Birth Plan

A guided, reflective, and deeply supportive workbook to help you prepare for the birth you want — and go into it with confidence and calm.

Created by Sharon Loose,
Certified Birth and Postpartum Doula
supporting families for over 26 years.



Dear Mama,

Congratulations on your pregnancy!
You are about to experience one of the most powerful, life-changing events of your life — bringing your baby into the world.

This workbook isn't just about writing a plan. It's about:

- Understanding your options
- Quieting the noise of unwanted advice
- Discovering what YOU want for YOUR birth
- Walking into birth feeling confident, calm, and supported

Take your time with each section. Reflect. Dream. Plan.
Write down your thoughts — even your fears — and use the affirmations and tips throughout this book to remind you:

"YOUR BIRTH MATTERS.
YOUR CHOICES MATTER.
YOU MATTER."



With love,
Sharon Loose,

Doula, Educator, and Founder
of Calgary Birth Essentials

How to Use This Workbook



1. Read the prompts

They will help you think about things you may never have considered.



2. Discuss your wishes

Use this book to discuss your wishes with your partner, doula, or care team.



3. Tick and Write

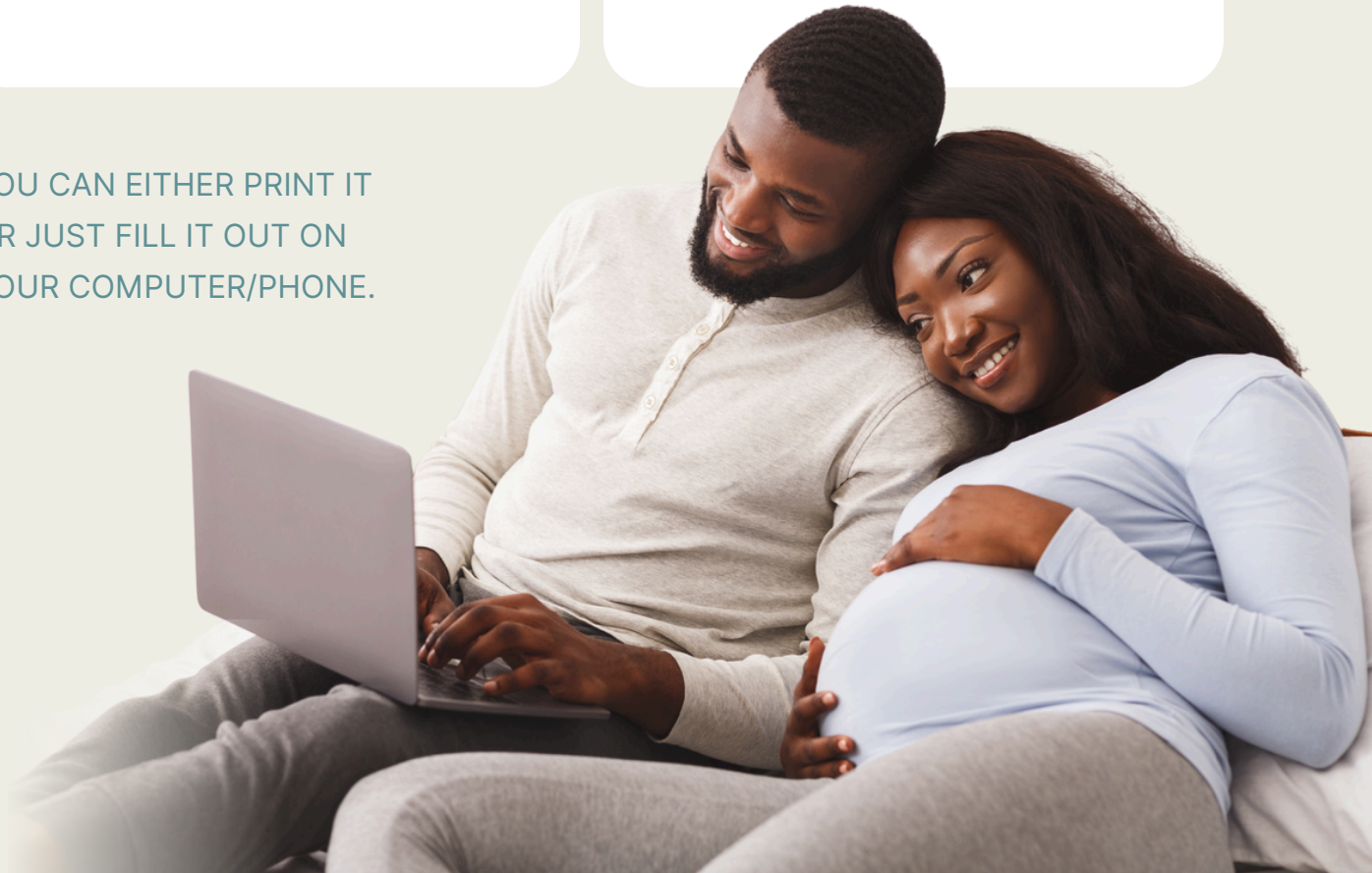
Tick the boxes that fit, write your own notes, circle what feels right.



