

ACTIVITY

Birth Vision: Me + My Partner

OVERVIEW

This guide exists to inspire conversation, not pressure you to complete a rigid questionnaire. Customize as you wish; edit and embellish and let your own questions lead you. Allow this offering to shift and transform to support you and your partner exactly where you are.

As you navigate these questions together, your mind's response may be strongest and most immediate. We encourage you to check in with other areas of your body, attending to their responses as well. You might feel your shoulders tighten, stomach flutter, or face flush. What information might your body be trying to relay? Offer your attention to whatever unfolds.

PREPARE

Time

Allow at least 15 minutes for individual reflection and 30 minutes for sharing, exploration, and conversation. You may need more time, or you may need less. Set aside time when you will be unhurried, allowing yourselves to be generous with your attention and curious with what comes up.

Space

Choose a private, comfortable place where you won't be interrupted. Silence phones and pause your daily tasks.

Materials

Optional, but often helpful. A candle or music. Paper, pens and pencils, markers.

OPEN & CENTER

It can be jarring to move from the speed of daily life to a slow, intimate conversation. To support yourselves, you might choose to light a candle, play music you both enjoy, or take three deep breaths together.

Set your intentions for this time. For (amount of time), we will explore our visions of birth, offering our full attention to one another.

REFLECT

Take time to individually explore your responses to the questions below. You might choose to write out your responses so you can revisit, refine, or add to them later. If it is helpful, you might also draw some responses. At times, images reveal insights that words alone haven't yet brought to the surface.

What thoughts or images surface when you think of birth? What sensations do you notice in your body? What emotions do you notice?

Have you ever witnessed or experienced a birth before? If so, what was that like?

Do you know the story of your birth? Share what you know, or what questions you have.

When you imagine yourself (or your partner) birthing, what is that like? Where are you? Who is with you?

Does your family, valued community, or birth team have any expectations for your (or your partner's) birth? If so, how do you feel about those?

What questions do you have about birth?

CONVERSE

When you are ready, share your responses with one another, one question at a time. Focus on hearing your partner's reflections, and allow them to express themselves without interruption. When you both feel your sharing on a question is complete, ask any questions that arose for you during their sharing.

After sharing your responses, attend to some or all of the following questions together:

What did we learn about one another through this conversation?

How do our visions and experiences of birth align, and how do they differ?

What additional information or support do we need to come into alignment about how we are planning for the upcoming birth to unfold?

What are our resources for if birth does not unfold how we expect?

What additional questions do we have, and where will we turn to ask those questions?

If you need to set another time to return to or revisit some questions, do so.

CONVERSE

Ease your way back to daily life by extinguishing your candle, silencing your music, or taking another set of deep breaths together. Thank one another for showing up to reflect and explore. Your support of one another through pregnancy and birth nourishes not only you and your partnership, but also your baby and the family you are creating.