

WORKBOOK

Doula At The Gae Client Guide & Workbook

A SUPPORTIVE TOOLKIT FOR
PREGNANCY, LABOR & POSTPARTUM



WWW.DOULAATTHEGATE.COM

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**Hi! I am
Authisa,
your doula
specialist!**

Authisa Aston

Welcome to Doula at the Gate

Whether this is your first baby or your fifth, stepping into birth is a powerful, personal journey. This guide and workbook has been created to support you every step of the way - through planning, questions, fears, big feelings, and beautiful moments.

As your doula, my role isn't to direct or decide - it's to walk beside you. To offer knowledge, comfort, reassurance, and advocacy so that you can feel confident, calm, and deeply supported in your choices.

Birth is not something you have to 'get right.' You already know what's best for you - I'm just here to help you stay connected to that knowing, no matter how your path unfolds.

Authisa Aston

DONA Certified

CPR Certified

Lactation Support

Bereavement Training

VBAC Informed

Perinatal Mood



What Does a Doula Do?

That includes:

- Listening to your hopes, fears and concerns
- Helping you prepare emotionally and practically
- Offering comfort techniques during labour
- Supporting your partner or birth team
- Holding space & advocating for your wishes
- Supporting your recovery after birth

Continuous care - not just during labour.

What a Doula Doesn't Do

Just so we're clear:

- No medical advice or decisions
- No clinical tasks (checks, monitoring)
- Doesn't replace your midwife or OB
- No judgment - your birth, your way

Communication & Boundaries

Here's how we'll stay connected:

Prenatal Meetings

Two visits to prepare for birth and labor.
First visit in-person.

Message Support

Text/email during pregnancy. Phone calls at labor onset.

On-Call Window

On-call from 38 weeks until delivery.

Postpartum Check-In

1 hour after delivery + follow-up visit.

If there's ever something you're unsure about, please ask.



Pregnancy Preparation

Pregnancy isn't just about getting ready for birth. It's also about preparing to advocate for yourself, make informed choices, and feel truly supported. My role is to help you feel grounded.



Your Support Circle

One of the most important parts of preparing for birth is deciding who you want in your corner. Your support circle might include your partner, a trusted friend, a family member, your doula, or others who will respect your choices and help you feel emotionally and physically safe.

Knowing Your Rights and Options

In pregnancy and birth, you have the right to ask questions, be fully informed, say yes, say no, or take time to decide. Using the B.R.A.I.N. decision-making tool can help you stay calm and confident.

Creating Birth Preferences (Not a Script)

A birth plan isn't about controlling the experience. It's about communicating what matters to you - your hopes, coping style, and preferences - while remaining flexible if things shift.





Pregnancy Reflections

What's feeling exciting about birth right now?

What's feeling unknown, worrying, or overwhelming?

What do I want to feel during birth?

Who helps me feel emotionally and physically supported?

Birth Preferences Worksheet

What kind of environment would help me feel calm and grounded?

What are my thoughts around pain relief and comfort tools?

Are there specific movements or positions I'd like to try?

How do I want baby to be welcomed after birth?

Any specific requests for my birth team?



Partner Role Planner

When I'm in pain or overwhelmed, I feel most supported when...

It would be helpful if you could...

What I might not want during labor is...

Here's how we can prepare together before birth...

Appointment Question Log



Next appointment date:

Questions I want to ask:

Things I'd like more information on:

Labor & Birth Support

Labor is unique to every person and every birth. It rarely unfolds exactly as planned, but you can feel steady and supported throughout.

What to Expect During Labor

Labor is a process - physically, emotionally, and hormonally. It begins with small signs: backache, period-like cramps, or mild tightenings. As contractions become stronger and closer together, you'll move into active labor where I'll join you.

Early Labor vs Active Labor

In early labor, staying home, resting, and conserving energy is key. In active labor, contractions become more intense and regular. Breathing techniques, movement, massage, and supportive touch help you stay grounded.

Comfort Tools: Physical & Emotional

We'll build a personalised toolkit of physical and emotional tools: warmth, cold compresses, movement, massage, counter-pressure, calm reassurance, guided breathing, and grounding touch.

