

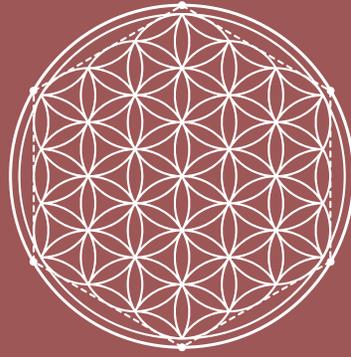


Heart~Womb

Model

*Honoring the
Sacred Transitions
of Birth*

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The Heart-Womb Model nourishes and calls upon us to remember the fact of our wholeness; guiding us back to the source, the fountainhead of all life.

This tradition is drenched in mystery, compassion, and the infinite healing powers of the invisible. The Heart-Womb tradition directs our energy back into the lush, wild forests of our inner knowing; holding us in our completeness.

One of the things that's so powerful about this tradition is that we need not search elsewhere for it - we don't have to go looking for it in the hands of some authority (whether that be man or machine) - this tradition lives and breathes in each of us.

The Wise Being Within



There is no beginning or end to our journey - birth, life, death, rebirth, & transcendence - in all its manifestations - forms the spiral of eternity

Heart-Womb is a call to remember the Wise Being Within that lives in each of us. Consider the womb as a gateway - connecting us below to the Earth Womb and above to the Great Cosmic Womb. This is the pathway of the Wise Being Within, always passing through the heart. We can embody this energy by feeding our intuition through deep listening and taking responsibility for our health & wellness.

In the Heart-Womb Model, each person is at the center of their own experience. Rather than placing the responsibility in the hands of an Institution, the birthing person is responsible for making choices and constructing + walking their path.

Midwives support the heart-womb path by gathering options, offering support, providing suggestions, holding space, and maintaining deep knowledge of birth, life, and death.

Heart-Womb birth honors each individual as a self-contained healer; trusting deeply in body & nature. Nature, including plants, essences, sun, water, etc. - the Earthbody, is part of the self-contained healer as we are all extensions of these energies.

Remember that the Earth + nature + our bodies are all reflections of one another and are our greatest teachers.



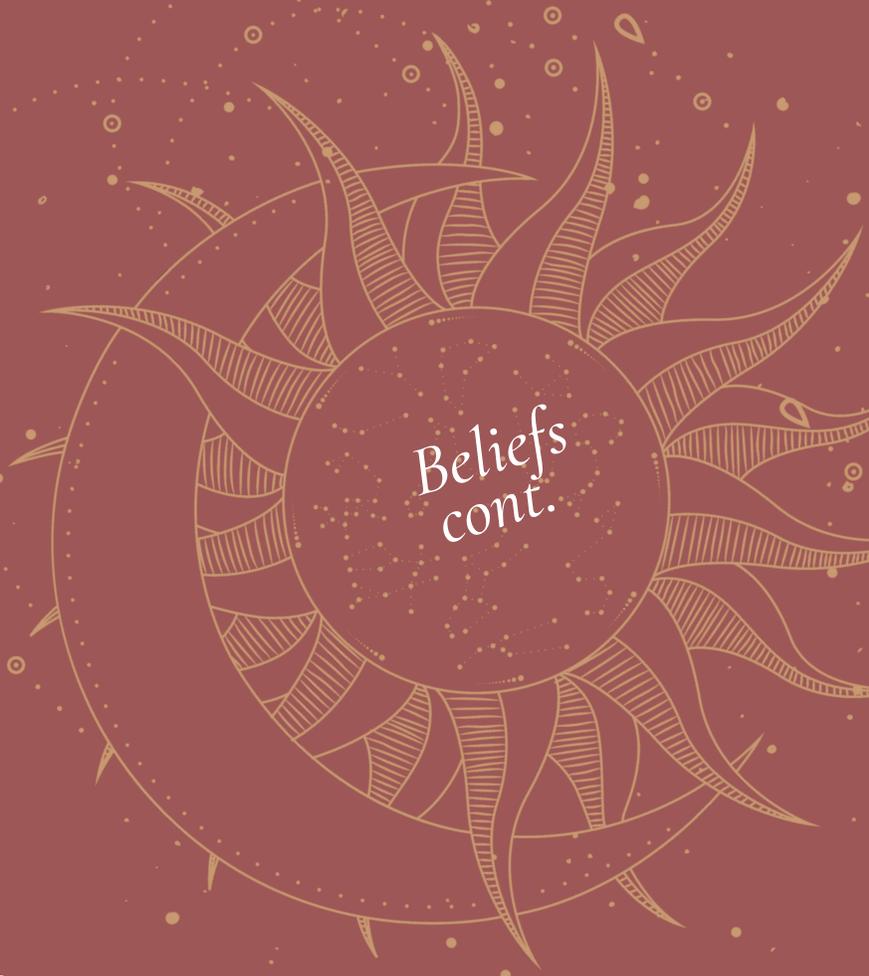
Integral Beliefs:

