

Fearless Birth & Beyond



by Nina Joy

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Dedication
to
Clarence W. Haack

We want to dedicate this book to a Beloved who we call Poppy Clarence. Poppy stepped up and volunteered to be our benefactor. He allowed us to fulfill our dream to be 24/7 parents and we couldn't have done all we did without him! He said, "yes" even though most people would think him crazy for it. He not only said yes, he was eager the whole way through. You would have to believe in Angels to understand the meaning of his giving heart and you would have to believe in miracles to be able to understand his unconditional love. There are no words that can even come close to describe the appreciation we have for you Poppy... you are one of a kind and will remain forever loved by us;

Brack, Nina, Now, Star and Jam

Special Thanks To...

First and foremost, Heavenly Father, Son and Holy Spirit, source of my being, Christ within me and all around me, I love you with all of my heart, with all of my soul, with all of my might and mind.

My Parents Arthur (Red) and Joy Dobbins. Even though I don't have you to physically touch any longer, I do feel your love for me every day and know that you both will live on forever. Thank you Daddy for Now Joy's naturally beautiful red hair. And thank you Mama for always being with me at those times most meaningful.

My Sisters; Jilien Joy and Samia Joy, who are the best sisters imaginable and my little Brother Drew who we call Drew boy. Thank you for loving me in spite of my crazy way out there thinking.

Mama Lorna Love. I love you like a Mom, thank you for teaching me to not be afraid to dance my own dance.

My first grade Teacher; Mrs. Harper. Thank you for reading all those books out loud for us. You certainly inspired me to do the same and to write my own.

The Navy... for kicking my bottom into gear when I was 17.

Merrily, Mary Ann, Joan and Cathy, our beloved Midwives. There just aren't enough words to thank you for your caring and loving hands and hearts.

Dr. Paul St. Amand. My Doc, my Mentor, my Friend. Thank you for always believing that I could do anything I set my mind to.

Louise Hay, if not for your book; *You Can Heal Your Life*, I wouldn't be here enjoying mine. I met Christ Jesus when I was little, yet I got lost after my parents split up. I believe God reached me through your books. Your divine, magnificent expressions in words literally saved my life.

Many blessings go to Joan Ocean; who introduced me to my underwater family and life's infinite possibilities. What an amazing example of a Christ, on this planet, you are.

I have traveled the world and have met many teachers, too many to count; yet I want to mention two that have been instrumental in my life's journey:

Dr. Shuncheng Li, Master of Chi Gong. Thank you for meeting me in Beijing and for the invitation to study with you at Beijing Medical University and for your many beautiful letters. And Dr. Igor Tjarkovsky. Meeting you was a great turning point in my life. There are no words to thank you enough for your invitation to join you in Russia and the Black Sea, to birth our first baby in the water with dolphins.

Peggy Jenkins for your book *The Joyful Child*. Meeting you was another miracle. Your book has been another bible to refer to again and again for joyful living. Truly a life-changing book for me and our 3 Joys.

I could write an entire book filled with love and appreciation for my Mate of 33 plus years; Allen Bracken Cherry II, whom I call Brack, and our Joy girls; Now, Star and Iam. You are my teachers of unconditional love every day of my life.

Mr. Allen B. Cherry I. Without you none of this could have been even physically possible! Thank you for your encouragement, your help and your unconditional love. You always told us this would be our greatest project, and as usual, you are right.

Last but not least, to you beloved. You who are reading this. I pray that you are inspired, uplifted and blessed... as you read the rest.

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Foreword

My name is Allen Bracken Cherry II. Nina calls me 'Brack'. I'm Nina Joy's Mate and the Father of our three beautiful Daughters, Now Joy, Star Joy and Iam Joy. I am one of the most blessed men on Earth to have the honor and privilege of being with 4 of the greatest Joys in the world. I do live with perpetual JOY.

Why are we sharing our three Daughters' Birth Stories? Well, Nina and I truly experienced three home waterbirths in the early nineties, with no fear and very little pain for Nina Joy, all without meds. and we want to share with expectant Mothers, really, all women and their mates around the world how we did it, so they too can have less fear and less pain during their birthing experiences. I am a living testament and participant of the most joyful experiences of my life, seeing first hand the miracle of childbirth!

To share my story, let me go back to April 21, 1989. I was 37 and not even thinking about having a life long mate or children. I'd been traveling through California to the different 'Whole Life Expos' and was at a social gathering in Santa Monica.

I remember that it was a beautiful sunny day and we were all sitting outside around a picnic table on the front porch, when I noticed a little red Toyota hatchback pull in the driveway. A woman in a pink silk pantsuit stepped out of the car and started walking towards us. I was totally and completely awe-struck!

She was the most beautiful, angelic woman I had ever seen. She sat down across from me and I introduced myself looking right into her eyes and then something happened that I had never experienced before in my life, a sort of download into my brain/mind computer. My future life was flashing before my eyes, my minds eye.

I saw future experiences with her and our life together. It was incredible and I knew right then that there was NO WAY I was going to let her get out of my sight without talking her into being with me for a million years!

I remember thinking that I had to get her away from all these other people and tell her what had just happened. So after a few minutes of small talk, I asked her if she could take me to get some Dr. Pepper. She said, “okay” and then asked me if I wanted to drive or walk, and I said, “lets walk.”

We took off walking down through the neighborhood to a convenience store to get my Dr. Pepper. After FIVE HOURS of walking and talking, we went back to the porch party and announced to everyone’s shocked faces, that we were going to be together from then on, and so we have.

The next morning we flew from L.A. to Phoenix and drove north to Sedona, where I had been living. This began the most incredible adventures of my life!

It is our intention to share with as many young women, plenty of time before their pregnancy, expectant mothers and their lovers, really anyone would benefit from reading Nina’s book, but especially if you are expecting, we hope it will inspire, uplift and empower you to experience less fear and less pain in your own birthing experience.

Now, a tip for all the fathers to be; your job is the easiest of all. That's if you want it to be. From my experience, all you *fathers to be*, to help make the pregnancy and birth less fearful and less painful for our Mates, is to be completely loving and supportive of anything and everything our *Moms To Be* want during the whole process of pregnancy and birth. Easy enough, huh?

I mean let's face it: we don't have to grow the baby inside of us. We don't have to go through morning sickness and we don't have to carry this heavy looking balloon for months and we don't have to push a baby out of our body!

With our beloved doing all of the hard work, the least we can do is give them what they want during the whole process and to love & support them with all that we can..

I guarantee you that if we had to change jobs with them just once, we would gladly give them everything they desired the next time around.

Husbands and Fathers to be, please read these birth stories with your honey bun. I guarantee that you will be much better off for it.

My personal experiences in these real life stories were the greatest times of my life. I believe that this book will bless you, no matter who you are and hopefully empower women to have a more expanded pregnancy and birth experience.

Bracken



Honoring All Women

I'd like to take this time to acknowledge all women of all time, especially those who have birthed a child. The way I chose to birth my three Joys is not necessarily the best way or the only way to gently bring forth a Being of Light. I do realize it won't be for everyone. It's just the way I chose to do it. I do truly honor you and believe that no matter what way you choose to birth your little miracle into this world, if you are willing to spend time with deliberate loving intention & focus preparing your body and mind for the event, I know you will experience the most empowering moments of your life! This was certainly true for me. I pray that this book of our extraordinary journeys of miracles, pregnancy, birth & beyond will uplift, inspire and even empower you into... the most awesome birth of your dreams.

*With Love and Birthing Blessings,
Nina Joy*

MY FIRST WATER BABY



Today is March 3rd 1990, just a few days before the birth...

I'd like to share a story with you. A story about a journey, a kind of journey like no other. Occasionally predictable, yet mostly and profoundly unpredictable. In fact it was so unpredictable at times, it was like living on the edge of reality and certainly in the now moment and totally in faith about the next.

You see... I am about to have my first baby. The portable Birthing Tub has been heated and ready for days. Our midwife is on call. The video camera is on the tripod and focused and I'm really feeling like I could pop any moment!

Now all that is left to do is relax and trust that I'm in the perfect place and the perfect time for the delivery of a better than perfect baby.

Fast Forward to March 14th, 1990...

I am delighted as I sit here with one arm cuddling a better than perfect baby girl on my breast, and one hand on the keyboard typing this story.

For a bit of background, let's go back about 9 months ago to June of 1989. My life mate Brack and I were living in Sedona, Arizona. It was then we discovered that I was pregnant. We could not have been happier! An amazing confirmation of being in the flow of the stream of well-being.

Being my first pregnancy I knew I had a lot to learn, so I started reading everything I could get my hands on. We even bought video's showing the different methods of childbirth. It was a blessing to have been a Nurse early in life and to know, at least in theory, what changes I could expect and what would occur physiologically.

Also having experience of working in the hospital, I knew absolutely that I wanted to give birth to my child without the typical hospital confinement and physician intervention practices. I knew that no one knew my body better than I did, (except God of course) and I knew that I was the only one in control of my thoughts and feelings.

It was such an exciting time! We connected with people, I read books and different sources of information about pre-birth bonding, home birth and

gentle birth practices, waterbirth, re-birthing during pregnancy and many others.

My favorite book of all time is Dr. Frederick Leboyer's astonishing and history making book; "Birth Without Violence". Words written so long ago, yet still sooooo important to know.

In short, Leboyer's revolutionizing book challenged hospitals all over the world to examine and radically change what was being done to the new human being who had just emerged. After helping to deliver over 9,000 babies, he could no longer see the abrupt and cold separation from the mothers warm body to an upside down hanging, which puts tremendous stress on the babies spine, or the typical slap on the butt... as joyful moments of birth! Dr. Leboyer fully, clearly, and simply describes why we must never make the mistake of thinking that the newborn's first experiences of life are not fully felt and tremendously important!

When I read about *The Bradley Method* of childbirth, developed in 1947 by Robert A. Bradley, I was hooked. This method encourages mothers to trust their own bodies, emphasizing relaxed abdominal breathing and relaxation throughout labor. This was exactly what I envisioned.

After reading Dr. Michel O'dent's book; *Birth Reborn*, there was no question that my choice would be a home birth. At home I would be comfortable and familiar with my surroundings, in a place of warmth and peace, with my beloved Brack right there with me, cuddling and caressing my body. My desire was to give birth in a place where all was calm and serene, not a sterile environment with monitoring machines beeping and clanging. After all, I know in my heart that childbirth is a natural event, not a medical event.

Having said that, with a Nursing back ground I do understand that sometimes it is necessary for intervention, yet it was my desire to start the pregnancy with *clear deliberate intention*. Create a clear picture in my mind. Consistently see and tell the story of exactly how I desired my birth experience to be. I would choose a Midwife or a Dr. who made house calls, who was skilled, yet who would allow *me* and the inner knowing of *my body* to give birth. Someone who trusted *me* and what *my body* could do. I believe childbirth is a divinely orchestrated natural event.

One of the best Childbirth Information Resources I came upon was Karil Daniels' documentary Film and Resource book; 'WaterBaby'. This 1986 award winning documentary film shows four live waterbirths, interviews three Obstetricians, with Michel O'dent, being one of them.

Dr. Michel O'dent is an amazing Dr. and a favorite of mine, as he conclusively proved that *non-intervention childbirth* works best. I especially liked the fact that he encouraged women to sing during their pregnancy.

In Dr. O'dent's clinic in France, women give birth in big tanks. I learned that when they first started doing this, they had all the instruments laid out on tables and all the emergency supplies ready, with a doctor standing by in case there was a problem. But they didn't have a problem for a long time; a year went by and they still hadn't had a problem. Still another year went by, and finally 20,000 births went by without one single complication! Now they just have the instruments and equipment stuck in a corner somewhere because there simply aren't any problems.

The physicians highlighted in Karil Daniel's film practice non-intervention childbirth, which means the doctor allows laboring women to adopt any position they choose and to deliver their own babies, with the doctor stepping

in only when it is absolutely necessary. Karil's' film also shows Igor Tjarkovsky, a long practicing Midwife from Russia and the pioneering researcher of waterbirth and water training for newborns and children.

I was absolutely blown away by the coincidence of seeing Igor in this film! I had met him in the Soviet Union a few months earlier when I was there on a business trip. We actually had dinner together. Igor has been involved in underwater birthing for a long time. His work involved observation of babies in water, including his daughter, Veta, who was born prematurely in 1963, weighing 2.62 pounds. Igor placed his daughter in a water environment, a shallow pan of warm water for most of the first two years of her life. She Thrived!

When I was in Moscow, Igor and his assistant Vladimir showed me pictures of the women they had assisted and filmed giving birth in the water. One of the births was in the ocean with dolphins swimming a few yards away!

At that time, I thought, "how fantastic", I've always loved dolphins, yet I never gave it much thought after our meeting, as I wasn't pregnant at the time and I wasn't planning to be any time soon. Funny how your life can change in a moment.

Now looking back at my meeting with Igor, I remember that we had a very unusual and unforgettable connection. It was like I already knew him from somewhere, a feeling of family. A soul connection? He spoke no English, yet we both could communicate, not only through his Interpreter Vladimir. This is truly a gift from the Divine. It has always been easy for me to deeply sense a person and pick up their thoughts.