4. The Final Pages

Use the Final Pages Summary to share key preferences with your provider (doctor or midwife).

YOU CAN EITHER PRINT IT OR JUST FILL IT OUT ON YOUR COMPUTER/PHONE.



PART 1

Birth Location & Enviroment

Why this matters:

THE SPACE YOU BIRTH IN SHAPES HOW SAFE AND CALM YOU FEEL.
YOUR BODY RELAXES WHEN IT FEELS SAFE — AND THAT MAKES BIRTH EASIER.

Where will you give birth?









- ◯ Hospital
- ◯ Home
- ◯ Birth Centre
- ◯ Not sure yet

WHY I CHOSE THIS LOCATION:



Doula Tip: Your body labours better when it feels safe. Add items that remind you of home — they signal to your body: "I can relax here."



PART 2

Birth Location & Enviroment

What will help me feel comfortable there?



- [ ] Dim lighting



- [ ] My pillow or blanket from home



- [ ] Music or calming playlist



- [ ] Photos, affirmations, or favourite scents



- [ ] My own clothes



- [ ] Massage tools and massage oil

Other things that would make me feel safe:



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____



Affirmation: *"Wherever I birth, I create a space of calm and love."*

PART 1

Support Team

Why this matters:

BIRTH IS EASIER WHEN YOU FEEL SUPPORTED. THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU SET THE TONE.

Who will be with me?



- ○ Partner



- ○ Midwife / Doctor



- ○ Photographer



- ○ Doula



- ○ Family member or friend



- ○ Other

Name	&	Role
1.		
2.		
3.		

How should each person support me?

- ○ Advocate for my wishes
- ○ Massage, counterpressure, holding my hand
- ○ Keeping me calm with gentle reminders
- ○ Staying quietly present
- ○ Taking photos or videos

Other things I want from my team:



PART 2

Support Team

How my partner can support me in each stage of labour:

1. Early labour: _____
2. Active labour: _____
3. Transition: _____
4. Pushing: _____

Doula Tip: Have an honest conversation with your support people before labour. Tell them exactly what you do — and don't — want during birth.

Your thoughts



Affirmation:

I am surrounded by the right people who lift me up and help me feel safe.



PART 1

Partner's Role In Labour

What is the true role of a partner during labour?

Your role during labour is not to stand on the sidelines, but to be her anchor, her advocate, and her calm support. One of the most valuable things you can do is help distract her from the contractions while keeping her encouraged and connected. Use the ideas below as inspiration — and feel free to add your own.

Ways to Support Her:

1. Help with breathing

Breathe with her, cue slow inhales and long, relaxed exhales.

2. Massage & counter-pressure

Apply steady pressure on her lower back, hips, or shoulders.

