



the Empowered Pregnancy and Birth Blueprint

The Seven Steps to Empowerment provides a template to return to, again and again as we engage in the ever evolving empowerment journey.

Enjoy the process, each and everyday. Harvesting the good in all things, in all transformative experiences and in all the variations and beauty that pregnancy, birth and the transition into parenthood brings.

You are a Glorious Being!





Your Empowered Pregnancy Blueprint

The word empower comes from the French root 'en' which means 'in or into' combined with the word 'power', **so empowerment means in-power**, and empowerment is a process - not a destination. Having an empowered pregnancy or birth or experience looks different for everyone but the thread that connects it all is In-Power and that means activating your ***privilege to choose***.

Ask yourself frequently "am I in my power?" Does this thought, this action, these words, this habit, this response, this decision, this activity, this food, this body language, this choice, this use of my time, this relationship, this conversation, this job, represent me in-my-power?

And when speaking specifically about healthcare providers, does this midwife or doctor leave me feeling in-my-power. ***It is critical that the answer to this is a resounding YES!*** Because...if you leave your prenatals feeling unheard or worse, belittled, that energy will impact the flow of your birthing process. ***Mutual trust, respect and a level of basic love are key ingredients.***

There is a ***fierce vulnerability*** in labor and birth. Afterall, we are engaged in one of the most sacred and intimate acts of creation.

The bringing in of a new life into the world. And it is critical that those around you create a safe container for you, so that you can journey deep into yourself, into the challenging work of simply being so present in the body, that you can let go into the intensity of the rhythmic waves flowing through you and simply allow them to move, without resistance, and filled with love.

To fully welcome and embrace each and every one and to do that, you need to know that you are held and bathed in the energy of trust, belief and the freedom to shift and move as your body guides.

The preparation for this massive, life changing event, requires an investment of time, energy, money, love, planning and practice. The uterus begins 'shaping up for its big day', right from the start and more and more as birth approaches (felt as Braxton Hick contractions). It knows that it needs to strengthen and practice the rhythm of relaxing and toning, and at the same time expanding and growing.

We must do the same in all ways and on all levels.

I invite you to dig into preparing to birth and parent by taking a deep dive within, by nourishing your vessel, the body, mind and spirit, with nutrient rich foods, joyful and balanced movement, mindful thoughts and increased awareness, lavish support and lots and lots of love! Find someone to guide you along the way and create the village you need to succeed with delight.

Learn to become present, allow your breath to guide you there and listen to your inner wisdom. Discover the gift of presence and increased awareness to work with and through your stories and beliefs, unravel blockages in your heart and mind and body and emotions and nervous system and surrender into the immense changes that pregnancy brings.

Play with the Seven Steps of Empowerment through your pregnancy, birth, transition into parenting, throughout parenting and in the creation of your life! *Teach your children a modified and simplified version of these steps and dance with the ever evolving process of empowerment.*

I bring this ***Empowered Pregnancy, Birth and Life Blueprint*** to you with so much love, belief, and trust in your ability to make it your own. Adapt it to fit your individual needs, your strengths and place in the process itself.

"Pregnancy is a rite of passage into parenthood and can be challenging. By facing the challenges, courage emerges and confidence grows." ~ avril

Step 1 - Gather Information

The process of gathering information, on whatever it is in life, is the critical first step on ***the path of empowerment because it helps you create a clear direction and make decisions.*** In this step, we also become more aware about what feels right to us, which is a natural part of building trust in ourselves, our bodies and our intuitions. *A must have for birth and parenting.*

Sometimes, all the information needed is to take a moment of quiet awareness to look within and gauge what feels right to you, in your body. While at other times, it may be best to research, read, ask questions, attend events and use all the resources we have at our fingertips in the 21st century to learn more. Including asking your provider open-ended questions and expecting answers :)

It is ideal to choose from a variety of sources while remaining open to new information, and listening for that *inner voice when you land on something that resonates deeply.* That's when you know you have likely gathered enough information. Our body and mind are doing this all the time. They assess the surroundings through the senses and make micro adjustments and decisions

You need not become an expert, simply gather enough information for you to find clarity, and no more. There is so much information out there, you must protect yourself from becoming overwhelmed and lost in it!

Step 2 - Clear Path of Direction

Creating a clear path of direction is part of the visioning process (which in and of itself is a bold act of empowerment), and helps you see the whole picture from a grandeur perspective. This is a critical piece in bringing your chosen future into the present moment. It allows you to see the path forward, without getting lost in all the details, and becomes the template for which to make a plan to get you there. Having a clear path of direction, not only provides you with a compass to align to, which is of vital importance, but it helps you make all the small decisions along your way.

And when you inevitably stray from the path, as it is easy to get caught up in the day to day, that clear path of direction will lead you back and help you get back on track. The clear path forward also helps you cultivate adaptability and flexibility as you can adjust and readjust to new insights, increased levels of awareness, challenges and changing circumstances.



You get to write your own script



The future is coming towards us whether or not we choose to chart our own course or not. Taking charge of charting the course is a powerful declaration of ***'I know who I am, what I want and where I am going!'***

Step 3 - Make a choice & Take Action

Life is absolutely full of choices and pregnancy, birth, the transition into parenting and parenting itself are beckoning us to step up our decision making game, take action (including action) and step into our power in the process! Getting quicker at this, greatly reduces feelings of overwhelm, sets us in motion and frees up the energy needed to continue moving forward.