When Igor and I met I had already been aware of my gift of healing hands, in fact this was the reason I went to the Soviet Union, to meet others like me. He asked if I would share what I did with him. So right there at the dinner table I asked Igor to close his eyes and I placed my hands over his heart. After a few moments he told Vladimir that he saw and felt a burst of energy in his chest, then this brilliant light expanded throughout his body.

What a powerful time for me. I was across the world in a communist country sharing what I knew the Divine was guiding me to do. I had felt such love, an immediate trust with Igor. I just knew I had to call and tell him that I was going to have a baby!

It took me several days before I got through to Moscow. When I did, there was no answer at Vladimir's. I continued calling with no avail. Frustrated as I was, my persistence was even greater, so I kept calling every other day or so. I also wrote Igor a letter hoping it would reach him quickly.

Several weeks went by. Finally a call came in and it was from Moscow! Igor had received my letter and had his interpreter Nina call. What a coincidence, my name is Nina!

I was so excited I could hardly speak, let alone understand what Nina was saying. Yet after a few moments we both were carrying on as if we were best friends. Nina said that Igor would like to invite me to meet him in Spain where he was doing research with women giving birth in the warm waters of the Black Sea with dolphins present. He said he would love to assist in my giving birth.

At the time I thought, oh my Lord, this is a chance of a lifetime! To think that I would actually be with Igor Tjarkovsky, the pioneering researcher of

waterbirth! It was still quite early in my pregnancy and I had traveled to Europe before, so I thought why not. I can go a couple of month's early, get settled in Spain, and all would be great.

Yet after a few days of continuous prayer and communing with the life inside of me, it became clearer and clearer that it would be winter when the baby was due. A season much too cold to deliver in the ocean. Feeling disappointment, I got on the phone and called Nina. I told her how I was feeling. She said, "Not a problem, you can come to Moscow and deliver the baby here in one of Igor's birthing tubs." Needless to say I was every bit as excited as before and we immediately started making arrangements.

The days and weeks passed, I was staying in great shape, eating healthy, practicing prenatal yoga, swimming, and walking. It was also getting colder in Sedona and my desire to be in water was growing. Everyday I took hour-long baths, practiced deep breathing and communed with my unborn child. It was in the warm water I felt closest to my baby. I loved to sing and rub my belly, knowing that life was growing inside of me. I felt very safe and warm.

I also had this intense desire to be in water all of the time. I couldn't seem to get enough! The outdoor pool at the Health Club was getting too cold to comfortably swim in, so I spent most of my time floating in the Jacuzzi. The cold weather also gave me more of an idea of how cold it would be in Moscow in February, when we thought the baby was due. I started thinking that it wouldn't be appropriate. I knew Brack was right there with me, no matter what decision I made.

After long thought, prayer and conversation, we decided not to go to Russia. I do remember feeling very disappointed that I wouldn't be able to birth with

Igor, yet I had to trust that something better would happen for us. My Mama Joy always says...

“When a door slams shut, there’ll be a window that opens up.”

Remember this was 1989, before waterbirth was even heard of in the USA. Most likely if you walked up to somebody and asked if they knew what waterbirth was, you’d get a: Huh? Luckily I was blessed with Karil Daniels’ resource book, as it contained a list of Midwives all over the world. It also included fascinating information from the worlds most leading waterbirth pioneers and dozens of personal waterbirth stories, and the newest products too.

We hadn’t yet connected with a Midwife in Sedona, mainly because we were so focused on Igor’s invitation. So I once again delved into Karil’s book more closely and found a practicing Midwife on Maui. Her name was Merrily. I felt goose bumps all over!

I had visited the big Isle of Hawaii before I met Brack, and loved it. The balmy air and fragrant smells were intoxicating and perfect to uplift ones soul. I did have a strong desire to be free to swim in warm water and possibly interact with dolphins. And more over, I had been having recurring dreams swimming with dolphins all around me.



Could it be that we were being guided on a journey west, instead of east, to the warm waters of Hawaii? Indeed we were!

Even though it was January when we arrived on Maui, it was warm. I was entering what I thought was my 7th month of pregnancy. I hadn't seen any doctors or midwives to be sure, so we were kind of guessing the due date.

Brack had lived on Maui before we met and knew of a place we could stay. It was a small rustic lodge in Ioa Valley. Not expensive, fairly remote and so amazingly beautiful! Ioa Valley is known for its' healing water and jungle like environment. A lot of locals rented there. We were so blessed!

As soon as we got settled in we called Merrily. She told us she had assisted in 40 waterbirths without any negative incidents and was very comfortable. Merrily is also a Registered Nurse. I immediately felt confidence in her. Everything was working out amazingly!



We also wanted to connect with someone who knew where dolphins swam and soon found out from the locals about a woman who was called, *The Dolphin Lady*. People would say that all she had to do was jump in the ocean and dolphins would suddenly appear. It was whale season too and Humpbacks were swimming near the Islands.

What more could we ask for? Just as I was drawn to the waters of Hawaii, the Humpback whales would swim long distances to birth and frolic in the perfect warm ocean. I felt so blessed and in grand company!

The days and nights passed quickly, I felt like I was in a dream most of the time. We swam and snorkeled almost everyday and watched the Spinner dolphins and the Humpback whales spin up and breach out of the ocean. I hadn't experienced a close encounter, yet I could hear their unique sounds, how they communicated under the water and I sensed that the little water-baby inside of me was receiving their messages too.

It is easy to hear the *whales song* swimming just slightly under the surface of the ocean. Their energy and playful behavior would always bring me to a state of joy and child-likeness; it was as if time stood still. I felt so very nurtured by this Island.

In fact, in the Hawaiian culture, Maui is known as the *Mother Isle*. I knew I was in the perfect place to have our baby and I knew that being in the water with dolphins and whales was somehow very important to the divine miracle growing inside me.

Well, time didn't stand still at all, another month had gone by and we still hadn't found a place where we wanted to actually birth the baby. We kind of felt like Mary and Joseph when they were searching for a place to have baby Jesus.

We held tight to our dream...

Merrily lived in Makawao, very close to Mount Haleakala. She had already offered to let us birth the baby in a portable birthing tub at her house if we couldn't find a place. So we had that option if nothing else showed up, yet something inside of me had other plans. Was the baby somehow leading the show?

I was really starting to feel the baby's weight and I also felt like the delivery was really close. I looked like I was carrying a beach ball in my swimsuit and I remember I still had a very strong desire to swim close to the dolphins, where I could actually see them under the water. A little voice was in my head constantly saying; "swim with the dolphins, swim with the dolphins". I wonder where that was coming from?

Then one day, we finally got a call from Star Heart, *The Dolphin Lady*. It was a delight to talk with her. Star shared with us that she had had a lot of interaction with them on the Big Island and suggested a trip there. So off we all were to another Island in search of a dream!



Our dream came to fruition when we were led to Kealakekua Bay, a place where Spinner dolphins come most every morning to feed and play.

We arrived about 8:30 in the morning. I still remember the anticipation I felt. I have had close contact with dolphins before, yet never in the wild and never this pregnant!

After about a half an hour we spotted them. Lots of them. They were about a quarter of a mile out. I was so excited!! I immediately grabbed my gear and headed to the water.

It seemed to take forever putting my fins, mask and snorkel on; my belly was so big with the baby. Brack said it was hilarious to watch. After all... I was in

my eighth month of pregnancy. I knew that Brack did not want me out of his sight. “Wait for me,” he yelled. Yet I couldn’t wait for any-thing, I couldn’t wait for anyone, I was driven. I was fearless! I felt totally confident and filled with Joy! I had been swimming almost everyday. I was strong and I wasn’t concerned about making it out to the dolphins, no matter how far.



My excitement grew with each stroke and then finally after what seemed to be an eternity I heard the familiar sound of dolphin sonar.

The popping and crackling was getting louder and louder!

The ocean felt wonderful, supportive. In salt water you are already more buoyant and when pregnant, I guess even more. I took a moment to empty my leaking mask and looked around for the Spinners. I didn’t see any dorsal fins above the water, yet just as soon as my face entered the ocean I was surrounded. There were dolphins in every direction! My body was tingling all over! I was giggling and crying at the same time!

I swam with captive dolphins before and had numerous dreams with them, yet this was incredible! The precious water-baby inside of me seemed to be swimming too and loving it as much as I was. We were surrounded by dolphins, sooooo many dolphins!!!

By then Brack had caught up with me and there were some friends of Star’s, with Kayaks, just in case I got tired.

I have loved being in the water all my life and for a long time I had practiced swimming like dolphins do, mimicking their undulating movements and my body seemed to automatically take on this type of motion, I totally felt like I was part of the Pod.

While swimming with these beautiful Beings, I didn't tire, I was fulfilled, I was in my element, I was in heaven and heaven was in me.

I do remember diving deep and holding my breath for long periods to get a little closer to them and just when I thought I would never get close enough, right in front of me, not much more than an arm's length, a dolphin stopped and looked straight at me.

I could clearly hear the familiar clicking sonar sounds that dolphins make and I wondered if this dolphin wanted to convey a message to me. I felt so safe and protected, so I closed my eyes and thought, "you are so beautiful and I love you." Immediately I heard a voice in my mind and my heart that said, "You are my mirror beloved and I love you dearly." Then it slowly moved directly toward me, so close to the side of me, I was awestruck; my body tingled with excitement and joy!

This physical and telepathic connection had exceeded all my wildest dreams and I remember feeling so blessed, so very blessed. We swam for over 2 hours with them that day and again my experience of time stood still. Thank you, thank you, thank you sweet dolphins!!!

The next day we were back on Maui and it was time to find our birthing place. I wasn't exactly sure how close I was to delivery, yet I was feeling this

overwhelming desire to nest. I guess all pregnant women go through this at some point in their 3rd trimester.

We'd been talking with some people at the Lodge and one mentioned a place about 3 miles up Mt. Haleakala. It was a private home and was often used as a place for retreats and seminars. It had a pool and Jacuzzi, Island views and large tubs. It sounded perfect! We immediately called and made arrangements to see the place. And... it just so happened to be really close to where Merrily lived.

The drive up Mt. Haleakala was absolutely beautiful, though I do remember the road was narrow and winding and seemed to make me dizzy and take forever. Finally, in wild anticipation, we arrived at our destination. We drove down the long driveway and there appeared a beautiful 2-story mansion. Will, the owner of the house, happily greeted us.

He led us around to the back 1st, where the view was spectacular! We could see the rest of the Island and more Islands in the distance. Native Koa trees and gardens of Protea flowers surrounded the house. There was an Olympic size pool with a separate Jacuzzi. Next we were on our way for a tour inside.

We specifically asked to see the bathrooms and were led to the master suite, which included 3 bedrooms and a huge bathroom with a large magenta colored Jacuzzi tub, with a separate steam/shower and all the walls were mirrored. And from the bathtub you could look out a huge picture window with spectacular views of the Island.

As soon as we saw that tub Brack and I looked at each other and said, "this is the place!" We were at the peak of excitement. What an awesome place to have our baby!

Next, we sat down with Will to schedule everything and soon found out that the entire house had been already booked for a group of mountain bikers at the time we would require it, and even though Will was just as excited to have us, there wasn't much he could do. We left feeling very disappointed, very discouraged. We were, we thought, just 14 days away from delivery.

That afternoon, like most, we went snorkeling. Swimming in the warm water always gave me such a feeling of freedom and lightness. It also helped with the heaviness, as the baby was at its' peak of growth.

Throughout my pregnancy, Brack and I often sat in prayer and meditation together to connect more fully with Divine Source and to clear our minds. It always seemed to help when things weren't flowing. That day we sat on the beach knowing that our hearts desire was to be able to have our child in that amazing bathtub.

Even though it looked impossible, we said a prayer and asked that all details be taken care of. We let go of all worry, the need to bang it into place, as we disappeared for a few moments into a higher power. Feeling grateful for the day, we returned to our little rustic room at Ioa Valley Lodge.

A few days passed and still no word about the house. We knew we didn't want to have the baby at the Lodge, as it was a very small room, lots of noise and just didn't feel right.

Before we left Sedona we made plans for our close friend, Bev to come for the birth. Brack and I call her a Galactic Godmother 'cause she knows all about the stars and has an incredibly far out personality. She never had children of her own, yet we wanted her to be our baby's God Mother.

Miraculous things happened when she was around. So we got on the phone and called her and said it was time for her to come. We thought that maybe her presence would turn the tide.

Well, after almost 2 months on the Islands, our money was indeed running out. We had charged Bev's airline tickets on our already over the limit credit card and we only had a few dollars in our pockets. Brack had some things in storage at the Lodge from when he lived on Maui the year before we met. One of the items was a fairly new computer. We knew we could sell the computer, if we had to.

We weren't too concerned, as there had been times during our relationship when money had been scarce. We always held the thought and feeling that a financial miracle would take place, and it always did!

It's true something seemingly miraculous would always happen for us. Brack is a genius when it comes to anything related to finance or computers. I think he could fix any problem. Body, Mind and Spirit work is a passion of mine, a client was always just around the corner.

