



Doula Training Course  
January 2009

## About Doula's

A Doula is a woman who provides physical, emotional and information support to women and their families before during and after childbirth.

A Doula recognises birth as a key experience that the mother will remember all her life, she understands the physiology of birth and the emotional needs of a woman in labour. She loves mothers and babies, and is able to provide continuity of care.

A Doula assists women and their partners to prepare for and carry out their plans for the birth of their baby. She can stay by the side of the labouring woman throughout the entire labour and facilitate communication between the labouring woman her partner and clinical caregivers.

The presence of a Doula can:

- Decrease the chance of caesarian section by 50%
- Shorten labour by 25%
- Decrease the need for pain medication
- Help fathers participate with confidence
- Increase success with breastfeeding

## Doula Training Overview

Being a Doula is a calling rather than a job, as a Doula you are in a unique position to dwell in the mystery and miracle of birth and support other people in that miracle. Life, death, love, courage, fear, trust and self-discovery and transformation are all inherent in the birth process.

We believe working with and understanding your life and birth experiences will enable you to work more effectively with women in the momentous occasion of giving birth. With this in mind Dial a Doula training incorporates knowledge of the physical and emotional aspects of birth, understanding of how to provide support to women and their families as well as your own personal development as a woman.

The Doula training is a personal journey, the curriculum comprises work with the International College of Spiritual Midwifery and includes participation in group trainings, homework, study, practice, personal development and healing work.

Dial a Doula Curriculum:

- Doula Foundation Training - 6 Days
- Childbirth Preparation classes
- Spiritual Midwifery Level I – 3 days
- Women's Mysteries retreat – 5 days
- Rebirthing sessions
- Body transformation sessions
- Bellies and Babies Sessions – 4 sessions
- Attendance at 3 births – includes two pre and two post natal visits, a write up of each visit and the birth itself.
- Required reading list and associated homework

Books, tapes and videos, DVD's and audio tapes will be available from the ICSM library.



## Doula Foundation Training

This is the foundation of your training, providing you with the solid basis on which to build your development as a Doula. The training day's focus on learning the hands on skills of supporting families before during and after childbirth as well as preparing for your own business as a working doula. The training incorporates six separate days.



### Day 1 - What is a Doula

- Introduction to the Doula Training Program
- Introductions to all participants, what has brought you to the training? What has drawn you to work with birth?
- Exploring what it means to be a doula
- Watching DVD's showing and explaining Doula Support
- Meditation and Mandala
- Linking in with other professional health services within the community.

### Reading and homework

- Essay – the role of the Doula and the value of Doula support at least 2000 words



## Day 2 - Pre Natal Support

Care of the pregnant woman/couple throughout pregnancy. Preparation for Birth

- Pre-natal tests
- Nutrition and Exercise
- Choices and Options for the Birth
- Relaxation Techniques
- Chakra Breathing: this hour long guided mediation provides the opportunity for women to get a sense of their own
- Breathwork and Bodywork as preparation for birth
- Nurturing Support

### Reading and homework

- Recommended reading: *Defiant Birth* by Tankard Reist or *Birthing from Within* Pam England, Rob Horowitz
- Research – talk to women you know about what tests they have had, how they felt about them, did they feel they had a choice? Write a short essay on your findings and conclusions.

## Doula Training Day 3 - Labour and Birth Support

Supporting women and their partners through labour, birth and immediately after birth.

- You are each other's Doula – start your doula practice now
- Strengths and weaknesses exercise
- An understanding of each stage of labour.
- DVD – watching the full birth process
- Support and alternative pain management techniques. Including:
- How to support a woman in Labour as a doula
- Exercise – worry and support
- Comfort essentials
- Roles and Responsibilities
- What not to do



### Reading and homework

Sarah Buckley – Gentle Birth Gentle Mothering

- Essay – ecstatic birth, how hormones work during childbirth

## Doula Training Day 4 - Interventions and Unexpected Outcomes

### Your role as a Doula when things go off the plan

- Medical Interventions, what are they, why and when are they used
- Birth Plans and how to use them
- Supporting couples when things go not according to plan
- Supporting yourself when things go off the plan

### Reading and homework

- Report – all interventions and drugs and their pro's and con's



## Doula Training Day 5 - Post Natal Support

### Your role as a Doula after birth

- What support you can offer, on ground physical support i.e. cooking, shopping and cleaning
- Nurturing the mother: listening and validating the mothers own inner knowing
- Nurturing the family: including spending time with siblings and partners
- Breastfeeding support
- An understanding of Post Natal depression
- Immunization: choices and alternatives
- Infant Massage
- Nurturing the Doula: looking after yourself, debriefing after each birth, regular check ins and keeping yourself energized and focused.