How I Support You Through Labor

- Stay with you through the full experience offering continuous care
- Offer physical comfort, emotional encouragement, and information
- Remind you of your preferences and help you advocate
- Work alongside your partner to keep you supported
- Help you feel held - without pressure or judgment

Coping Strategies Menu

Use this menu to note the techniques you'd like to try.

Comfort techniques I want to use:

- ☐ Breathing patterns(slow,deeporcountedbreathing)
- ☐ Massage or counter-pressure
- ☐ Swaying or movement
- ☐ Shower or bath
- ☐ Warm packs
- ☐ Visualization or mental imagery
- ☐ Affirmations or calming words
- ☐ Music or playlist
- ☐ Rest between contractions
- ☐ Dim lights or aromatherapy
- ☐ Ice chips or cool cloths
- ☐ Partner support - hand-holding, encouragement

Other ideas I'd like to explore:



Movement & Position Cheat Sheet

Upright positions I want to try (to support gravity and progress):

Resting or supported positions (for when I need to recharge):

Pushing positions I'm open to (side-lying, hands-and-knees, squatting):

Visual Birth Map & Affirmation Space

Affirmations that calm or encourage me:

Images, quotes, or symbols I want near me during labor:

What I want my birth space to feel like:

Postpartum & The Fourth Trimester

Your body has just done something huge. It deserves gentleness and care - not pressure to bounce back.



The First Days After Birth

The moment your baby is born, a new version of you is born too. The fourth trimester - 12 weeks after birth - is a time of massive transition. It can be messy, magical, exhausting, and deeply meaningful, often all in the same day. My support continues beyond the birth.

Recovery & Emotional Support

- Vaginal soreness or healing from a caesarean
- Night sweats, bleeding, cramping
- Fatigue and emotional swings
- Milk coming in, leaking, or feeding frustrations
- Identity shifts, body image changes, or mood dips

Feeding Your Baby (With Support, Not Pressure)

Whether you're planning to breastfeed, bottle-feed, mix-feed, or you're not sure yet, I support your feeding choices without pressure. Feeding your baby is about connection, nourishment, and support.

Knowing Your Needs & Asking for Help

You deserve to feel supported, emotionally and practically. There's nothing selfish about needing space. The fourth trimester is about recovery, bonding, and rest.

Postpartum Plan



In the first days/weeks after birth, I want to prioritize:

People I can lean on for practical help:

Emotional support (people I feel safe talking to):

Boundaries I'd like around visits or social media sharing:

What makes me feel nurtured or calm:

[illegible]

Visitor Boundaries Guide



What kind of support do I want from visitors?

Things I don't want (unsolicited advice, long stays, etc):

What I can say to set boundaries kindly but clearly:

[illegible]

Reflection & Birth Story Space

Looking Back with Kindness

No matter how your birth unfolded, it deserves to be honored. Maybe it went exactly as you hoped. Maybe it didn't. There's no right way to feel about your birth, only your way. This section is here to help you reflect on what happened and what you're still processing.

There's No "Perfect" Birth

Sometimes we carry unexpected emotions after birth: grief, guilt, pride, anger, relief, or confusion. These feelings are common and deserve space. They don't make you ungrateful - they make you human. If your birth didn't match your plan, that doesn't mean you failed. And you made it through.

Guided Reflection Prompts

What stands out most when I think about my birth experience?

What feelings came up during labor and birth?

What helped me feel safe or strong in the moment?

What, if anything, felt challenging or hard to process?

What did I learn about myself through this experience?



This is a space to write a letter to the version of you who gave birth, whether it was three days ago or three months ago.

Dear me,

I want you to know...

With love,

[Your name]

"What I'm Proud Of" List

Honor the quiet moments of strength, resilience, and love. Write a list of things you feel proud of, big or small.

- _____
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- _____

Start wherever you like. There's no right or wrong way to tell your story.



Final Note

However your birth unfolded, please know this:

You showed up. You listened to your body.
You brought life into the world in your own way.

That matters.

This workbook may be ending, but your journey
continues - deeper into connection and growth,
and the beautiful chaos of life with a new baby.

If you ever need a reminder of how strong you are,
come back to these pages.

You've done something incredible.