We never let the lack of money stop us. In fact, Brack likes to say that he liked it when the bank account got low because it means that Gods Universe was getting ready to deliver more. He'd say, "The key to manifesting more is to not worry. To immensely appreciate what you do have, in other words keep counting your blessings even if it is just your next breath and be willing to do the action it takes to get it done." His formula for manifesting desires rapidly. Pretty cool huh?

The next day we awoke full of energy. We were in total trust. We had found the perfect birthing place and Bev was on her way. It was time to swim and be near the whales, dolphins and little fishies. I was *really* feeling the heaviness of pregnancy and the water was so warm and inviting. We spent most of the next two days just basking in the warm water and sunshine, feeling blessed beyond belief.



When we picked Bev up at the airport, we thought we had only a week or so before the baby was to come. It was wonderful seeing her and having our amazing friend with us again. I was missing my Mom's energy and Bev filled that space.

We were expecting a room for her at the lodge, yet when we arrived we were told that there wasn't one available that day. Not the best info, as our room was already cramped with me being so pregnant. I remember wishing we were already at our birthing place. I wanted to nest!

Of course, we told Bev about the mansion on Mt. Haleakala and of our desire to be there for the birth. We told her of our trust in a *Higher Power* and that we were totally confident we would have the baby in that magenta, Jacuzzi tub. She on the other hand insisted on a back up plan and encouraged us to find something else. Bev trusted Spirit more than anyone, yet this was not something she was comfortable with.

With the baby due any day now, she felt strongly that we get settled into somewhere else where the atmosphere felt more nurturing. So we all hopped back in the car and drove to the nearest newspaper stand, bought an 'Island Journal' and started looking for another place to rent.

Amazingly, there was a house fairly close to Will's beautiful mansion; it was



vacant and ready for occupancy. We called and spoke to Jeanie, the owner. She said the house was also for sale priced at \$450,000. From the conversation we could tell that it was a really nice place. Yet how were we going to afford it?

Jeanie told us that her realtor would let us in if we wanted to see it that day, as she herself was on the other side of the Island and wouldn't be back until the next day. We told her a little about our situation and she seemed really anxious to meet us.

We did see the house that day and it was beautiful! It wasn't the mansion with the magenta Jacuzzi tub, yet we were excited to have found it. We wanted to move in right away, yet how? We didn't have much money.

Brack said that a lack of money never stopped us before and that when we met Jeanie in person, all would be taken care of. We went to bed that night

counting our blessings and trusting that because we asked, God and His Universe was in charge and everything would be handled.

The next day we met Jeanie at a little Espresso shop in town. I remember feeling kind of nervous driving there. Yet after a minute of being with her I knew she was another Angel sent from Heaven! Brack did most of the talking, he explained to her that we really wanted to move into her house that day, that we had no money to give her, yet we could write her a check that wouldn't be good until we sold his computer, which was worth about \$4,000.00. It may take a week or so... eventually it would sell.

What happened next was a miracle and it confirmed that Angels do exist and that Jeanie was one of them.

She explained that she had been going through a divorce and had moved out of the house and was living in Hana. The house was in need of some repair and she really wasn't totally sure if it would be right for us, although if we loved it so much she would be willing to take a chance on us paying her later. She had two children and knew what it was like. We moved in that very day! Oh! I forgot to mention... the house was beautifully furnished, everything we required and more.

The next two weeks were beyond amazing! Let me tell you just how amazing it was...

First, Merrily's boyfriend was shopping for a new computer and he bought Brack's laptop for \$2,000.00. Second, we raised over \$500.00 by selling some stored items. Third, and for the most MIRACULOUS news of all. Will, the owner of the mansion half way up Mt. Haleakala (with the huge magenta bathtub) called us and said that the Mountain Bikers Club had canceled their

stay, due to the wet weather. And he had decided to take a month's trip to Tahoe. The house WOULD be available after all and all we had to do was give him a \$500.00 security deposit and it was ours for 30 days for \$2000.00 rent!

Now if that doesn't prove that there is a "Divine" with Universal Forces working on our behalf, this next part will...

It was March 5th around 10:00pm. Brack and I had been in bed about an hour when I woke up and felt that familiar call to go to the bathroom and a bit of cramping. I went to the bathroom and when I sat down on the toilet I heard a plopping sound. I looked down and saw what the pregnancy books refer to as the bloody show or mucous plug. Sounds weird, I know, yet it is nature's way of keeping a safe and protective barrier for your baby.

My heart was pounding as a really warm sensation came over me. I remembered to take a deep breath in and out and then called into the bedroom to tell Brack that the baby was coming. He jumped out of a sound sleep and said, "OK, what do we do now?" I said, "How 'bout we call Merrily."

Merrily answered the phone on the first ring and I told her what had happened. She said not to be too excited, that I had plenty of time. And in her experience, first time babies don't come too fast. She suggested that I start timing my contractions and try and rest as much as possible.

Needless to say we were all too excited to sleep. Bev was still up and we started talking about how wonderful it would be to move into the mansion. Why not tonight instead of chancing it tomorrow. We could be there in 20 minutes. Even though it was ten o'clock at night and I had just experienced the first signs of labor, I still wanted to move into our birthplace. I felt so strongly that our little *joy* was indeed helping orchestrate a perfect birth. And I also

knew that our love and faith was allowing the greater part of us to be in charge.

We phoned Merrily again and she said it would be perfectly fine to go ahead and move, since Will's house was only 20 minutes away, she felt we had plenty of time before the baby would come.

Next we phoned Will and asked if we could go ahead and move in that night. We told him I had just started labor and had time to still deliver in the beautiful bathtub. He was really excited for us and said, "come on over, I'm just packing for my trip, I'll be leaving in the morning." Excitedly we gathered a few of our belongings and headed to our *miracle* birthing place... with Bev of course, intentionally holding the Light.

Our drive over to the mansion seemed long. We reminisced about that day on the beach when we prayed for this. We recalled how we asked for a seemingly impossible thing and then trusted completely that the outcome would be the highest and best for all. And yet again we were amazed that not only were we getting what we asked for, we were getting even more! Our baby was coming in the most perfect and divine timing. And we had a whole month to bask in one of the most beautiful places on earth. Sometimes the best comes just in the nick of time.

I can tell you this, no matter how many WOW experiences you have; life can still blow you away. My life with Brack was always full of amazing manifestations, yet this was almost beyond belief! We all were so very humbled by the awesome power of love, faith and simple happy action.

When we arrived at the mansion on the mountain I wasn't at all tired. It was about midnight and my *contraction/expansions* (I say the word expansion too,

because you do want your cervix to open and expand easily and effortlessly and this was my consistent prayer) were still 20 or so minutes apart. At this point labor was a breeze, just a bit of cramping like I had with my menstrual periods. Merrily suggested I take a warm bath, she thought this would help relax me.

The warm bath did feel wonderful! I felt no weight on me, I felt free and I started to get sleepy. It was so nice to finally be able to let go of everything and just be. Up until that point it had been like living on the edge of reality. Now reality was quite clear. I would have a newborn baby in my arms in a few hours and we were at the most beautiful place on the planet.

During my pregnancy I read a lot of books about childbirth. One of my favorites was *Birth Reborn*, written by Dr. Michel O'dent. Dr. O'dent is convinced that labor, birth and breast-feeding are all, in part, sexual events and that privacy, intimacy, calmness and freedom to labor in any position, are crucial to a spontaneous first stage labor.

Floating there in the water I thought how blessed we were to be in this kind of environment, free to float, free to be. Brack often came in to check on me. I finally asked him if he'd join me, the bathtub was plenty big enough. As he climbed in I couldn't help notice that there was such calmness about him. It was as if he had experienced this many times. I felt totally safe and I didn't even notice that I was in labor.

We tickled and giggled in the warm water like two frolicking dolphins and soon the tenderness of our touching brought us both to a state of ecstasy. I know this will sound impossible to some, yet the process of labor and childbirth can also include orgasms. I can tell you honestly, I experienced them. Orgasmic Birth... WOW!!!

Okay... I know what you might be thinking, orgasm during labor? If this stretches the imagination, this next part may stretch your mind even more.

Please bear with me a little longer... there really is going to be a birth.

After our liquid love experience, Brack and I were just laying in the water looking out the window when the night sky started to glow a brilliant green color. It was incredibly bright and then we both said out loud, "Oh my God it's a space ship! It's a space ship hovering over the house!" Bev came in shortly after and asked us if we saw the green glow out the window.

All three of us had seen UFO's and such in Sedona and were used to talking openly about all kinds of strange happenings. In Sedona there was always something going on in the night sky. It turns out that the next day there were many reports phoned in to the police and radio stations on Maui, confirming the sightings of brilliant green saucer shaped lights.

Just another day in Paradise!

I managed to rest comfortably for a few hours. It was now about 8:00 a.m. and I had been in mild labor for about ten hours. When Merrily checked me she said that my cervix was about 3 cm. opened. My contraction/expansions were very mild still and felt more like mild menstrual cramps. While she was examining me she said that the baby's head wasn't coming straight down on my cervix and was tilted to the left a bit and suggested that I lay on my right side as much as possible. She encouraged me to rest, though I could also walk around if I wanted to.

So for the next couple of hours Brack and I walked around the mansion among Will's beautiful Protea gardens and Koa trees, resting in between. The

grass was so inviting, we actually curled up next to each other and napped a bit. I remember he would massage my back after each contraction/expansion and it felt sooooo good!

We didn't feel the need to look at a clock. There was no fear about how long it was taking. We knew that my body was in charge of



bringing this baby forth and that whenever that time was, it was going to be perfect.

When we did look at the clock again we were surprised that I had been in labor for 20 hours. We had rested most of the day together and I did manage to sleep quite a bit.

It was starting to get dark again and when Merrily checked me she said I was around 6 cm. and with that exam the bag of waters broke. She said all was going slow yet very well. And although we still had a ways to go, she was still pleased that my vitals were normal and things would probably speed up now.

She was right. My contraction/expansions started to increase in intensity and they were coming more often. I was breathing a bit more intensely too and I remembered from the *WaterBaby* video, that one of the women used a pressure point technique to try and lesson the pain.

There are pressure points on the fingers and by holding Brack's hands in a way where his fingers pressed on mine it really did seem to help. I also remember that I breathed in while visualizing an ocean wave gradually

swelling, rising and rising until it reached its' height and then dropping off quickly and calmly.

I had been practicing visual imagery, meditation and yoga throughout my pregnancy. Now was the test of whether all of my focused time practicing these techniques, would make this birth happen with ease.



Focusing on the breath, actually can lesson the pain that most women in labor think they need drugs for. I'm so glad I practiced this during my pregnancy. There was pain, and it was intense, yet my slow rhythmic breathing in between contraction/expansions was super oxygenating and it was like having anesthesia. It really helped manage the intensity.

I don't remember exactly when this happened; I do know it was late that second night. I was all alone floating in the portable birthing tub. I hadn't been asleep in awhile and everyone was either asleep or somewhere else in the house, when I started to feel an uncontrollable urge to push. It was a couple of hours after Merrily had checked me when I was at 6 cm. I didn't know if it was too soon to be pushing yet the feeling was so intense, and I gave in. I remember that it felt sooooo good! Really, really good! I just let go and gave it everything I had and puuuushed! I think I pushed like this about 5 times and then I heard the word, STOP!

Divine Source sometimes yells, and for Good reason!

I am so glad I listened because the next time Merrily checked me I had developed a cervical lip. Cervical lips aren't uncommon, especially when a baby's body part isn't pressing down equally on the cervix. Merrily was so calm about everything and told me that she did have experience with manually adjusting cervical lips and that if I was in agreement she would try and move the lip over the baby's head, if she couldn't, I would have to go to the hospital.

I have to say; going to the hospital was not something I wanted to do. I told her that we were going to take care of this right now. I remember thinking that I didn't come this far to give up and succumb to a hospital birth, we were going to get down to business and we were going to do it right now! Within just a few minutes, with our combined efforts and most assuredly *Divine intervention*, Merrily managed to slide the cervical lip up and over our baby's tiny head and she did it without one bit of tearing. The baby was doing great and so was mommy to be.

After the ordeal with the lip, Merrily suggested I get into the warm water. Our vitals were fine but I was pretty exhausted after being in labor 29 hours.

Oh my, the warm water did help ease the pressure right away. My contraction/expansions seemed very close together now. I was in the beautiful tub lying back on a bath pillow against the side. Brack hadn't entered the water yet and was sitting along the edge.

I remember that Merrily checked the baby's heart tones after each contraction/expansion and she would tell us that the baby was doing fine. I was pushing when another would come, yet the baby's head wasn't pushing through. I was pushing my hardest but I was very tired. It had been almost 30 hours since the

onset of labor and I hadn't really slept much of the last 15 or so. I was exhausted and in this position my pushing wasn't very effective.

Merrily said it would help if I could squat or get on my knees. I would still be up to my waist in the water and this position would give gravity a better chance to help my pushing. So I squatted with my body half way submerged and gave it two more pushes and the top of the baby's head pushed through. The phrase *'Ring of Fire'* describes it perfectly! It was an awesome burning feeling beyond all description.