Heart-Womb Path

*Beliefs are the essence of experience.
The following are the roots of Heart-
Womb Birth*

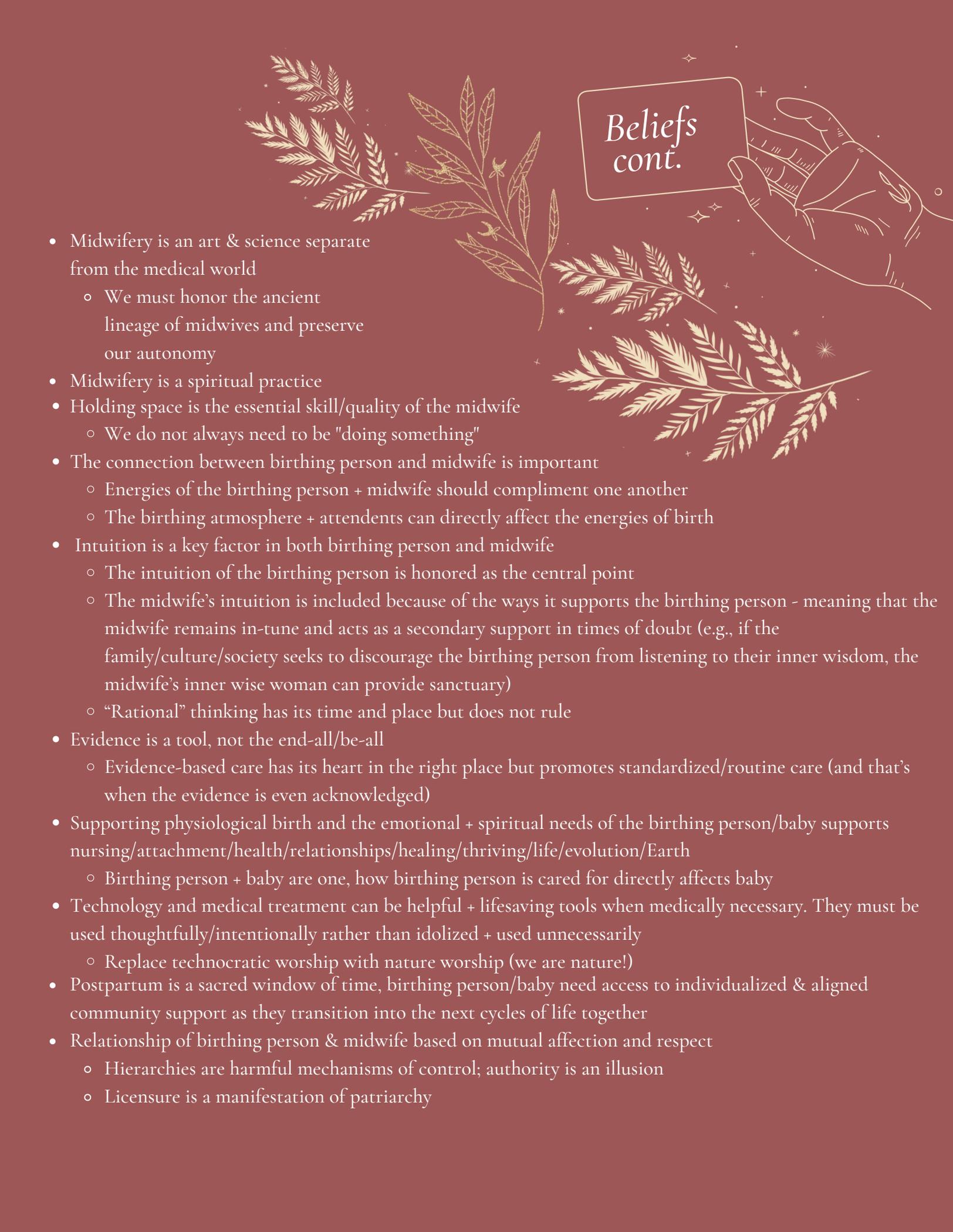
- Our bodies are perfectly designed for birth
 - Birth is sacred; physiological birth must be respected to ensure the spiritual, emotional, & physical wellness of all beings on Earth and the earth Herself
 - Birth is not a medical event
 - Birth is a normal, physiological process
 - Our fear of birth stems from the toxic masculine's fear of death which leads to oppressive systems of patriarchal authoritarianism (e.g., believing we can manipulate/control nature in order to avoid death)
 - The sensations of birth are purposeful and exist as a means of transformation
 - The way we birth influences the way we live (for birthing people, babies, people, society, environment)
- The birthing person is at the center of their spiral
 - They are responsible for constructing + walking their path
 - Flowarchy rather than hierarchy
- Birthing people need to be honored & respected as keepers of great & ancient wisdom
 - Replacing our global fear of women with reverence places the trust back into ourselves and society/culture's trust back into birth
 - We all have the power to recognize and listen to our inner wisdom, regardless of culture/background
- The transformation from maiden to mother is a holy one
 - All practices, environments, people involved must honor this
- Birth is mysterious and there is so much we don't know
 - Birth is a cosmic force - it transcends our comprehension. The way we view + hold birth must reflect this fact
 - Birth is a liminal space - through birth we hold both life and death and traverse the Great Mystery
- Birth is a sexual + spiritual experience
 - To birth is to make/create love
 - Birth is the ultimate act of creativity
 - Birth is divine, cosmic energy