### Reading and homework

*Sleeping Like a Baby* by Pinky McKay or *Holding Time* by Dr Martha Welsh

- Essay – gentle parenting approaches



## Doula Training Day 6 - Working as a Doula

### Your role as a Doula

- What to do on your first visit to a prospective client
- What to do on your subsequent visits with your clients
- How to use birth plans
- Managing your time
- Managing being on call
- Ensuring correct roles and responsibilities
- How much to charge
- Creating your own package
- How to talk about payment

**The Doula Bag**, what you need to carry with you when attending a birth.

### Homework

Write your own blurb and create your own flyer, add it to the ICSM or other website.

Organise a visit to a local GP or wellness centre, introduce your self and give them your flyers or business cards.

*"The Doula training has been a beautiful time of learning and connecting with other women. I have developed a deeper trust in the process of birth. This course took me beyond the books and taught me how to be in the unknown, to be with a birthing woman. I now feel confident to support women during pregnancy, birth and afterbirth. This time has been a personal journey that has reconnected me back to my heart. I feel a deep value for myself as a woman and for my role as a mother for my three children. Great thanks to you all Rachana, Sunderai and Anna".*

Cathy Jackson mother of three, Yoga teacher and Doula.



## Childbirth Preparation Classes

Attending Childbirth preparation classes with families strengthens your knowledge and understanding of the birth process and gain confidence and insight into how to be with people from diverse backgrounds and how to communicate with them. It also gives you an opportunity to present yourself as a Doula to expectant couples.

This childbirth preparation classes are run by Anna Urbanski over 6 evenings days (plus reunion) and explores the physical, emotional and spiritual aspects of Pregnancy, birth and early parenting.

Sessions include:

For the body

- What's happening to you and your body in the lead up to giving birth
- How to know when you are in labour
- When to go to hospital, how to labour at home
- How the body functions to help give birth
- How the hormone system works during birth
- How your baby takes part in the birth process
- Support during labour - the father's role, the doula, midwife and obstetrician roles
- Active Birth - allowing your instincts to guide you
- Pain relief - all of your options, natural and medical
- Post natal support, breastfeeding support

For the mind

- Birth Options: medical/natural, Obstetrician/ Midwife/Doula what is your ideal mix?
- All the alternatives and options available so you can make appropriate choices for you and your baby (including water birth and lotus birth)
- Communicating and working with your care providers
- Understanding hospital policies and your choices and rights within the hospital system.
- Possible obstacles and how to overcome them

For the spirit

- How your emotions effect the process of birth
- Having a strong sense of birth as a rite of passage
- Feeling a connection to the miracle of birth
- Feeling connected to your baby
- Exploring your needs
- Exploring your fears
- Relaxation - Calm birth – Massage
- Post Natal Depression – how to reduce the risks
- Confidence, trust and relaxation - the vital ingredients

Classes are conducted using; classroom style teaching, active participation, the latest DVD's and relaxation techniques.

Doula Trainee's can attend alternative childbirth preparation classes if they wish.



## Spiritual Midwifery Level I

The birth process is mysterious and it is something we all experience when we are born. A deeper understanding of the birth time enables one to live with much more aliveness and connection. Spirit moves into form and the midwife is there - a witness to the miracle. Yet again a human opens her/his eyes and sees. This course lifts the veils of illusion that hamper the realisation of the dream.

The course gives Doula's a deep understanding of their calling to work with birth in a deeply intuitive way. The course includes:

**The Calling.** Looking at the participant's connection to the birth process - articulating, re-discovering and expanding this vital inner sense.

**The Body Systems.** The known and the "unknown" - the physical and spiritual bodies. Examining experiences that demonstrate these systems. Looking at the inter-relationship between them and how this understanding aids the resolution of difficulties that can manifest during pregnancy and birth. A model based on the four elements will be presented and explored - EARTH, FIRE, WATER and AIR.

**Altered States of Consciousness.** Defining these and learning about the healing available in these states. De-mystifying them and learning how to access them, a VITAL tool for the birth attendant/doula. Seeing how they are important part of a woman's well-being during pregnancy, birth and post-partum.

**Left Brain, Right Brain.** How entering right brain spaces facilitates the birth process. How engaging the left brain inappropriately inhibits labour. The place of birth and the practices/rituals that aid or hinder the process.