3. Suggest positions

Encourage gentle changes: standing, hands-and-knees, leaning forward, on the birth ball, side-lying.



4. Advocate for her

Speak up for her wishes if she's focused. Use the B.R.A.I.N. tool when choices come up.

5. Remind her of the baby

Say things like, "Every wave brings our baby closer."

6. Offer sips of water or ice chips

Remind her to drink between contractions.

7. Encourage her

Stay close, make eye contact, tell her how strong and amazing she is.

8. Keep informed

Listen carefully and summarize what's happening.

PART 2

Partner's Role In Labour

B.R.A.I.N. Decision-Making Tool

USE THIS WHEN THE CARE TEAM PRESENTS AN OPTION OR PROCEDURE:

B	***BENEFITS:***	—	What are the benefits for mom and baby?
R	***RISKS:***	—	What are the risks or side effects?
A	***ALTERNATIVES:***	—	Are there other options, or can we wait?
I	***INTUITION:***	—	What does her instinct say? How does she feel about it?
N	***NOTHING:***	—	What happens if we do nothing for now?

My Own Ideas to Support Her



"This is not just about getting through labour, it's about creating a memory of strength, connection, and love that will last forever."



PART 2

Pain Management Option

Why this matters:

PAIN IN LABOUR CAN FEEL INTENSE, BUT THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO COPE. KNOWING YOUR OPTIONS NOW HELPS YOU FEEL CALM LATER.

Comfort Measures

(non-medical):



- ○ Breathing techniques



- ○ T.E.N.S. machine



- ○ Music or affirmation



- ○ Movement *(walking, swaying, dancing)*



- ○ Labour positions *(hands-and-knees, squatting, side-lying, birth ball, child's pose, slow dancing)*



- ○ Warm shower or bath



- ○ Water birth (if available)



- ○ Massage (partner or doula)



- ○ Counter pressure



- ○ Heat packs or ice



- ○ Visualization or meditation



Other ideas I want to try for comfort:

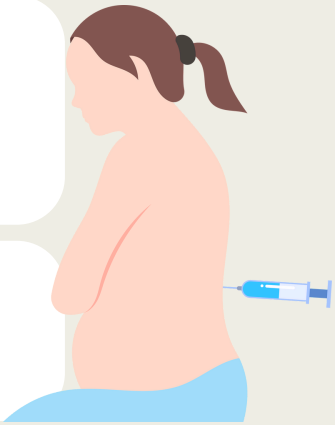


PART 2

Pain Management Option

Medical Options:

1. Nitrous Oxide ("laughing gas")
2. Epidural
3. IV pain medication (Morphine, Fentanyl)
4. Other



How I feel about medical pain relief:





Doula Tip:

Fear makes pain worse. The more you relax, the easier birth becomes. If you tense up, your body produces adrenaline, which can slow labour. Focus on breathing, warm water, movement, and staying calm — it helps both you AND your baby.

Affirmation:

"I trust my body and my team to help me find comfort in labour."

PART 1

Stages of Labour

Why this matters:

BIRTH HAPPENS IN STAGES. PREPARING FOR EACH ONE HELPS YOU FEEL READY AND CALM.

Early Labour

- ◯ Stay home as long as possible
- ◯ Go to the hospital early for reassurance
- ◯ Rest and sleep if possible
- ◯ Eat and hydrate
- ◯ Take a warm bath or shower
- ◯ Walk or distract myself with light activities







WAYS I CAN DISTRACT MYSELF DURING EARLY LABOUR:





PART 2

Stages of Labour

Active Labour

Positions I'd like to try:



◯ Side-lying



◯ Birth ball



◯ Child's pose



◯ Hands-and-knees



◯ Upright



◯ Slow dancing

Other _____

_____

_____

MANAGEMENT TOOLS TO USE

_____

_____

_____

IF MEDICATION WHAT WILL I CONSIDER

_____

_____

_____



Doula Tip:

Changing positions every 30-40 minutes helps your baby move down and can prevent long, difficult labours.