Beliefs cont.

- Birth is a sacred rite of passage
- Nature is our greatest teacher - nature is the archetypal midwife
 - We cannot and should not attempt to control nature
 - Our bodies and cycles are inextricably linked to the Earthbody/cycles (this should be celebrated and not ridiculed/shamed!)
- The body is our eldest healer
 - The body is energy
- Babies are wiser than we'll ever know
 - Babies choose when and how they are born
 - Birth does not conform to arbitrary timelines
- We are already whole - there is nothing outside of ourselves that can or needs to "save" us
 - Focus should be on restoration + nourishment, rather than trying to fix/save/solve
 - The way we are conditioned to think about health/wellness/medicine creates the illusion that we are inherently flawed and helpless and therefore require external "experts" to fix us - no more of this
 - Systems of control exist because we continue to feed them (we were taught to), those with the ability to see through the illusion must support others in doing so
 - Education of the soul
- Individualized care is paramount
- "Medicine" does not mean "medical"
 - Anything can be medicine; healing properties are everywhere
 - Everyone has access to medicine (even if it's invisible to others)
- Every birthing person, baby, and birth is completely unique - it's absurd to use the same approach for all people
 - I.e., there are no rules, regulations, or routine practices
- Our treatment of the Earth is an equal + direct reflection/mirror/manifestation of our treatment of birth & birthing people + vice versa - where there is needless trauma and destruction in one, there will be in the other
 - This needs to be seen and understood by humanity and can act as a jumping off point to help others understand the importance of heart-womb birth
- Birth and everything that comes along with it prepares one for parenthood

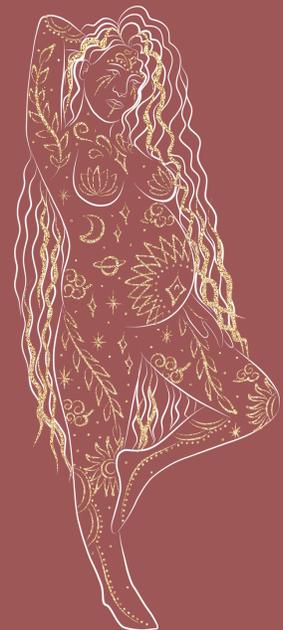


Beliefs
cont.

