



## Birth Space, Safe Place

by Adela Stockton,  
Findhorn Press: Forres, Scotland, 2009

This small book offers an overview of some of the emotional elements that come into play in conception, pregnancy, birth and mothering. The author is a doula and homoeopath, with a background in midwifery, based in the UK. She communicates her strong understanding of the normality and wonder of natural birth, and explores the interplay of body, mind and spirit in clear and approachable woman-friendly language. Women's stories are woven through each chapter, letting us hear women reflecting on their experiences in their own words. This book sensitively addresses issues of pregnancy loss, previous traumatic birth experience, sexual abuse, the mind/body connection in labour, and postnatal depression. The author's expertise in homoeopathy is shared through case studies and suggested remedies, and this book goes far in debunking some of the myths that underlie much of the overuse or misuse of homoeopathy by midwives and women.

While the author's background as a homoeopath and doula offers a unique and valuable perspective, one of the drawbacks I found in the book was an over-representation of these two forms of intervention when discussing possible approaches to pursue for any given situation. The fact that doulas are not widely found in New Zealand perhaps pointed out this theme even more dramatically. In addition, the differences in the maternity system in the UK compared with New Zealand means that not all of the discussion is directly relevant to the women we work with.

Nevertheless, I feel that this is a valuable book to share with women in pregnancy. I see it as more of a 'sign post' than a 'destination' book, as it raises issues and points out possible approaches, rather than going to the depth of helping women work with emotional issues. But what it lacks in depth it gains in brevity and ease



of reading, and could doubtless help many women to face some of the myriad emotional dynamics that surface during, or have their origin in, pregnancy, birth and mothering.

Reviewed by Cecil Tamang, Homebirth midwife, Dunedin, New Zealand.

## A Breech in the System

This Australian DVD reflects many of the universal issues women, midwives and obstetricians need to consider when women plan physiological breech birth. Much of the video addresses Karin Ecker's journey of decision-making during late pregnancy before recording her labour, transfer to the hospital setting and birth of her baby.

Dialogue throughout the DVD is sensitive and meaningful, and the viewer is able to see and hear valuable role modelling about what healthy collaborative care between midwives

and obstetricians can look and sound like.

This is a welcome addition to the scarce resources available for women and health care providers alike which focuses on the breech birth experience.

**Duration: 45 minutes long**  
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Reviewed by Maggie Banks, Midwifery educator, Hamilton, New Zealand