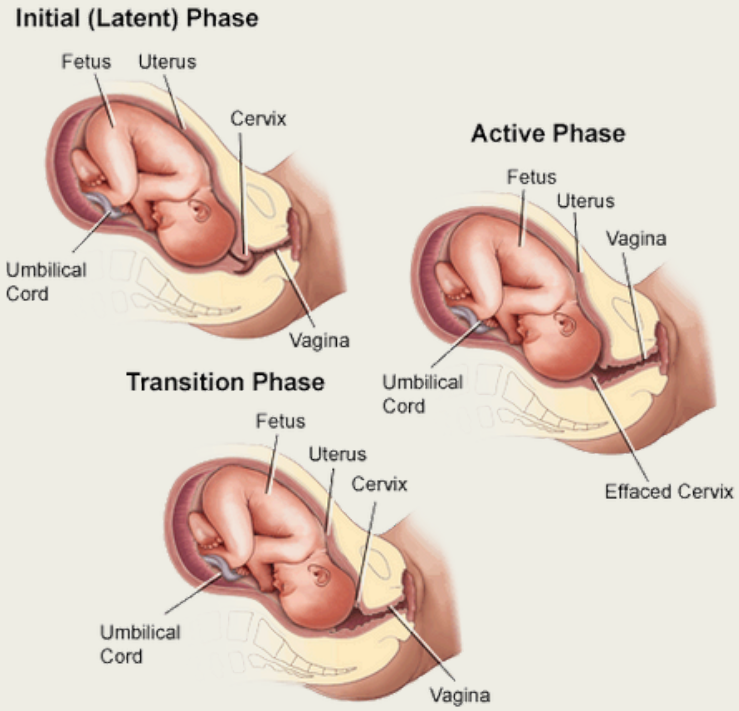
PART 3

Stages of Labour

Transition Stage

(most intense stage):

- ○ Guided breathing or focused relaxation
- ○ Shower or bath
- ○ Support from partner or doula
- ○ Music or dim lighting
- ○ I may consider pain medication during this stage





If I want pain medication at this stage, I prefer:

PART 4

Stages of Labour

Pushing Stage:



- ◯ Mirror to see baby crown
- ◯ No mirror
- ◯ Quiet encouragement only
- ◯ Coaching if needed

Potential interventions to consider:



- ◯ Squatting
- ◯ Side-lying



- ◯ Hands-and-knees
- ◯ Semi-reclined



- ◯ On a birth stool
- ◯ Other







OTHER PREFERENCES FOR PUSHING STAGE:



If a Cesarean becomes necessary:

- ◯ Partner present
- ◯ Skin-to-skin in OR if possible

Medical Preferences & Interventions

1. Monitoring:

- ◯ Intermittent (more mobility)
- ◯ Continuous

2. If induction is suggested:

- ◯ Only if medically necessary
- ◯ Open to it if recommended

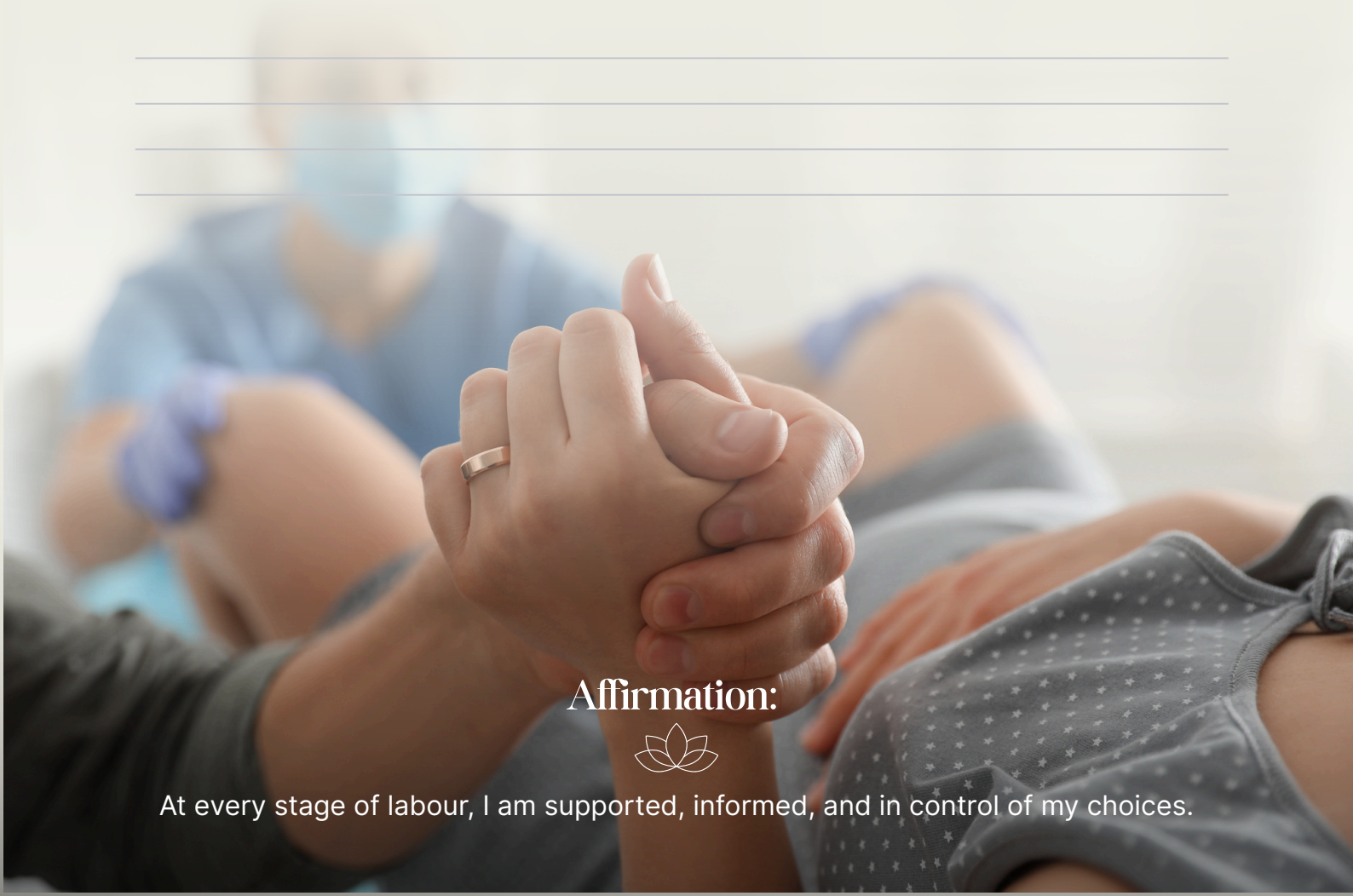
3. Interventions:

- ◯ Avoid unless medically necessary
- ◯ Open to suggestions

Potential interventions to consider:

- ◯ IV fluids
- ◯ Breaking water
- ◯ Oxytocin (Pitocin)
- ◯ Vacuum
- ◯ Forceps
- ◯ Episiotomy

MY THOUGHTS ABOUT THESE INTERVENTIONS:



Affirmation:

At every stage of labour, I am supported, informed, and in control of my choices.

After Birth

1. Cord Clamping:

- ◯ Delayed (wait 1–3 minutes)
- ◯ Immediate if needed

2. Skin-to-Skin Contact:

- ◯ Immediately after birth
- ◯ After baby is checked

HOW LONG WOULD I LIKE SKIN-TO-SKIN CONTACT TO LAST?