- Midwifery is an art & science separate from the medical world
 - We must honor the ancient lineage of midwives and preserve our autonomy
- Midwifery is a spiritual practice
- Holding space is the essential skill/quality of the midwife
 - We do not always need to be "doing something"
- The connection between birthing person and midwife is important
 - Energies of the birthing person + midwife should compliment one another
 - The birthing atmosphere + attendents can directly affect the energies of birth
- Intuition is a key factor in both birthing person and midwife
 - The intuition of the birthing person is honored as the central point
 - The midwife's intuition is included because of the ways it supports the birthing person - meaning that the midwife remains in-tune and acts as a secondary support in times of doubt (e.g., if the family/culture/society seeks to discourage the birthing person from listening to their inner wisdom, the midwife's inner wise woman can provide sanctuary)
 - "Rational" thinking has its time and place but does not rule
- Evidence is a tool, not the end-all/be-all
 - Evidence-based care has its heart in the right place but promotes standardized/routine care (and that's when the evidence is even acknowledged)
- Supporting physiological birth and the emotional + spiritual needs of the birthing person/baby supports nursing/attachment/health/relationships/healing/thriving/life/evolution/Earth
 - Birthing person + baby are one, how birthing person is cared for directly affects baby
- Technology and medical treatment can be helpful + lifesaving tools when medically necessary. They must be used thoughtfully/intentionally rather than idolized + used unnecessarily
 - Replace technocratic worship with nature worship (we are nature!)
- Postpartum is a sacred window of time, birthing person/baby need access to individualized & aligned community support as they transition into the next cycles of life together
- Relationship of birthing person & midwife based on mutual affection and respect
 - Hierarchies are harmful mechanisms of control; authority is an illusion
 - Licensure is a manifestation of patriarchy

Core Characteristics

- Birthing person is at the center of their spiral
 - Birthing person is responsible for their choices + path - they're in charge of their experience
 - Midwife supports chosen path
 - Choices are honored
 - Midwife provides guidance
- Care is highly individualized, non-linear, messy
 - Infinite possibilities
- Midwifery is honored as an art + science separate from the medical world
 - Midwives have complete autonomy
 - Midwife is at the center of her spiral
- Midwifery is a spiritual practice
- Traditional midwives offer primary care for healthy birthing people and babies
 - A midwife for everyone who wants one
 - Making connections with those who exist outside of what the medical model would consider “normal” and initially providing emotional + spiritual support on an individualized basis
 - Midwives are open to exploring ways to offer care (e.g. Susan Weed’s 6 Steps), resourcing supplemental medical care from compassionate practitioners when necessary
 - People are not put into categories with umbrella labels like “high-risk”
 - Care/support is explored based on what feels in alignment for each individual (midwives provide unbiased guidance if client presents with uncertainty)
 - If a person is unsure of which options feels most in alignment, wise woman support is offered (e.g., a wise woman circle or community ritual that supports the person in finding their truth)
 - Assumptions about outcomes are not made (especially when they are based on numbers/figures and not people)
 - Breech, twins, OP, etc. are all variations of normal
 - Unassisted birth is a powerful choice for those who seek it
- Relationship of birthing person + midwife based on mutual affection and respect
- Midwives understand the importance of tapping into one’s sexual, fertile, creative, source energy and serving from this space
 - Encourages + supports client in tapping into these vital energies



Core Characteristics

Cont.

- Working with rather than against nature (permaculture philosophy)
- Heart-Womb prenatal care (if birthing person chooses to include midwife in prenatal care)
 - Prenatal care can be almost anything
 - Midwives teach clients (who want to learn) how to provide their own “clinical” care (e.g., palpation, listening w/ fetoscope, read labs, etc.)
 - Nutrition is a big focus
- Choice of birthplace
 - Homebirth accessible to all
 - Families are welcome to participate in birth
- Connection with and care of the whole person
 - Physical, emotional, spiritual health are one
 - All practices grow out of the understanding that the prenatal time influences birth which influences postpartum/nursing/bonding/attachment which influences society/culture/life/Earth
- Birth as a sacred ceremony
 - Instinctive/intuitive birth
- Intuitive knowledge is highly valued
 - Community/culture encourages practices that support individuals in strengthening their intuition
 - Evidence is supplementary
- Empowered and informed consent
- Continuity of care
- Midwives are well-supported to ensure their own self-care
- Good working relationships with medical practitioners
 - Medical providers respect birth and understand it’s immense power, complexity, & how it all connects (micro to macro)
- Medical care/practitioners participate in care when necessary and/or chosen by birthing person
 - Using interventions when medically necessary and/or client chooses
 - Technology is a tool, used intentionally when necessary
 - Transfer of care is based on what is in alignment with the wellbeing of the birthing person + their choices and not on the arbitrary rules of a standardized State system
 - Transfer of care is seamless, compassionate, and well-supported due to the respectful/intentional relationships of community practitioners + members



Characteristics Cont.