Thank God I regularly massaged my perineum with olive oil during our last trimester, (it helps prevent tearing down there). I reached down and felt the baby's head for the first time. It was so soft. It felt like velvet. And there was lots of hair!

Now that the head was pushing through I knew it wouldn't be long and I really wanted Brack to be able to catch the baby. So I again leaned back against one end of the tub and he sat directly in front of me. I must say, having the support of the warm water was so helpful!



Merrily was watching very closely now and had her hands in the water feeling the baby's head. She said it was okay to push if I felt like it. So I took a deep breath and pushed with what energy I had left. She said, "good, good, good... the baby's head is completely out now." I reached down again and felt this

small, round head sticking out of me. Truly amazing! All I had to do was push one more time and her whole body would come out.

I remember Merrily saying calmly yet firmly, "now lets bring this baby out." She said, "push just a little more to bring the shoulders through". So I gave one last push... and out she came. Brack described it this way, "she shot out of you just like a dolphin baby and I got to catch her!"

Finally, there she was submerged, our little baby girl, her eyes wide open, looking straight up at me and then at Brack. She was so aware, so present. It was truly a miracle! We both had tears in our eyes and smiles on our faces.



Our baby just floated there basking in her pool of liquid love moving a little, stretching a little. She looked fully awake and alert with her eyes gazing up at us.

About 2 minutes went by with her whole body under water with Brack supporting her while Merrily kept a close eye on her and the umbilical cord... it was still strongly pulsating. She seemed very relaxed about everything and didn't push us to bring the baby up out of the water. I'll be forever grateful for such a loving, allowing, capable and supportive midwife. Thank you, Thank you, Thank you Merrily! We couldn't have done it without you.

After another minute we decided to bring her face up to the surface so she could take her first breath. To us, the birth was complete; our *little miracle*

took her first breath at 5:00 a.m. March 7th, 1990. The next 20 minutes were the most divine moments of my life, bonding and caressing our baby in the water. She was so alert and continued to look intensely at us and her surroundings. She never cried, not one whimper.

The cord had stopped pulsating and she was breathing perfectly on her own; it



was time to cut the link between us. I remember this was very emotional for me. I loved being pregnant and a part of me didn't want to let that go. Merrily asked me if I wanted to do it and handed me the cord clippers.

As I started cutting, I was surprised at how hard the cord was... it was really hard to cut! After nine months of being physically connected to this tiny entity, we were now only joined... in Spirit.

The final step of the birth was when I delivered the placenta. I stepped out of the water, (Brack was holding our baby) and sat on some warm towels and leaned against the mirrored wall. What an amazing experience that was! There were surprisingly a couple of intense contraction/expansions, almost as powerful as they were when I was in labor, and out of my body it came. All I can say is; WOW!

Not very many people know this fact, yet the tradition of getting a birthday cake on our birthday represents the placenta, our original *Birth Day Cake*. It does look somewhat like a cake. Merrily showed us both sides of it. One side looks just like a tree and is referred to as the *Tree of Life*. This is the side that

is next to the baby feeding and nourishing him or her during pregnancy. It looked truly awesome! I'm so lucky to have seen it. Later that week we were inspired to bury it on Will's land and we planted a baby Koa tree over it.

As I sat on the floor, (Merrily had already brought warm towels for me) leaning against the mirrored wall with my newborn baby cuddled up close, I could feel my breasts tingling. Merrily helped me bring her gently to my breast and she soon started to nurse. This was her first meal and it was going to be the most the most important, the most nutritious meal she would ever, ever have; her Momma's Colostrum! The most important meal, because this



meal will begin to set up her immune system.

The three of us finished with a dip in the clean, warm portable birthing tub we had already set up in our bedroom. I remember that she did cry a little bit when we entered the water again, then soon relaxed and fell asleep. Our little Joy was so content floating there

and quietly experiencing her new-found freedom. It was quite an adventure, an adventure of love, trust and allowing.

It isn't the end of our journey. I could go on and on, yet I'll leave the rest for another time. I would like to tell you what we named our new little Joy. Her name came to me while I was singing the song *My Girl* about a week before the birth. We named her *Now Joy*. Now Joy reminds us to always feel content in the **Now** and to see **Joy** in everything!

The beginning...

*Story
from*

*Written
Nina's*



Journals,

1990

Now Joy

A Star is Born



This story is the extraordinary journey of a *Star* being born. It all started late summer of the year 1991. Brack and our first water baby; Now Joy, who was 19 months, and I were living in our 40-foot home on wheels near Key West, Florida.

Now Joy, was already proving to have an incredible memory and we were delighted that she was *our* teacher too. Each day with her was a blessing.

Home schooling was a choice Brack and I had made before our little Joy was born and I was up on every leading edge child development program or teaching toy I could get my hands on.

In my third trimester with Now Joy I'd even worn this cool pregnancy belt with speakers inside of it, so I could share with her while still in my womb, Mozart and Bach's music.

At that time, in 1989 research was just beginning to prove the very positive benefits of babies who are exposed to music while in the womb. Now they certainly know that such babies display advanced intelligence, coordination, and learning abilities. My personal experience with Now Joy was that I



noticed our telepathic communication grew clearer and stronger after wearing the belt.

We were back from Maui, where Now Joy was born. For a few months we traveled all over the country. I had just finished breast-feeding her, which I had done for almost 15 months, an amazing experience in itself, and I

was enjoying watching her experience all the new and wondrously delicious foods.

Being a health nut, I was real big on natural and holistic living and we ate as much organic foods as possible. If I bought any baby food in a jar at all, it had to come from a *Health Food* store. I mostly pureed all of her food fresh or cooked it just slightly. We also ate a lot of sprouts, juiced fruits and veggies for *super nutrition* as they call it now, and I remember how she loved to sit on the counter and help me feed our 'Juice Man' juicer.

One of Now Joy's favorite things to do was to help Mommy in the kitchen and she happily devoured most everything she could get her hands on! Accept for

red meat or chicken. I ate mostly vegetables, nuts and fruit, with fish as my only animal protein at the time and Now Joy seemed to take after me. She chose to be a vegetarian until she was four. Daddy Brack, as Now Joy called him, likes red meat, so we always had plenty of that around for him and I just loved cooking for both of them.

We were parked on a gorgeous waterfront lot on Sugar Loaf Key, just north of Key West, Florida. It was a brand new RV Resort called, Bluewater Key. We called it, *Our Little Piece of Heaven*.



We really hadn't planned to get pregnant again, yet when the Divine speaks, no matter what you think you want, indeed you go with the plan. We were very happy to have conceived, and if our calculations were right, the baby

would be born in the summer. Now Joy would be around 2 years and 3 months. They would be perfect playmates!

Almost everyday you could find the three of us, plus the little miracle growing inside of me, meandering through the Mangroves on our little jet boat or taking a quick drive to Key West on our scooter.

Key West was full of fun things to do, especially the water sports and side walks with happy people dancing to the non-stop Caribbean steel drum Reggae music. We loved exploring and shopping and there was always music playing somewhere downtown. It was always so cute when Now Joy would hear those steel drums, she'd always start to dance.

One of the most memorable things I recall while in my first trimester was eating tons of watermelon. Fresh fruit was plentiful in the Keys and mornings were tough with that yucky feeling of morning sickness. Eating *Ginger Chews* would help, yet watermelon was just about the only thing I could stomach. I could almost eat an entire watermelon for breakfast!



By mid afternoon I felt great and could eat anything. I ate lots of fresh caught fish and crab at the local hangout and Ahhh... the yummy juicy star fruit, we just couldn't get enough of those. Now Joy liked to watch Mommy cut this strange looking thing and happily make star shapes. There's no question why to this day, Now and Star Joy love to eat watermelons and when we're lucky... Star Fruit, Star Joy loves star fruit!!!

Time passed quickly and we were having an amazing time in the Keys. We were totally comfortable, again planning to have a baby in a Jacuzzi bathtub, yet this time in our Home on Wheels. I had already experienced a successful waterbirth with Now Joy and there was no reason why we couldn't do it again. Wow... a waterbirth in a Motorhome bathtub?

We were living pretty much in the moment, our overhead was modest and we had plenty of money saved up. Also I wasn't too concerned or anxious to find a midwife, as I trusted my body's ability to carry and birth a baby. I had learned long ago to listen for the voice within and when the time was right I knew we would be guided to the perfect place.

The community was full of naturalists and if I didn't find a midwife in Florida I could always call Merrily our midwife in Hawaii. She was an amazing midwife; it would be wonderful to have her with us again.

I know this might sound funny but the bathtub in the Motorhome was the main reasons we bought that particular one. Most Motorhomes don't have



bathtubs of that size, yet this was a *Special Edition Beaver Marque* and custom built for the original owner. When we bought it, it was practically brand new and had only been driven 15 thousand miles and it had a huge Jacuzzi bathtub. A perfect match for a bath loving person like me. The tub was unusually deep too and was perfect for Now Joy. The sides were high

enough that she couldn't climb out, like a play pin of sorts and she spent countless hours playing and taking baths in that amazing Jacuzzi bathtub!

Brack and I have always had incredible experiences together. We've seen spaceships and spirit beings in the deserts of Sedona. We've had telepathic communication with dolphins and whales in Sedona, Hawaii and the Dominican Republic. And we are convinced that Gods Universal forces can work in mysterious and miraculous ways.

Like when something you wish for seems impossible, yet you state your preference, pray and let go... and then one day you get a call from the person you never thought would call. And your dream of having a waterbirth in a beautiful mountain top mansion becomes reality.

Even though we weren't planning to have another baby so soon, it was for sure that another waterbirth was already being orchestrated, and it looked like we would have it in a Jacuzzi bathtub on wheels.

In our adventures in Hawaii for Now Joy's birth, and then northern Idaho, for our third waterbirth (you're gonna love that story, which follows this one) you can see that we are freedom seeking beings and that no matter the circumstances, miracles do happen and they happen to us pretty regularly.

Well... our life was about to take an unexpected turn and it was a really intense one!

I was about 4 months along and having a glorious pregnancy. The morning sickness was no more and I was swimming in the ocean most everyday, having glorious fun with Brack and brilliant little Now Joy, when all of a sudden I started having migraine headaches.

If you've ever had a migraine you know of the pain, the nausea and how your head feels like it could explode if you move an inch. They are pretty much completely debilitating.

When I was 19, I was in a car crash followed by a light post smashing into me, fracturing my lower back in two places. I had to be in a body cast for about 3 months, wear a chair back brace and then major back surgery 6 months later. Painful as that was, it didn't hold a candle to those headaches!

I had seen Chiropractors over the years with great success, so we immediately went to our local Doc. He was a Fruitarian and he looked like Tarzan! He did some massage and light adjusting and I felt a little relief. Yet after waking up three days in a row with a migraine and the nausea that accompanies, we were

getting worried. We couldn't understand why all of a sudden I was having these headaches.

I was very adamant about not taking medication during pregnancy and never really needed any... until then. My daily meditation and yoga practice helped, yet the intense headaches continued.

I went to the Chiropractor for some relief, yet everyday I woke up with another one. I must say, I was going a bit crazy. Doc was really helpful and I was getting relief, yet the headaches didn't stop.

This went on for another week and we *all* were getting a bit concerned that there might be something toxic to my body or something in the water we were drinking. So I called for an appointment to get some blood work done.

Although my background in Nursing has always served me well and I value my Naval Hospital Corps experience, I hadn't been to a western MD in quite awhile. I remember feeling a lot of resistance about going. Yet I certainly didn't want anything negative to happen to our unborn child. It felt better to go than not go. I had to follow my gut feeling, my conscience.

The morning of my appointment I did my usual prayer, meditation and yoga practice outside by the calm sea. My intention that day was so clear. I said out loud my true hearts desire; that these headaches stop immediately and I very much desired to know what I could do. I remember being pretty upset, yet I also knew that if I didn't clear my mind of this worry, I wouldn't be able to receive clear guidance. I started breathing deeply and intentionally and told myself to let go of the past and any worry about the future and fully focus on the now moment.

After breathing deeply and rhythmically for several minutes, I heard a loud and clear voice say, "*Nina, it's time to move on.*" It startled me at first, as I was in that lovely Theta state of mind and normally the Divine is a bit more subtle.

I immediately asked, "where to?" And the heavenly voice said, "*Sedona, the energy in Sedona will be more balancing and soothing to you and the baby.*" The encouraging voice was so clear and resonated so deep within me; I just knew it came from Holy Spirit.

In the past when I prayed for guidance and received answers that I knew were from the Divine, and very important to follow, not only would I hear that small still and sometimes loud voice, I would also experience tingling, starting from the top of my head and joyful bliss expand throughout my entire body. This was definitely one of those times. Bliss was filling my body, I was extraordinarily Holy Spirit filled!

There was no doubt in my mind that this was the answer and I immediately went to Brack and told him what had just happened. It didn't surprise me a bit when he said, "let's pack up and go right now!"