This is where your clear path of direction comes in super handy along with the plans created to get you there. You have charted your course and now all you have to do is align your choices, solidify them with action, then take the next step. Making choices quickly and confidently, taking action decisively and immediately, reinforces to yourself and to those around you that you again, you know where you are going and how to get there.

This is also a critical part of taking responsibility. of stuckness. But the truth is, this is only the beginning, and action pieces of empowerment and some choice is often possible in most circumstances...including the choice to accept times when choices are limited. When we have choice, we have control and when we have control, we take responsibility and when we are responsible for our choices, we feel empowered. I don't want to give the impression here that we have to control everything, that is neither true nor possible, what I am talking about here is having ***choice and control over the things that we can***. Choice is a very multifacet topic which we will dissect

throughout this program, breaking down choices available within limited situations and how to choose change and adaptability or to choose to let go. Suffice it to say here. I have a deep working understanding of having my choices limited AND I have learned that incredible empowerment can be found when you find the choice available in every situation.

Step 4 - Maintain Control & Let Go

Choice and control are intimate partners. One often compliments the other. Making choices and decisions AND taking action leads to an increased sense of control and control can be found even when choices are limited.

 **Letting go is also a powerful form of control** 

Creating boundaries for yourself is another aspect of choice and control worth exploring. Oftentimes, making choices includes creating boundaries. So in any given situation (depending on the complexity) you can mentally create or actually write down three columns.

Column 1) has a big hell NO, column 2) has a big YES! and column 3) is for those boundaries that you are willing to shift a little, depending on the circumstances. The key here is to find the things and the parts in a situation that you can control and place your focus on those while letting go of the parts that are outside of your control. When you do this, you naturally move toward empowerment and ownership and away from feeling like a victim within that situation and in your life. You effectively take back the reins!

Step 5- Communication & Boundaries

Communication is an absolutely crucial part of having an empowered pregnancy and birth because it is *how we let the people around us know and understand what our choices, preferences and expectations are*. Yes! Expectations are allowed and are actually integral in all areas of life.

How we choose to communicate influences the likelihood of getting our needs met so it is important to move through the previous steps outlined to develop the clarity and confidence needed to effectively, clearly, and firmly communicate.

There are many different forms of communication but in general, we communicate to exchange information with others. ***Communication is verbal and non-verbal*** and different methods of communication are useful depending on the content of the information exchanged and the people we are communicating with.

Learn about different styles of communication, become fluid in this skill, learn the language, find the common ground and use your voice to set the tone of intention. ***Practice and refinement are all a part of the process!***

Begin with getting clear within yourself and practice what you will say and how you will say it and constantly work to refine your message.

Step 6 - Cultivate Flexibility & Adaptability

Flexibility and adaptability build resilience and are signs of strength and not weakness. Pregnancy and life are full of changes and our ability to adapt and pivot with those changes creates the flexibility to shift with ease and grace.

The one true constant in life is change, and there is no other time in life like **pregnancy and parenting that we encounter such a scale of rapid and exquisitely beautiful, life giving, life moving changes.** Our journey on this planet literally invites us into this changemaking dance of learning, expanding and becoming ever improving versions of ourselves and releasing resistance is the first step.

When talking specifically about the changes of pregnancy, we must step into that current, chart our course, as ***it is necessary to have a destination in mind, but it is also crucial to go with the flow.*** To do so, relax and let go, let in, the beauty of it all. Take advantage of all the small transitions throughout the day, take a pause, sink into your breath, into your body and connect with yourself and your baby.

Accept what is with gratitude, realign with your clear path, and keep moving forward. Change is a gift, and one that helps you continue to evolve with a heart of, 'this' happened for me and not to me. Everything is an opportunity!

Step 7 - Respect & Trust

Mutual respect in any situation always creates a more positive and solution oriented environment as does regulating your own nervous system throughout your experiences and encounters.

I believe that as far as pregnancy and birth are concerned, we are culturally trained to respect our medical care providers and so, it is self respect that I want to emphasize here and how it relates to the other 6-steps to an empowered pregnancy, birth and life.

I will tell you now, that the typical relationship between patient and doctor often presents in an imbalanced way in regards to power and respect. **Power and respect are often not provided naturally to the patient and thus must be asserted.** First you must respect yourself and honor the process that you have gone through (the previous 6 steps), to arrive at a place of needing to assert yourself in a given situation.

Respect engenders trust and having a trusting relationship makes it far more likely that you will be able to work with your care providers as an active participant in your own care and as a result, have a sense that you are part of a team on your path towards health sovereignty.

Engage in all these steps and an unequivocal trust in yourself will emerge!

This process creates a blueprint for your mind and heart, becomes ***the focus that tethers you to your desired outcomes***, and reveals the working plan for you to get there. Engage in it and you will see your life transform before you.

We all need motivation to shift, change and acquire new skills and habits. The cool thing is, you've got incredible motivation right now growing rapidly inside of you that can be harnessed as a catalyst, to not only have a fabulously healthy pregnancy, empowering birth and smooth transition into parenthood, but an incredible life!

Curiosity is our friend. When we are curious, we are open. When we are open, we have the courage and capacity to learn and expand. When we are learning and expanding, we are growing and when we have clearly stated dreams and goals, we take the first step in guiding the direction of that growth and expansion.

For a deeper opportunity to engage in this work, reach out to me at avril@themidwifemethod.com and sign up for the VIP package.

~ Step into this Seven Step Process regularly and it will become second nature ~

*We must first figure out where we are and where we want to go
because that is what establishes a clear direction.*

~ Only then, can a working plan begin to emerge ~