**Birth as Part of the Continuum.** Seeing the interconnections of a woman's psycho/sexual life and its influence on birth outcomes. These rhythms of life affect all of us and our ability to respond appropriately. The honouring of these rhythms provides the impetus needed for the natural process to occur.

**With Woman.** We examine the forces present for the woman and her carers that aid or inhibit the birth process and the interpersonal relationships that occur in different situations. The allegiances, conscious and unconscious, that exist. Who has the power?

Led by Shivam Rachana, Principal of ICSM. Rachana has 30 years teaching experience and has worked in the area of women's health, particularly childbirth since the 70's. 3 full day sessions Running over 6 weeks.



## Women's Mysteries

Women's Mysteries takes women into the mysteries of their own woman-ness. It enables women to heal and complete their journey through girl/woman, lover/woman, mother/woman to wise/woman.

As a woman comes to understand her own journey she is able to complete the unfinished transitions of the past that have been barriers, limits, fears and interferences to her natural unfolding.

Initiation, rite of passage and ritual are the doorways as we take our place as midwives to the new consciousness on our planet.

This journey explores the realms of the super conscious in which all long to dwell. Travel with your sisters into the places of your being where you'll rediscover your full potential and the love that accompanies it.

There is laughter, there are tears. There is the excitement of full human relating awaiting those who respond to their inner calling with "yes".

Women's Mysteries offers a soft space where powerfulness, earthiness and sensuality are simply present in...

- Relationship
- Menstruation
- Birth
- Parenting
- The celebration of life
- Honoring your uniqueness
- The magnificence of the goddess within
- Fertility
- Conception
- Childhood
- Menopause
- Freedom of expression
- Acknowledging the wisdom of others

This is a 5 day residential retreat Led by Shivam Rachana, Principal of ICSM.



## Bellies and Babies sessions

These weekly sessions are for expecting mothers and mothers with babies to come together and share, discuss issues and support each other. Different topics will be covered each week including:

- Sleeping - sleeping habits and options
- Breastfeeding – challenges and tips
- Family pressures – adjusting to the new
- Baby massage – simple how to
- Support structures/options – what is in your community
- New mum struggles – normal feelings of isolation and self doubt
- Coping with common baby illnesses i.e fevers and vomiting

Sessions are held every monday morning, 10am – 12 noon, 766 Riversdale Road, East Camberwell \$15 - \$10 concession

Attendance at 4 of these sessions is required as part of the doula training.

## Rebirthing

Rebirthing is a healing process using a simple relaxing, gentle breathing rhythm. The process aids in dissolving physical tensions and emotional traumas and restores the power of the breath to revitalize and energise the mind, body and spirit.

Rebirthing is based on the understanding that how we think affects how we experience life. Combining breathing with quality thoughts can produce positive and lasting changes in our lives. Nurturing our positive thoughts supports us and expands our joy and aliveness. Holding onto the suppressing fearful thoughts and feelings can create tension, unhappiness and disease.

During your Doula training you will experience at least 5 sessions with a qualified practitioner.

## Body Transformation

The body remembers everything that it has ever experienced. All of our joy and all of our pain is remembered and unconsciously stored in our body's organic mind.

Where we have not been able to release or resolve stress we internalize it. The memory of these experiences can crystallise in the tissue in many ways, such as, muscular tightness, body pain and inhibited breathing. Through deep tissue bodywork you work with these body memories that are often outside your awareness, memories that influence our thinking, emotions and behaviour.

During your Doula training you will experience at least 7 sessions with a qualified practitioner.



## To support you in your training, you will:

**1. Choose a buddy.** You and your buddy or buddy's (you may like to team up with more than one other person) will be there to:

- Support each other to complete your assignments
- Talk to about your training
- Debrief with after visiting with your doula clients and after attending any births

**2. Attend Doula Gatherings.** The first Monday of every month starting in March there will be doula gatherings held at 766 Riversdale Rd in Camberwell. 1 – 3 pm, Cost \$10. These sessions are designed to support you between training events – there will be a different topic each gathering. We encourage you to attend these days.

**3. Share Resources.** Your training information binder with is just the beginning of your personal collection of information, books, inspirations and other resources. It is meant to become very personal to you. Bring your favourite books, quotes, stories, websites, practitioners and anything else you have – so that we all can share the wealth. You will gain other resources through other courses – eg booklet from childbirth classes and the Ankhara Rose Birth and Beyond homoeopathic kit from Spiritual Midwifery level 1.