If you've read Now Joy's birth story you know that Brack was always 110% supportive of whatever I needed or wanted when I was pregnant. In fact he named himself my *love slave for life* and after almost 27 years with him, this hasn't changed. We were then and still are so very telepathic. (I like to call it, thought transference)

Often Brack will do something for me minutes before I even ask and many times during my pregnancies, he would wake up in the morning just to tell me

what I was going to tell him. It is so divine to have your Mate in total support of you, especially when you're pregnant.

As far as leaving the Florida Keys... neither of us had ever dreamed we would leave our little piece of heaven by the calm sea. Yet if the headaches were caused by something there and they would stop if we left, I was all for it!

So that very day I called and cancelled my appointment with the lab. Brack gathered up our outdoor furniture, unplugged the electricity and water hoses, rolled in the awnings and just like that, we were off on another adventure. A journey back to the beautiful red rocks of Sedona, Arizona.

Sedona is where Brack and I first started our life together. We met in California, which is another *way out there* story, (Brack shares a bit from his perspective in the Forward) yet of all the places we've traveled, and we did travel a lot, Sedona is our favorite. Not just because it is where we said our vows to each other, or where we conceived our Now Joy, it's because Sedona's energy is like no other. Whenever we are there, extra-ordinary things always happen.

I think it's one of the most beautiful places you could ever imagine and in my opinion only missing one thing; the ocean. If Sedona was next to the sea you could never get me to leave. So if we did have to leave one paradise; the Florida Keys, for another; Sedona, well, that wouldn't be too hard, would it?

We left the Keys that very day and guess what? As crazy as this may sound, as soon as we left Florida, my headaches stopped. Yes, just like that! And a blessed day that was.

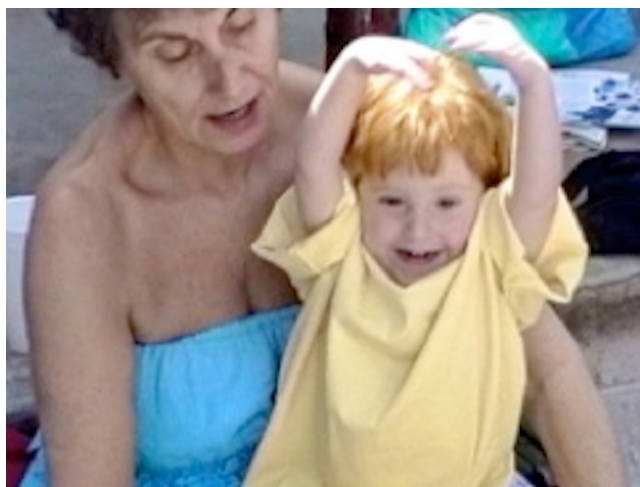
We never did figure out the cause of those intense headaches, yet even when something unusual like that happens, it can be for a good reason. It just so happened that in 1991, Florida, experienced what was named; *The Perfect Storm*. It was one of the most devastating storms ever to hit the east coast. We left just in time to avoid it. Now how's that for Divine Intervention?

It took us about a week or so to get back to Sedona and settled into an RV park. It was Indian summer and the autumn colors were beautiful, it felt so great to be back.

On the trip we talked about finding a house to rent so we could all stretch out a bit more. Luckily, we found the perfect house on Zane Grey Ave. It had 3 bedrooms, lots of space and most importantly, a large Roman Bath Tub. The house was in a quiet little neighborhood, close to everything and there was enough space to park our motorhome.

For a year or so we had been living either in a 27 foot or a 40 foot class A Motorhome. They were big enough, yet it was so nice to have plenty of space to move around. And the garage had been remodeled into a studio apartment and just perfect for my Mom, who we had asked to be Now Joy's Nanny. Having her right next door allowed me so much more freedom to prepare for a fearless, painless birth and Now Joy so adored her G-Joy.

My Mom was named 'Joy' and she just so happened to have three daughters and gave each of them 'Joy' as their middle name. Then when my sister, Jilien Joy had her baby girl, she named her 'Brandy Joy' and then I decided to pass Joy along and named my three daughters 'Now Joy', 'Star Joy' and 'Iam Joy'. Brandy Joy then had a daughter and named her, 'Alexis Joy' and now Alexis has a new baby 'Cloe Joy'. It just keeps going on and on... a never-ending family of Joy!



As I said, Sedona's energy was wonderful and it felt really great to be settled in. I did miss waking up next to the ocean though and being able to jump right in. I truly am a dolphin out of the water, so I immediately sought out where the nearest pool was and found an Olympic sized heated pool at Los Abrigados Resort.

I do have to admit that swimming laps in a chlorinated pool wasn't my favorite way to swim, yet it was better than nothing and inside was a fabulous Health Club and Spa, offering massage and yoga classes, and a fully equipped gym with stair masters. I was really attracted to stair masters at that time. They were new and all the rage then. The place was perfect! You could find me there almost everyday.

I also wanted to find a Chiropractor and was guided to 'Mountain Dove Chiropractic' in the Village of Oak Creek, where we met Drs. Jan and Marc Viafora, who were both Network Chiropractors. Dr. Jan also specialized in Acupuncture.

'Network' was a new (at that time) form of Chiropractic practice. Adjustments were different than the typical ones, where the Dr. just goes right in and performs a structural movement of your bones. Network Chiro's use a light touch or taps along the spine to relieve tension, which helps to clear your body of nervous interference. The tapping is like a type of communication, a language the body receives and understands and then in turn remembers to align itself.

The sessions are called ‘clear outs’ and boy did they! Although it was very different than the way I had been adjusted for years, I was so glad to have discovered it. Truly divine guidance. They also incorporated focused breathing during the ‘clear outs’ and encouraged focused breathing at home, which I was really into. The more I experienced Network Chiropractic the more in tune I became with my body’s energy flow and the more tuned in with the energy growing inside me.

There is no doubt that my once a week sessions helped me experience a more conscious and joyful birth. Jan, Marc and their daughter Aja, who was six at the time, soon became our good friends. I believe they were a family sent from Heaven just for me!

Now looking back, it’s kind of odd that I didn’t experience that intense desire to go to the ocean like I had with my two other pregnancies. I believe Star Joy had a lot to do with it... she must have been really comfortable in Sedona’s energy. I know I was. Sedona is known for it’s beautiful red rocks, high vibration and sacred sites often used for healing. Folk stories speak of Sedona as being very sacred land where the Ancient ones came to do ceremony, prayer and healing. Sedona is also known to have these area’s referred to as vortexes.

A vortex is the funnel shape created by a whirling fluid or by the motion of spiraling energy such as whirlwinds, tornadoes and water going down a drain. A vortex can be made up of anything that flows, such as wind, water, or electricity. They can be measured and are also believed to be created by spiraling spiritual energy. The energy is very subtle, yet if you are sensitive to energy flow, as I am, the energy can be felt when you’re near them.

I've studied and practiced many different healing modalities. I believe that the chakra system of our body is linked to the chakra system of Mother Earth, which these vortexes are thought to be. Going to them was something I loved doing. And being pregnant was double the fun! It was almost as much fun as swimming with dolphins while being pregnant.

Many times while meditating on Cathedral Rock, I've seen dolphins swimming all around me. Sedona is an amazing place for self-discovery, spiritual connection and a better than perfect place to have a baby!

Tuning in to *baby Star* was something very easy for me. When we visited the energy vortexes to pray and meditate or practice my pregnancy yoga sessions, our conscious connection was greatly enhanced. It's hard to say which vortex is my favorite, I guess if I had to choose just one, it would be the area of Cathedral Rock. The energy there feels very balanced to me.

Another really special memory was the strong connection between Now Joy, who was just 2 years young and the baby growing inside me. Often, and before I even really started to *show*, Now Joy would place her hands on my soon to be baby belly and start a conversation with it. There was no doubt that she and Star Joy were already communicating. It was precious beyond words, the two of them were already playing and sharing in their own special way.

You might be wondering how we came up with the name, Staryce-Stariel Joy. Well... we'd been talking about names towards the end of my pregnancy and the name 'Star' came up. We had a really good friend in town who's name was Joy Starr and whether the baby was a girl or boy the name 'Star' would be cool. Brack was sure it was going to be a girl and we were pretty much set on the name 'Star Joy.'



Then late one night while spooning with my big baby belly touching him, Brack woke up and felt a lot of kicking. He said I was fast asleep and didn't even stir. In the morning Brack was so excited as he told me that the baby was kicking him in the middle of the night. He said he clearly heard a voice talking to him and he knew it was the baby.

At the time we didn't know if we were having a girl or a boy, yet Brack said the baby told him she wanted a longer name. What could we add to the name *Star* to make it longer? Since Brack was so sure

it was going to be a girl, he really liked the name '*Staryce*'. Now Joy and I really liked the name '*Stariel*'. I think it was because our favorite movie was 'The Little Mermaid'. So we all agreed to settle on both. Sounds crazy I know... yet true!

Everything just seemed effortless this time around. We easily found a Nurse/Midwife team, Mary and Joan, two very nurturing women in Flagstaff, who of course were open to home birth and also very familiar with water birthing. And they were highly respected by the Doctors in the community.

Their practice was a bit more orthodox than Merrily or Cathy (our 1st and 3rd Midwives) yet we just loved them! They were very accommodating when we told them of our dream to create a film called '*A Star is Born, Joyous Conscious Birth*' and that we wanted to film some of our visits to their clinic. We'd been video taping ever since Now Joy's birth and Brack was getting



quite a bit of footage throughout this pregnancy.

In the film we definitely wanted to include the part of the Midwife and share how profound her role is, before, during and after pregnancy. We were so blessed to have found, with all three of our births, the perfect Midwives and I will be forever grateful for their

caring and loving support, as well as their capable hands.

Thank goodness we had my Mom with us. My Mama Joy had experienced 4 natural childbirths and she barely made it to the hospital in time to deliver me. I was told at a young age that her births were like having a hard bowel movement. Thank the Lord! It was much better programming than all the movies out there depicting women screaming and cussing at their mates. She helped with the cooking and cleaning and endless playing with Now Joy when it was time for me to rest.

Having her and Brack at home allowed me time to read wonderful books like, Janet Balaskas brand new book; *Water Birth* and Peggy Jenkins book, *The Joyful Child*, which has been one of our most treasured books for joyful living. A life-changing book for me.

I read books about incredible women around the world who considered childbirth very sacred, *a woman's right of passage*, and learned of women who gave birth in the fields where they worked, taking only moments off before going right back to their tasks and of course, my old favorites, *Spiritual*

Midwifery, by Ina May, a classic and *Birth Reborn*, my favorite!



Brack constantly told me how beautiful I was... even if I didn't look or feel that beautiful. I wasn't always hormonally balanced and I remember times when fear and doubt would surface and it took quite a bit of effort to realign myself back to my goal of a fearless, painless birth. Thankfully those times were few and far between. I was so lucky to have him at home busy preparing just as much as I was for the birth. And having Now Joy wanting to be a part of this experience was undeniably an absolute Joy!!!

Time passed and the weather started getting cold, it even snowed in Sedona that year and I remember we got to build a little snowman. My Sister *Samia Joy* was living close by and she was a big help too. Sami had 2 boys, Chris and Logan and couldn't really pass on the *Joy* name, yet they both are joys to me.



Easily I fell into a rhythm with a daily routine of, yoga, meditation and visualization, going to the club and eating healthy. Mom watched Now Joy for me when I went to the gym, yet most of the time I kept her with me. I'd take her swimming with me almost every day. Frolicking in the water was *Now*

Joy's favorite thing to do. She was already swimming like a dolphin and we'd

spend countless hours soaking in the whirlpool at Los Abrigados. It wasn't the warm, salty Kauai Ocean, yet it was good enough for her.

Now Joy's water training practically started the day she was born. I'll never forget the first day of her life, the three of us were in that huge magenta Jacuzzi bathtub she had been born in, when Brack simply dipped her underwater. It startled



me a bit, but she loved it! We practically did this every day from then on. It was our precious bath time fun!

My friend Igor Tjarkovsky convinced me of this. And at 4 months she'd actually stand strong and erect on my hand above the ocean and then eagerly dive in, being totally comfortable staying under water. Brack and I would pass her back and forth.



Now there she was swimming in a heated pool at two years young in the middle of the desert just like how baby dolphins swim, dipping in and out. I have so many precious memories of her going under the water just to kiss my big preggo belly.

Also there is something I'd like to share with you that by far is one of the most valuable gifts delivered to me during my pregnancy with Star Joy. It is a simple yet profoundly powerful tool that was instrumental in helping me get my mind and my body ready for a fearless,

painless birth experience. What is it? Well, it's a *cassette tape*. Yes... a cassette tape!

Nowadays, recorded guided imagery and meditation CD's, and exercise videos are a dime a dozen. It's so easy to find information on having a more



conscious birth and to find videos about practicing prenatal yoga etc, etc. Practically anything you might want to know about birth can be easily searched out and found on the internet. There is even a program called 'Hypnobirth' which is offered by a practicing medical doctor, proven to be very useful for less painful childbirth.

Yet remember this was 1992 and there was no Internet with easy search capabilities. Heck, fax machines were just beginning to be sold and anything that had been produced for *listening*, regarding a more gentle or conscious birth, didn't even exist! In fact most OB/GYN's didn't even support home births, let alone waterbirth!