- Diverse heart-womb academic education
- programs accessible to all students
 - Knowledge + skills for optimal physiological birth, nursing, attachment
- Apprenticeships are an integral part of the learning process
 - Financially supported/compensated so students can support themselves
- Local, state, national, global network of midwives that communicate regularly
 - Midwives practice conscious witnessing/self-reflection of beliefs + practices and make adjustments when needed
- Midwives are inherently activists who seek to wisdom-share
- Public education founded in Heart-Womb tradition
 - Various platforms designed to "meet people where they're at"
- Integrity, love, compassion, motivation, critical thinking, soul-searching, intuition, & honesty within the hearts of all

Energy Exchange \$

- Ideal = gift economy in context of midwifery and the larger culture
- Midwifery care available to all
 - Government funding and its implications as it is today doesn't appeal to my ideals (my ideal culture/model has no government)
 - Potentially a more socialist-leaning system (but w/o State systems/government) where families who can afford and have a surplus of funds cover the costs of those who cannot
 - Potentially an online group/system/bank where families-in-need can upload details of their situation and families with surplus can donate
 - Built into this structure and community members is the understanding of the holarchical/connected nature of all beings, i.e., the health of one = the health of all + the Earth
 - The goal of those who have surplus is not to have surplus, rather this is a by-product of their passion, what they create, and how this fits into society





Unique needs of this community are based in the understanding that we are both human & spiritual beings and birth is equally a human & spiritual experience. Birth is sacred - the original moment for all life on Earth. Birth is a time of great expansion and contraction - a microcosm of our entire journey from life to death and on. Pregnancy, birth, and postpartum are states of immense energetic openness; the experience leaves a lasting imprint on innumerable aspects of life for birthing person & baby. The specific needs of each individual will vary greatly, but I believe that if these central understandings are honored and the details of the birth experience align with them, needs will be met.

General Community Needs:

- Traditional midwives are accessible to all and are well supported by the community + culture
- Community is well-informed about birthplace options
 - Homebirth accessible to all
 - Birth centers with traditional midwives for those who cannot or don't want to birth at home
- Financially accessible care
- Network of care
 - Loving community of Heart-Womb practitioners available for specific needs
 - Bodywork, nursing specialists, postpartum guides, herbalists, etc.
 - Extensive postpartum resources to honor physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects of birthing person & baby
 - Childcare for families with multiple children is available + financially accessible
 - Medical specialists/OBs who honor the Heart-Womb way are available if needed
 - Medical community exists within Heart-Womb Model - same framework of thought with different tools
 - Good working + harmonious relationships between medical providers, midwives, and other practitioners
 - Transfer of care when necessary and in alignment with birthing person is seamless, compassionate, and well-supported
 - Culturally diverse/sensitive care





Prenatal Care

Prenatal care consists of all the ways we choose to nourish and care for ourselves during pregnancy; it can look and feel like a seemingly infinite number of things. The essence of prenatal care rests in the connection we have to our body, our baby, the Earth, and the Cosmos of which we are made of. Prenatal care is about finding the medicine that supports us in feeling and honoring our wholeness. From lighting a candle and placing our hands on our bellies or digging our toes into the soft Earth, to clinical care, labs, etc.; prenatal care is what brings peace, understanding, wellness, and love throughout pregnancy.

Prenatal care with a Heart-Womb midwife:

- Birthing person is the source of all decisions; they choose what is and is not included in their care
 - Midwife and birthing person explore together to discover the most nourishing elements to include
 - Midwife unbiasedly provides all current + available options
 - Clinical care offered, knowledge shared
 - Midwife provides guidance + suggestions when appropriate
- One-on-one prenatal care is the primary offering
 - Group prenatal sessions offered periodically
 - Prenatal sessions take place in the home of the birthing person whenever possible
- Sessions are highly intentional and are viewed/experienced as ceremony to honor birthing person & baby
 - Sessions provide opportunities for midwife to support birthing person in tapping into + exploring their own divine wisdom
- Family is welcome to attend sessions
 - Family sessions provide opportunities for education + familiarization of the birth process (pregnancy - postpartum)
- Care + timelines for care are highly individualized in accordance to what is in alignment for birthing person, baby and midwife