose and then monitoring and guiding individuals as they stretch to ensure proper body mechanics.

Early Postpartum Workshop Instructor, Blossom Birth, Palo Alto, CA

2007-present

Surviving the First Six Weeks workshop instruction. Leading group discussions in a 3.5 hour workshop format on postpartum healing, integrating as a couple with a new baby, and creating a postpartum plan that will help couples to get the help and resources they may need for after the baby comes. Normalizing some of the physical symptoms and reactions of the early postpartum time.

Teen Age Parenting Program, Redwood City, CA

2002-present

Mentoring teen aged mothers in Childbirth education modules, prenatal and postpartum yoga. Working closely with their classroom instructors to make sure girls are meeting school goals, as they prepare for graduation along with becoming a new mother. Organizing free doula services for any of the mother's that request such services through local professional networks. Organizing donations of maternity and baby items for these mothers through local parenting networks.

Prenatal and Hot Stone Massage Instructor, Watercourse Way, Palo Alto, CA

1999-present

Teaching proper bolstering, indications and contraindications of prenatal and postpartum massage to certified massage therapists at a reputable spa in the Bay Area. Leading group workshops, monitoring students as the practice and then test on each module of learning. Creating syllabus and learning objectives for teaching Hot Stone Massage to novice therapists for work on spa clientele.

EDUCATION: INSTITUTIONAL AND CONTINUING

Institutional Education:

The Doula School, 2002, Certified Birth and Postpartum Doula through apprenticeship and extended training program.

Whole Birth Resources, 2003, Certified Prenatal/Postpartum Yoga Instructor

Birthing From Within, 2001-present, Certified Childbirth Mentor, currently completing advanced certification.

The Aveda Institute, 1998, Certified Massage and Spa Therapist with a focus on prenatal and aroma therapies

Bismarck State College, 1996-1998, Associate of Arts Degree with focus on Social Studies

Continuing Education:

Ongoing Personal and Professional development, through research, online courses, peer dialogue groups, and podcast education modules.

Attending Labor, Birth and/or Early Postpartum as a professional doula, with a minimum of 6 clients per year. To continue knowledge base with different hospital protocols and hands on work with individual couples going through the birth process.

Staying up to date with Evidence Based Information and Practices relating to the Prenatal, Postpartum, and Early Parenting fields of study.

Advanced ongoing archetypal studies for better presentation of class material as subject to relating to different types of archetypes in clientele.

Ongoing studies of Neurolinguistic Programing (NLP) for using language and intonation to present class information to the different learning types of people. (kinesthetic, auditory, visual, and auditory digital)

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES:

Treesa Mclean: Instructor/Founder The Doula School
1540 Stafford, Hayward, CA
510-581-1013

Annemarie Russo: Former Class Participant, new doula mentoring under me
California Ave Palo Alto, CA
650-279-6429

Suzanne Andrews: Doula Colleague
Palo Alto, CA
650-322-4834

Pam Rollin: Former Director Blossom Birth served as my supervisor and mentor
Cupertino, CA
415-819-2583