I admit I did have very valuable and treasured reading material that was irreplaceable to me. And I was lucky to have found videos like *Water Baby* and a couple of other videos showing live births during my 1st pregnancy. I also found guided meditation tapes in Sedona, yet there really wasn't anything to listen to that was specifically focused, for an easier childbirth.

At that time, most people were just beginning to open up to the 'power of Now'. Reading books on enlightenment or gentle birth practices was not very common. This type of material, as far as I knew could only be found at 'The

Bhodi Tree Bookstore' in Los Angeles, or Sedona, Arizona. If you wanted a guided meditation tape, you pretty much had to record your own. I did do that a few times but they were never really that great.

Then one day, in the back of one of the new books I was reading, I was thrilled to find a wonderful Resource section, which included a list of books I hadn't read, guided imagery cassette tapes (because there was no such thing as a CD) and there were VHS videos of live births.



I remember being so excited as I sent for a cassette entitled, *Opening to Love* and a video from India showing several women squatting during childbirth. The cassette and video were wonderful! The music and words on the cassette were so soothing, and I was guided step by step in visualizing my body opening to birth easily and effortlessly.

The video on *Squatting for Birth* convinced me there was no other way that would be more conducive for a faster, more comfortable labor. I was used to singing throughout my pregnancy with Now Joy and I learned from Dr. O'dent, a physician in France, that singing and talking to your unborn child was one of those very special things you could do to commune. It is now well known and proven scientifically that the baby really enjoys it.

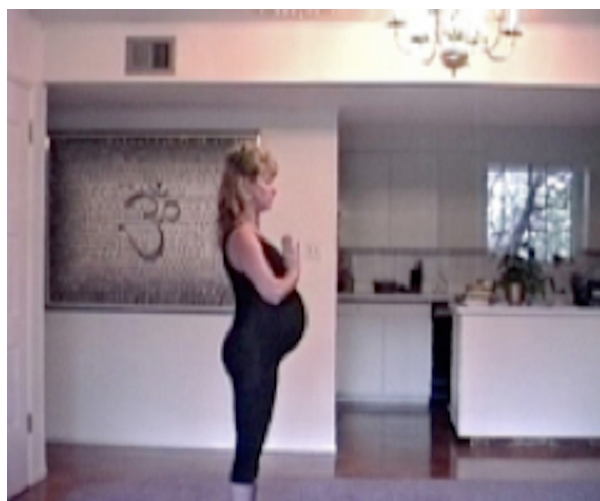
I know that spending time every day listening to *Opening to Love* repeatedly and visualizing my body opening was instrumental in my experience of fearless, painless, ecstatic childbirth.

The days and nights went quickly and soon the baby was at its peak of growth. I had gained about 35 lbs, practically all boobs and belly, thanks to Mr. Stair Master! My due date wasn't exact and according to Mary Ann, it was estimated to be around the 1st week in June.

I felt like I was in the greatest shape of my life and with all of the focused time spent on quieting my mind, strengthening my body and spirit, I knew I was ready for anything. I was ready because of my Hatha yoga practice, which focuses on balance, flexibility and strength. And I was spending a lot of time in the water swimming almost every day.

Well actually I mostly floated in the pool those last heavy weeks. I believe swimming is also one of the most important exercises for pregnancy, especially during your third trimester. Being in the water takes all the weight off of you and it helps you focus more on rhythmic breathing, the type of breathing so important for pain management.

And if you can master the complete breath or yogic breath, some call it diaphragmatic breathing, it can make all the difference in the world, especially when you are experiencing the strong sensations of labor and birth. It's a proven natural anesthetic.



It was getting close to my due date, which was around the 10th of June. Daddy Brack, the director & producer of our video we were creating, wanted to buy an outside Jacuzzi for easier filming. It was going to be summer and

plenty warm enough. And what an amazing setting for a waterbirth with the red rocks in the background.

Remember, this was 1992 when waterbirth was still very unusual and not accepted or as popular as it is today. There was no Internet, no cell phones and fax machines were all the rage. A bit hard for you young ones to imagine. Still very few women had even heard of waterbirth or even considered having a home birth and in some states Midwives were not even allowed to practice. Brack really wanted this video to look professional and therefore it had to be very different than the way we filmed Now Joy's birth.

When I planned for Now's birth I intentionally made every effort to gently bring her into this world. She came when it was dark outside and we kept the lights low and the environment quiet and calm. We were lucky to even have any photos or video. It just wasn't our focus. This time my labor and birth was going to be professionally filmed and edited and I was completely comfortable with that.

Funny how things change. I think that baby Star wanted it too. I trusted my feelings more than I ever had before. If our baby hadn't been in alignment, I don't think I would have felt so aligned with the idea. After all, she was going to be the main attraction. Our goal was to educate with this film, it was to be partly a documentary on how to deliberately create a fearless and painless birth experience.

So here we go again...

On June 10th a few minutes after midnight I awoke with that familiar call to the bathroom. It was almost exactly the way I started labor with Now Joy. I sat down on the toilet and heard a plop, looked down and knew I was in the first stages of labor.

I had been experiencing Braxton Hicks contractions off and on the last couple of days and having gained 5 more pounds in that last week, I remember being soooooo very ready to release our baby. The little miracle inside me was definitely going to be bigger than the last one.

Braxton Hicks contractions can begin as early as the second trimester, however they are more common in the third. The muscles of your uterus tighten for approximately 30 to 60 seconds or as long as 2 minutes. They are also called practice contractions, because they will prepare you for the real thing.

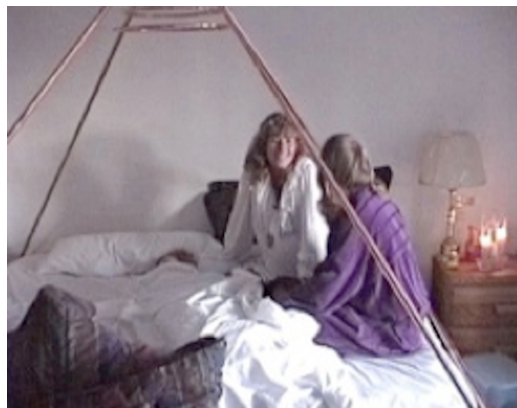
An easy way to tell the difference between Braxton Hicks contractions and real labor contractions is that Braxton Hicks contractions don't increase in intensity. They are pretty mild in general.

My last labor had been 30 hours. This time I was expecting a much shorter one. I woke Brack up and said, "Guess what honey?" He jumped right up and said, "lets get the cameras going and I better check the Jacuzzi's water temperature!" Brack practically slept with the video cam those last days. And then we called our Midwives.

Everything had been in place for a couple of weeks. We'd bought an 8x8 'Cal Spa' with a white interior, Brack's color choice for better filming. We also built a deck to it from our bedroom door and another deck to the side for the 2nd camera.

Brack, Now Joy and I had been sleeping under a copper pyramid for a few months and resting more peacefully than we ever had. You're probably thinking, 'that's weird,' yet remember, we were living in Sedona, Arizona. Brack calls it; A Galactic Zoo... and it is!

For millennia, pyramids are known to be powerful energy generators and sleeping under one was something we were trying out and believe it or not the so called, pyramid power has been proven scientifically. It definitely helped us rest better at night and tune in quicker when we prayed and meditated.



There happened to be a guy living near Sedona who made copper pyramids of all sizes. Tom, ‘*The Pyramid Man*’ took great care in building them in the exact dimensions of the Great Pyramid of Giza.

And for something a little extra, at the apex of the pyramid was a place to put a little colored lens. The color you choose depends on what effect or energy you want to amplify. Color, light and sound are all used for balancing the emotions and the body.

Knowing about the healing effects of color used as therapy and now with the addition of the pyramid energy, it was like icing on a cake! We noticed a big



difference sleeping under one and we thought, why not set one up over the hot tub. Lots of experiments show that being inside a pyramid can ease pain and increase healing. Sooooo *The Pyramid Man* made us one specifically to fit over our birthing tub.

We also had this special *cold fusion water* our friend Joy Starr gave us. Joy owned a book & angel shop in town

and she knew all kinds of leading edge people. This special water had been proven to cure disease and alleviate pain. You could simply spray it on you and the pain would subside.

One day I woke up with tremendous pain going down my arm from a pinched nerve in my neck and I sprayed this water on it and within 10 minutes the pain was completely gone. Imagine that! At that time the government was giving the man who created this special water a 5 million dollar grant for more study. Joy suggested we add some to our birthing tub. And we did.

I'm sure that all of this might seem a bit outrageous to you, yet our goal of having a natural painless birth was outrageous in itself. I definitely needed all the help I could get. We were living right in the hub of Sedona and the leading edge birthing and enlightenment movement and soaking up everything we could get our hands on!

Mom hadn't been to sleep yet and I could hear her tinkering around in the kitchen. I told her I had seen the first signs that the baby was coming and she said that she had a feeling and was preparing to bake a cake. My Mom had always been a strong believer and quite intuitive. She raised 4 kids being a single Mom. She and my Nana could often predict events way before they happened. I remember wonderfully weird things would often happen.

One of our more practical books we all were reading; *'What to Expect When You Are Expecting,'* has a chapter in it suggesting foods to have ready for the 'Birth Day' and we had decided on a yummy chocolate angel food cake. Mom was happily baking.

Now Joy, who was 2 years 3 months, woke up and insisted on getting dressed, shoes and all and wanted to help her G-Joy. Brack was outside waking Scott

up, our professional videographer, who was staying in the Motorhome. He said they needed to get the lights set up just in case the baby came when it was dark. Excitement was filling the air.... soon a brand new baby Star would be born!

It was around 3:00 AM when our midwives Mary and Joan arrived. By then I had taken a bath and was really feeling the excitement around the house. The smell of coffee and breakfast was filling the air.

Brack and I aren't coffee drinkers; his morning ritual even to today is Dr. Pepper and mine is usually lemon water or Herbal Tea. Everyone else was sitting around the kitchen table having a cup of Joe.

I remember that I was wide-awake and eager to see how far along I was. I'd been squatting with each contraction/expansion, (*I coined this phrase when I was pregnant with Now Joy, I added 'expansion' because you do want your cervix to open and expand easily and effortlessly*) I just knew in my heart that this baby was going to come much faster than the last. Mary Ann checked me and was pleasantly surprised that I had already opened to about 6 cm. and that the bag of waters was still intact.

Joan explained that one big reason I was having such an easy time of it was that the bag of waters was acting as a cushion for the baby's head and my Cervix. It was amazing! I was having a painless labor!

Mary Ann told us she had once assisted with a birth where the bag of waters was fully intact the whole time and that the amniotic membrane preceded the baby's head out of the womb and didn't open until the baby moved into it.

She said it was so beautiful and looked like a *veil* was lifting over the baby's head. I remember thinking that maybe this would happen for us. Maybe the baby would go from the bag of waters straight into another precious water environment.

An unveiling into liquid love...

There was something very different about my labor with Star Joy. The word labor really isn't the best word to describe it. It was more like a pajama party! I did have very healthy contraction/expansions. Yet this time instead of breathing with an upper, shallow type of chest breathing with a fast rhythm, (the hee hee ha ha method) I took long, slow cleansing breaths and I squatted with just about every one of my contraction/expansions. I allowed *my body* to guide me. Sometimes I would sway back and forth and sometimes my body would automatically go into a spiraling movement, more like a dance.

I had practiced a lot of pelvic floor exercises (*kegels*) all during my pregnancy and also deliberately used this movement to tighten and relax these muscles in between my contraction/expansions. I couldn't imagine being confined to a hospital bed with medical instruments attached or inserted inside me, measuring every rhythm and heartbeat etc, etc. Not being allowed the freedom of movement during labor, freedom to squat, freedom to walk around, to allow gravity to assist.

I love what Dr. O'dent expresses so passionately in his book; Birth Reborn; "*Freedom to be in any position is crucial to a spontaneous first stage labor.*" I was free to rest in my own bed, to walk, to squat, to play with Now Joy. I was free to listen to soothing music, to laugh, to cry. At times I felt great emotion pouring through me, enveloping me totally and completely. I felt exhilarated, liberated, nurtured.

When I was tired I rested under the calm energy of our bed pyramid. It felt so good to be able to freely take a dip in the warm tub whenever I wanted. To have loving and an allowing family and friends around me. To be fully aware that our baby could also feel, could hear and was conscious of everything that I was feeling and doing. I knew the more joyful I was, the more joyful the birth would be. I was deliberately creating a vortex of joyful vibrations and everyone around me seemed to be happily in the flow of it. I felt utter power, profound love and appreciation for myself... the child of God that I be!

I had been in labor for about 5 1/2 hours, mostly walking and squatting.



Gravity had done a good job of bringing the baby down quickly. Like I said before, it really felt like we were having a pajama party and I felt zero anxiety to rush or hurry anything.