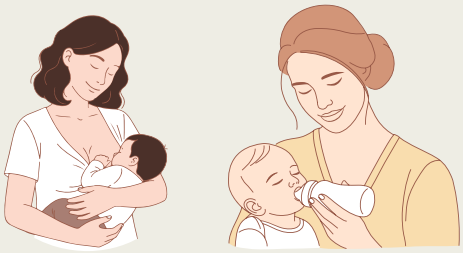


4. Newborn Procedures:

- ◯ Vitamin K injection
- ◯ Decline Vitamin K

5. First Feeding:

- ◯ Breastfeeding
- ◯ Formula
- ◯ Combination
- ◯ Other



Doula Tip:

Delayed cord clamping (waiting 1-3 minutes before cutting) allows extra blood and iron for your baby.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR BABY'S CARE:

Hopes, Fears & Visualization

My biggest hopes for birth are:

1. _____

My fears or concerns are:

2. _____

Doula Tip: Your baby feels what you feel. When you relax, your baby feels safe too. Calm your mind, and your body will follow.

What will help me feel safe if I get anxious:

3. _____



Affirmation:

"I am calm. My baby is calm. We are safe."

Hospital Bag Checklist

1. Essentials for Labour:



- [ ] Birth Plan



- [ ] ID and health card



- [ ] Robe, socks, slippers, hair ties



- [ ] Lip balm, toothbrush, skincare

2. For Comfort & Coping:



- [ ] Pillow or blanket



- [ ] Essential oils, massage tools



- [ ] Playlist and speaker or headphones



- [ ] TENS machine

3. For Partner:



- [ ] Snacks



- [ ] Change of clothes



- [ ] Charger or power bank

4. For Baby:



- [ ] Onesie



- [ ] Blanket



- [ ] Hat and diapers

5. Optional Additions:



- [ ] Book, magazine, or podcast



- [ ] Camera or phone for photos



- [ ] Birth ball (if allowed)

Add something of your own _____



Doula Tip:

Bring snacks for your partner — hungry support people are cranky support people!



PART 1

Final 2-Page Summary

USE THIS PAGE TO SUMMARIZE YOUR TOP PREFERENCES
TO EASILY SHARE WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR MIDWIFE:

1. Birth Location & Comfort

- **PLANNED PLACE OF BIRTH:** _____
- **THINGS I WANT IN THE ROOM** *(LIGHTING, SCENTS, MUSIC, PERSONAL ITEMS):*

_____

_____



2. Support Team & Their Roles

- **SUPPORT PEOPLE PRESENT:** _____

_____

_____

- **ROLES** *(emotional support, advocacy, photography, etc.):*

_____

_____

3. Preferred Pain Management

- **COMFORT METHODS I'D LIKE TO TRY:** _____

_____

- **MEDICAL OPTIONS I'M OPEN TO:** _____

_____

4. Monitoring & Interventions Preferences

- **MONITORING PREFERENCE:** ◯ Intermittent ◯ Continuous
- **INTERVENTION APPROACH:** ◯ Avoid unless necessary ◯ Open to suggestion
- **NOTES ON SPECIFIC INTERVENTIONS** (E.G., EPIDURAL, INDUCTION, IV, EPISIOTOMY):

_____

_____

PART 2

Final 2-Page Summary

USE THIS PAGE TO SUMMARIZE YOUR TOP PREFERENCES
TO EASILY SHARE WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR MIDWIFE:

5. Skin-to-Skin & Feeding Preferences



• SKIN-TO-SKIN:

◯ Immediately ◯ After checks

Other: _____

• FIRST FEEDING PREFERENCE:

◯ Breastfeeding ◯ Formula

◯ Combo

Notes: _____

_____

6. Key Medical Notes or Concerns

• ALLERGIES, CONDITIONS, OR IMPORTANT INFO: _____

• ANYTHING ELSE MY CARE TEAM SHOULD KNOW:



You have turned unknowns into plans, and worries into calm. Your birth might surprise you — but you now have tools, knowledge, and support.

You are ready!