**4. Find yourself** – The beauty of being a doula is that you only have to be yourself. Each doula is unique – being authentically you is being a great doula – you will be encouraged to be yourself not to “get it right”.

**5. Keep Learning** – your learning will not end here, you will keep learning and growing from every birth and from every woman. You may find a particular passion e.g. touch; which you can learn from someone like Fiona Hallinan – or HypnoChildbirth with Denise Love. You may want to incorporate Reiki, aromatherapy, ritual – whatever you love. Never stop learning.

**6. Market yourself** – We will support you by putting your profile onto the ICSM (and soon to be launched Dial a Doula) websites by the end of your Doula Training Days you will have a profile to put on the website – you can also have Dial a Doula business cards.

**7. Putting it out there** – you will have a role in the broader community to promote Doula's – when you see an opportunity to place flyers and posters – we encourage you to take those opportunities – we all support each other, the more we spread the word the better for everybody.



## About Us

**Sunderai Felich** is the Director of Dial a Doula as well as a Director of ICSM. She has 25 years experience in women's and children's health. As an independent Childbirth Educator she provides a relaxed environment for couples to share their experiences, hopes and fears as they move through pregnancy and birth. Her qualifications also include Pre-school Mothercraft, Breathwork, Bodywork, Massage, Reiki, Doula Training & Hypnobirthing.



As Director of [Dial a Doula](#) Sunderai co-ordinates a comprehensive training program for Doulas incorporating many of the college programs. These include: Introduction to Spiritual Midwifery, Childbirth Preparation, 5 Day Women's Retreat, Parentcraft, experience of Breathwork, Bodywork, Doula Training days, required reading list, essay writing etc. She co-ordinates the placement of Doulas to provide support to mothers, fathers and their families throughout pregnancy, birth and postnatally.



**Shivam Rachana.** Rachana has been teaching for more than thirty years. Within each person she recognises the ability to self-heal and through the power of this recognition, enables others to take the necessary steps toward their healing. She draws upon her experience as a woman, lover, mother, teacher of Spiritual Midwifery, therapist and pioneer of birthing practices including Waterbirth and Lotus Birth. She teaches nationally and internationally.

### **Anna Urbanski**

Anna decided to become a Doula after the natural birth of her twins in 2001. She trained with Denise Love in Sydney and found becoming a Doula and Birth Educator enabled her to integrate her professional skills and her spiritual life. Anna moved to the Yarra Valley in 2006 and became a part of the International College of Spiritual Midwifery.

Anna is a mother of three and works as a Doula, Childbirth Educator and Doula Training Coordinator.



## The International College of Spiritual Midwifery

As a woman's life traverses its many directions and turning points, including sexuality, ovulation, menstruation, conception, pregnancy, birth, lactation, motherhood, menopause and grandmotherhood, pathways are created to allow for awareness, growth and transformation.

Spiritual Midwifery reclaims a woman's power in her own process. It allows women the chance to remember how to listen to their bodies, and trust in their ability to respond to this new intelligence. In this, a deep inner knowing pervades and strength is brought to all undertakings.

Our aim is to provide the opportunity for women to undertake the journey to freedom, through information and making fully informed choices. To achieve this goal we hold radically innovative seminars, workshops and individual sessions and provide access to internationally recognized teachers and practitioners.



## How to Get Started

The training is suitable for anyone interested in birth, midwives, health practitioners and women on their own life journey. Each section of the Doula training can be completed in a time frame that suits you. You can start where you like, take as much time as you like and follow your own path to becoming a Doula.

To talk about whether this is the right path for you and, please contact Anna Urbanski:  
Email: [anna@womenofspirit.asn.au](mailto:anna@womenofspirit.asn.au)  
Phone: 03 9718 1239 – 0408 954 120

For upcoming dates of each course visit the calendar at [www.womenofspirit.asn.au](http://www.womenofspirit.asn.au)

## Costs

Program	Contact Hours	Cost
Women's Mysteries 5 Day Retreat	85	\$1295
6 Doula training Days	36	\$ 750
Spiritual Midwifery level 1	21	\$ 650
Childbirth Preparation Classes	18	\$ 150
Bellies and Babies Sessions	10	\$ 60
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Total Course	170	\$2905
Bodywork and Breathwork Sessions \$60 – \$100 each x 12 = approx *		\$1000
total price *		\$3905

\* Individual session rates vary depending on each practitioners experience and rates, some offer discounts for booking a series of sessions. Recommended practitioners are listed on the ICSM website, [www.womenofspirit.asn.au](http://www.womenofspirit.asn.au)