The cameras were rolling, the aroma of the chocolate cake was in the air and everyone was sitting around the kitchen table gabbing. Dr. Jan, our Chiro and good friend arrived about 4:30 and she already designated herself to be the photographer. She insisted that the pictures would be her gift to us. She often massaged my back during a contraction/expansion and gently tapped along my spine helping to clear any nerve resistance. I felt nurtured and tended to as if I were a beloved Queen.

What if this could be the way that all women were treated during labor and birth?

In the meantime Joan had been outside soaking up the amazing energy around the birthing tub. When she came in she said that we really ought to go outside and feel what was going on out there. She said the energy was incredible! I remember Jan saying as we walked out, “lets go see what the angels are doing to prepare the area for you and the baby.”

Talk about incredible energy... it was palpable! I couldn't wait to enter the space we and those who love us had created. And speaking of joyful vibrations, I'd like to describe what it felt like when I stepped into our 'Vortex of Liquid Love.'

You've probably realized by now that we have a tendency to do some pretty strange things and set some pretty outrageous goals. I do admit that even today most people might think us crazy. We don't go to normal doctors; we don't carry any insurance, except for what is legally required. We live in domes and we travel to far off places to swim with Humpback whales. We home school our children, who we have always considered our teachers and we have waterbirths in back yard hot tubs.

Well, this back yard hot tub wasn't just a typical hot tub with water in it, either. A copper pyramid with a violet lens at the apex, creating a field of pure positive energy stood over it. It had 4 huge, powerful stones placed on each outside corner and... the hot tub had super duper cold fusion water added to it.

When me and my big buddha belly stepped into that water, I felt like I was flying. Literally I felt like I was being lifted up out of my body! All pressure from the weight of the baby was gone. It felt beyond wonderful! It felt

orgasmic! I truly was in my element. I was a mother dolphin about to give birth, swimming freely and immersed in liquid love.



There were no boundaries, no limits! I knew that my body was designed to give birth and I was free to allow it to undulate, to spin. It was pure pleasure to float, to completely relax, to breathe in Sedona and her deserts' crisp morning air. The birds were singing their morning songs. It was blissful. It was erotic. It was better than perfect!

After some time alone in my vortex of liquid love, Brack asked if he could join me. His energy is never intrusive, never pushy. He always sensed when I required space and was always there when I required support. I am truly blessed to have him. I am blessed beyond belief. I invited him in the water and together we floated, holding each other as I allowed my body to open.

We were in and out of the tub for the next couple of hours. And by the time my sister Samia Joy arrived around 7:00, I was *Complete*. I was fully opened, bag of waters still intact.

I don't know why, yet this time I didn't experience that intense urge to push like I had with Now Joy. In fact I only pushed maybe four or five times. I do remember towards the end getting out of the tub to cool off a bit... the morning Sedona sun was hot and while sitting on the birthing stool, I was given a mirror to see the bag of waters coming out of me. It was still intact and bulging out of my womb. It looked like a water balloon and with another

contraction I felt the baby moving down and a strong urge to push came over me. I knew I had to get back into the water quick, I couldn't push yet... the baby might come out!

I must have looked pretty funny waddling back to the tub... for goodness sakes, I had a water balloon between my legs and there was a baby in it!!!

It turned out that after safely getting back into our vortex of liquid love... there was time. There was time to feel the excitement rushing through me, the energy inside me compelling me to push. There was time to see the anticipation on the faces around me, to feel Brack's soft caresses, to hear Now



Joy's sweet voice saying, "the baby's coming out, the baby's coming out." Now Joy and Brack were both in the water with me, loving me.

Time stood still as I watched my dear family and friends and the cameras focused on me. A few moments to breathe slowly and

deeply, to feel the baby's velvety head move slowly into the bag of waters... I was pushing hard, it was easy, it was orgasmic!

I remember that Mary Ann was in front of me, softly telling me, "you're doing perfectly, just push a little more and reach down and deliver your baby." And that is exactly what I did. I pushed one more time and my little miracle was born right into my hands.

Suddenly and miraculously I was holding another waterbaby, a new and perfect little Joy, who emerged fearlessly and painlessly, and who desired the

name; Staryce-Starielle Joy Cherry. Again... I was a Mother with a newborn child. Creation... nothing could be more divine.

Story written by Nina Joy 2009



Staryce-Starielle Joy

Count Down To Dome Births



You know the saying 3 times a charm. Well the 3rd time was a charm and it was certainly and unequivocally a joy filled charm. I was again surrounded and nurtured by my family and friends and felt so very blessed to have been in the northern forest of Idaho in our brand new home. The expansion of my body, which allowed our *divine magnificent expression of life*, to enter this realm, took only 4 hours. The two births were so closely entwined. It couldn't have been more perfectly designed.

Our dream to build a dome was almost 4 years in the making and it took us on a journey from the red rocks of Sedona, Arizona, to the Islands of Hawaii, the Columbian River Gorge and finally, to the gloriously lush pine filled forest of northern Idaho.

Let's go back in time to the year 1990. Brack, Now Joy, who was 10 months young and I were traveling north on I-35 between Austin and Dallas, Texas in our 27-foot Motorhome. Now Joy was dancing to Madonna's new song 'Celebration', when we glanced off to the right and saw these little white

Domes. They looked like Igloos, yet much, much bigger. One even looked like a huge caterpillar.



There was another that had pitched roofs over the windows and a white picket fence around it. With our eyes nearly popping out of our heads we excitedly looked at each other and said at the exact same time, “We have to go back and see those!”

Unfortunately, we had already passed the Italy exit and being way out in the boonies on a Texas highway meant that the next exit was about 10 miles up the road. We wanted to make a U-turn, but couldn't. I remember those next 10 miles seemed to take forever and I can still remember our anticipation driving back to those Domes. We were on the edge of our seats!

If you have read our two previous birth stories you already know that Brack and I are very futuristic minded. We are adventurous beings. And we just knew we were in store for another, way out there experience.

When we finally got back to the Italy exit, our excitement was at its peak! We turned left and saw an old homemade sign that read ‘DOMES’ with an arrow pointing down a very narrow country road.

I'm glad Brack was driving because we were in a big Motorhome and this road looked like it was made for only 4-wheel drive vehicles, sooooo I held my breath and held on tight to my seat as we slowly headed down that road.

After about a quarter mile of rockin and rollin we pulled in the driveway of Monolithic Construction Inc. (without a scratch I might add) and saw Domes everywhere! Little did we know our life would never be the same.

The friendliest people on earth greeted us, they were happy to answer all of our questions. We found out that *Monolithic Domes* are incredibly energy efficient, you can save at least 50% of your cooling and heating costs compared to a regularly built house and they actually have the highest insulation rating of any known building.

They are simple to build, only having 4 ingredients... an air-form, concrete, steel rebar and polyurethane foam insulation, and they cost much less to build than a conventional stick frame or concrete block home.

These domes can withstand disasters such as hurricanes, tornadoes, fires and earthquakes. And, they can withstand the test of time more than any other structure known to man, with very little maintenance. There is a dome that was built in Rome in 128 AD, the 'Pantheon' and it is still standing in good condition to this day.

The owner of the company; David South and his family had been experimenting and building Domes for years. He himself insisted on showing us the operation.

David first took us to their Model Dome Home, the one with the white picket fence. I have to admit from the outside they do look a little funny, although on

the inside, they are a dream. The Dome Model was about 30 feet in diameter. It didn't look very big from the outside, yet once we stepped in we were amazed!

This round house was only around 1200 sq. feet. (I didn't know how they figured square footage out of a round shape though) In this Dome there was so much more space than you can imagine. David explained the optical illusion is because the outer walls are not straight and there are no corners. We were so excited we could hardly speak!

David then led us back to the office where there were 3 Domes put together, which made one heck of an office space and boy were they spacious.

We saw pictures of Domes that they had built all over the world. David told us about a 60 ft. Dome Home, just a few miles south in a little town called Temple, that was for sale. He encouraged us to phone the owners Rev. & Mrs. Huber. When we did, they said we were welcome to come any time.



It had been an amazing day so far and it was getting better and better by the minute. We thanked everyone for their generous hospitality and then headed off on another Dome seeking adventure.

As we drove back down I-35 south to Temple, Brack and I couldn't stop talking about how excited we were. We were on another exciting adventure together with our beloved Now Joy. And boy was Now Joy excited too. She was again dancing to the song, *Celebration*, and she was really going at it. For us... LIFE was a continual CELEBRATION!

The drive to Temple wasn't long and from the highway, the 60-foot Dome didn't look very big. Yet when we stepped over the threshold, WOW was it expansive. It was the most beautiful home I had ever seen!

There was a beautiful natural stone stairway winding up to the left and at 32 feet high there was a round skylight allowing so much light in. There were four spacious bedrooms upstairs with a huge loft and on one side of the loft was a crescent moon-shaped cutout on the floor and looking down through it you could view the down stairs formal dining room. It was magnificent! Downstairs was the master bedroom and another two guest rooms. This house was amazing! We wanted to buy it and move in that very day.

We spent most of the day with the Hubers and they shared all about what it was like to live in a Monolithic Dome. There was no doubt in our minds we were at the perfect place at the perfect time.

As it turned out, we didn't buy the Temple, Texas Dome, yet from that day on we knew, without a doubt, we wanted to live in a Dome and that no conventionally built home would ever do. We left Temple, very, very excited!



This began our journey to find the perfect spot to build our dream Dome Home.

Our journey took nearly four year. We had bought a 40-foot Motorhome soon after our visit to Temple. By then we had traveled to the Florida Keys, we had birthed another waterbaby, lived in a couple of places in Arizona

Traveled up the entire California coast, all through Oregon and Washington State and all the while searching for the perfect spot to build our dream Dome.

Our search ended in 1993 when we found the perfect spot near Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. It is one of the most beautiful 80 acres of pristine virgin land.

The construction of our Dream Dome started in May of 1994. And... I was in my fifth month of pregnancy.

Once we found the land, everything miraculously fell into place. Brack's long time friend and builder; Gaylord, said he'd be thrilled to help us and we all happily went to Italy, Texas for a Dome Workshop, of which David South was offering to Licensed Contractors. Gaylord learned all the ins and outs of the Monolithic Dome and actually got to build a small one during the workshop.

We all were in the process of learning, designing and creating a new home, a Dome Home. It was a busy time, a creative time.

Brack and I were also raising Now and Star Joy and everything this entails. We were 24/7 parents, living in a home on wheels, home- schooling them and on top of that I was carrying a third little *being* who was growing fast.



Time passed quickly. All progressed nicely with the building of the Dome and the building of our baby growing inside me. We had met a very skilled and experienced Nurse/Midwife, Cathy Weston. She was a perfect match for us, and our far out life style.

Cathy had been practicing midwifery for many years and was very comfortable with waterbirth. She had all 4 of her children at home naturally and also owned an organic bakery in Coeur D'Alene, just 30 minutes away. I was bound to be well fed.

One of the things I cherish most about Cathy is the calm, confident aura about her. She is wise beyond her years. I always felt nurtured just being in her presence. I guess this comes with time, not to mention assisting with hundreds of births.

I learned so much from her in regards to natural remedies for pregnancy, birth and beyond. Cathy practiced with natural organic herbs and homeopathic remedies. She taught me many things about the art of *spiritual midwifery*. I don't think Cathy has a nervous bone in her body and I will be forever thankful for her guidance.

Only 3 months to go...

Thank God Domes go up fast because we only had 3 months till the birth of our next child. It truly was my hearts desire to birth the baby in our Dome. It would be the first Monolithic Dome WaterBirth! Yet as the days and nights passed we experienced many delays in the construction and I started to feel like it wasn't going to be finished in time. I felt compelled to have a back up plan just in case.

This is when my intense and vivid dreams started...

We were all having lots of fun in the forest and swimming in the nearby Coeur D'Alene River and Rose Lake. We really loved the community and our little ones were developing heartily. People in these parts call it, 'Gods Country' and we all felt blessed to be living there, even if it was just in a motorhome. I knew I could have the baby in the Motorhome bathtub, or even in a portable birthing tub, my preference of course was the Dome.

I was having a lot of vivid dreams and in most of them I was with my under water dolphin friends in Hawaii almost every night. It felt like they were calling me to come. Memories were coming to mind of being in Hawaii swimming with dolphins when I was carrying Now Joy and my meditations on Cathedral Rock in Sedona were also coming back very strongly.

There is something awesomely special about being pregnant and swimming with Dolphins. I've had so many amazing experiences with them and I really missed my pod!

Dolphins seem to have preferences with humans. this is not an absolute rule, but is usually true. If you go swimming with dolphins and there are children

around, the dolphins go to the children first. If there are no children, they go to the women. If there are no women, they go to the men. And if there's a woman who's pregnant, everyone else can forget it, she gets their total attention. That little incoming baby is the greatest thing of all. The dolphins become very excited when they see a human giving birth. They just love it!

Dolphins can do things that are really amazing. Babies who were born with midwifing dolphins, at least as it's going in Russia, are extraordinary children. From everything I've read so far, not one of those babies has an IQ under 150, and they all have extremely stable emotional bodies and extremely strong physical bodies. They seem to be superior in one way or another. Amazing!

Brack and I talked about going to Hawaii. We had friends living there and we knew they would help us find the perfect house near the ocean. We thought maybe we could birth there again. We could fly Cathy over when the time was right... it would be great!

There is nothing like living in the moment, yes it takes quite a bit of trust yet if you can let go and let God, as I like to say, everything works out. And it is usually better than you could ever do alone.

Soooooo, we let go and let the *Divine* take the helm. We all got on a jet plane and headed to the Big Island of Hawaii to visit our ocean family... the *Spinners*. If I just so happened to go into labor, well, Merrily, our midwife for Now Joy's waterbirth, was close by to assist.

You should have seen us... there we all were. Brack, Now, Star, and me, being 7 months along, setting off to the big blue ocean. Back to the waters where we had lived and birthed Now Joy, where I swam with hundreds of dolphins and where we could birth our new little Joy that was soon to come.



I had two successful waterbirths behind me and I was confident this one would be wonderful too, no matter where we were. And if our Dome wasn't going to be ready, I wanted to get settled in somewhere in Hawaii as soon as possible. Cathy was so supportive, she knew all would work out for us and she was willing to fly over if we wanted her to.

The ocean is always warm and inviting in Hawaii and I could rejoin with all of my dolphin friends who lived above the water and all of them living under it. The Big Island was where we spent countless hours swimming and kayaking with our friends, the Spinner dolphins and Humpback whales.

We found a rental house just steps from the water in Kealahou Bay and settled in quickly. That first afternoon the dolphins gave us a warm spinning out of the water welcome. I couldn't wait to get close to my Pod! I felt strong and healthy and never tired when I was in the waters around them.

One of my most treasured teachers; Joan Ocean, who is an experiential dolphin and whale researcher, invited us on one of her dolphin excursions during our stay there. Joan has been swimming with dolphins and whales and studying *with* them for many years. She has written books and many papers, and given lectures around the world about her close encounters with them.

After we had experienced many joy filled moments with the *Spinners*, Joan told me she thought I was going to have the baby right there in the ocean, in the middle of this giant pod, with dolphins as our midwives. Wouldn't that have been a sight to behold?

I was in my 8th month of pregnancy and we had been on the Big Isle for about five weeks. Now and Star had had lots of dolphin encounters. It was always thrilling to watch and observe their fearlessness swimming freely with them. I felt that I was truly in my element and it was hard to get me to stay on land for very long.



I have to say that I am so very thankful for my Brack. He allowed me all the time I wanted to swim with the dolphins. Meanwhile he took very good care of our daughters. He never pushed me to do anything I didn't want to do and was pretty much selfless during our stay there. Yes, he did have to keep up with his computer work, which wasn't that demanding, and keep the guys in Idaho on the job. Yet he was always there for me no matter what I was going through.

We all were very happy being on the Island, yet at the same time we missed our forest home. My dreams had also shifted. I was dreaming almost every night that I was speaking with our, not yet born miracle. And we were always in a Dome. A part of me really wanted to stay, yet there was also a part of me that wanted to go back to the forest, to our Dome.



Deep down I think we all wanted the baby to be born in Idaho in the water and in the Dome. Over the years I'd learned to trust that inner voice, you know the one that just keeps lovingly nagging you to do something. The one that after many years you learn to listen to and follow. The one that never lets you down. As much as I

didn't want to leave Hawaii, I knew that it was time to go Dome.

I want to again mention that Brack has always been and still is the best thing that has ever happened to me. He's my rock. He calls himself my *Love Slave* and says it's really okay to be a slave when love is involved. We have an immensely powerful telepathic connection too. He almost always knows what I'm thinking and during my pregnancies this bond was even stronger. No matter what I wanted to do he was 100% on my side. He allowed things that most men would think crazy. I couldn't have done any of this without his undying love and support.

Brack kept a close eye on the construction in Idaho and it was all progressing nicely. He also knew that I was leaning more towards having the baby in the Dome. So he talked to Gaylord to see if it was even remotely possible. Gaylord said it would be close, but if we really, really wanted to have the baby

in the Dome, he would do everything he could to have at least the water running and a bed on the floor.

Brack and I had been in what looked like impossible situations before. It was our job to ask and then allow Gods' Universal Forces to go to work and rearrange and align the circumstances, people and events for us so that our ultimate hearts desire could be fulfilled. All we needed to do was to do the best we could to stay in alignment with the power that creates worlds.

I'm not kidding. Gods law of vibration & attraction definitely does work! Intense and specific focused desire, action, as well as allowing, is the key... which is not always easy. This was one of those big desires... to have the first ever Monolithic Dome WaterBirth.

Brack and I knew just about anything was possible, yet we weren't actually the ones who were building the Dome, Gaylord and his crews were. We did however know that if we held tight to our faith and our vision and trusted that *Divine Universal Forces* were working on our behalf, everything for the highest and best would be the outcome.

So once more... we were off on another journey, another Dome seeking adventure...

I remember clearly that the trip back from Hawaii was very tiring for me. I was really feeling heavy with the baby and we were due in less than 3 weeks. Even though it was hard leaving my dolphin friends, I knew I was making the right decision to leave Hawaii when we did. This baby was coming soon. Now and Star were going to have a little sister or brother in less than a month and I really wanted to find a nest. I was experiencing that intense desire to nest, to settle down in a comfortable and nurturing environment for birth.

When we finally drove up the long driveway and saw our Dome we were all screaming with excitement! I was so glad to be back in the forest amongst the giant pine trees.

The Dome looked about the same on the outside yet when we went inside, so much had been accomplished and we were pleased to see the bathtub was in place. The faucets still hadn't arrived but were due any day. Gaylord and Butch were still working on the drywall in the bathroom, Bill, our electrician was setting the lights, and the glass block shower wall was beautiful, but only half done.

If you've ever witnessed the building of your own home, you know that everything doesn't always go smoothly. From picking out just the right fixtures, to choosing where you want your walls, there are always delays. It can be pretty stressful for anyone, let alone someone who is...

NINE MONTHS PREGNANT!!!

Thank God I had practiced prayer, meditation and full body breathing for many years. It had always helped me through times of crazy, stressful situations. So to keep from going out of my mind I made this a twice a day ritual. Especially focusing on deep and rhythmic breathing to help quiet my mind. It was important to visualize the Dome being ready and having a perfect birth.

I needed to remind myself that the outer circumstances didn't really matter. What matters is *my* inner peace and joy. I focused on how blessed I was to have my Mother there helping with Now and Star, who were 4 and 2 years young. Brack was there to deal with the construction.

Now looking back at those last few days before the baby came, I know there was a power that was guiding me and truly nourishing my spirit. That pure positive flowing river, the never-ending stream of well-being. There was so much busyness around me yet there was a profound calm within me.

It's beyond words, yet I can tell you this and I know it to the core of my being, there were definitely times when I felt the incredible Energy, the Spirit, the Essence of our baby Joy, who's body temple I had been blessed with, to carry and to nourish for nearly nine months. This child was growing more and more powerful within me, all around me, and the awesome power of LOVE was beyond AMAZING... it felt like pure bliss!

I also remember in that last week before she came, we hadn't yet received a name. We didn't know if it was a girl or boy. Brack and I both sensed female energy, although you never know until you see.

I know you must be thinking that picking out a name is usually one of the first things an expectant Mother does... not in our case. I had received my first 2 daughters names, not from a book, but clearly from Divine Holy Spirit and not until the very end of our pregnancies. The day the name came to us; I was being pushed on a swing!

Brack, the girls and I had a daily ritual of walking down to the playground at 'Rose Lake's historical one room School house.' On that day, Brack was swinging me and all of a sudden he said, "Nina, I just heard the name *Iam Joy* in my head, it's going to be a girl!" We all agreed it was the perfect name.

The baby was due any moment and our bathtub fixtures hadn't arrived. It really looked like we might have to birth in the motorhome bathtub, which was plenty big enough, yet it wasn't my first choice. Everyone seemed to be



walking on eggshells around me. I was due to have the baby the following week but you never really know just when a baby will decide to come.

And this is how close it was...

It was a **Tuesday**. They had finished the glass block wall separating the bathroom from the bedroom. It was gorgeous; clear glass with bubbles! On **Thursday** the fixtures for the bathtub finally arrived and Bob, the plumber was diligently installing them. The beautiful ocean blue carpet went in on **Friday**. We had ordered a custom made 8 foot round bed. The owner of the Mattress Company and his wife specially delivered it on **Saturday**. We picked up the sheets for the bed on **Monday** and I went into labor on **Tuesday** afternoon at four o'clock.

Our new little water baby girl took her first breath at eight o'clock on a beautiful starry night, just four hours later. She was born joyously and painlessly in warm water, with Brack next to me in our newborn Ocean Dome! Our midwife Cathy said, "she came spinning out of you just like a baby spinner dolphin!" It was the most awesome birth experience yet!!!

There are many moments that I remember during that short 4 hours of labor and birth. I remember feeling so blessed to have family and friends around me and a calm and nurturing unobtrusive Midwife standing by.

I remember my beautiful loving friend Teri and her daughter Laura and baby Sean, who was enjoying his freedom, crawling all around our huge Dome bedroom. Thank you Teri for manning the video cam!

I remember with each contraction/expansion, it felt so good to be free to walk and talk, to sing, to dance and frolic in the warm water, yes they were intense, yet with having practiced deep rhythmic breathing and the freedom to squat with each and send loving thoughts to my body and the baby, they passed quickly. I remember the peace I felt knowing that my body was made to have babies.



I remember my beautiful and oh so calm and supportive, allowing mate, Brack ever present ever loving. Thank you for everything my darling!

I remember our 2 other water babies, Now Joy and Star Joy, laughing and playing and dancing with Laura and watching Disney's, 'The Little Mermaid' on the big screen TV.

I remember Now Joy's anxious anticipation, often saying, "Mommy, when is the baby coming out?"

I remember my dear mother Joy who was always there for me no matter what. It was she who brought warm towels for our newborn Iam Joy.

I mostly remember that there was a calm within me and there was no fear and no pain in bringing our new little Joy into this world. I remember it was easy to breath and visualize and commune with the spirit of this child of God. I remember that there was no separation between my body and my spirit and the love and power of the Divine!

I also remember in those final moments of squatting in the water, pushing and feeling again for the 3rd time, *the burning ring of fire*, as her head squeezed out of my body, it felt like the most intense orgasm. Such pleasure, no words can convey. I'm sure you've heard the saying, three times a charm, Oh Yes, it is so true. Weighing in at 8 pounds 5 ounces and 20 inches long, our perfect little baby girl was not so small after all!

I so much want to thank those who did Super-Human feats to finish our Ocean Dome in the middle of the forest, so I could experience my ecstatic waterbirth within it. I want to thank Cathy Weston, our most awesome and allowing Midwife. It just wouldn't have been as divine without you there.

Many thanks go out to everyone at Monolithic Construction Inc. in Italy, Texas for all their help and encouragement. To Gaylord Allen and Butch Rothe for their unending love for building Domes. Marshall Crigger the helper, Bill and Pete Cropper of Cropper Electric, without you guys, there would have been NO water! Bob DuBois of Sally Ann Mechanical, Michael Engelby Excavating, Steve Garitone and Carl & Tod Cochran of C & G Construction, Wally Burnham of Burnham Construction, Central Premix P & B Concrete, Pella Windows and Tapley Cabinets.

My extraordinary Mother Joy, my awesome mate Brack and daughters: Now Joy and Star Joy, for their un-conditional love and patience.

And last but not least, thank you baby *Iam Joy* for hanging in there... until the job was done!



I am Joy

Joyous TIPS
FOR
PREGNANCY, BIRTH & BEYOND



Hi again! I do hope you enjoyed reading our extraordinary adventures, during my years of pregnancy & childbirth. To me, unforgettable blessings with Brack and our 3 Joy girls. I pray you were inspired, uplifted and maybe even empowered. And now I pray you will find these Joyous Tips... also inspiring, uplifting and maybe even empowering, on your journey of pregnancy, birth & beyond.

Our Joy's are all grown up now and beginning their young and happy adult lives. Brack and I continue to be together and are still growing in love, honor and respect for each other.

We continued being 24/7 parents from their births, throughout their young lives. As of this writing, it's been nearly 33 years. I have to admit home schooling, even to home College, and beyond has been awesome! As I've said before our children are our teachers too.

They each were ready for their own computer at 3 years young. They definitely got that from daddy Brack, and with both of us choosing a home-based biz, we were able to travel and expose them to what we call a more free to be, have and do lifestyle.

Long ago I learned about the power of setting an intention. So it is my intention to share *Key* things that I deliberately focused on. Specific *tools* and valued *tips of the trade* that undoubtedly helped me prepare and I know will help you in your journey through pregnancy, childbirth & beyond.

It is my joyous intention in writing this 'beyond' section of the book, to uplift and empower you. If you are needing guidance, help guide you back to you. To assist you in recognizing that your body was designed to give birth. To share truth. Truth that there is powerful innate wisdom in every intelligent cell of your body and when you are prepared in body and mind, clear of fear, of doubt, of negative expectations, there will be more expansion, more allowance and therefore less resistance, less stress, less pain.

Undoubtedly some of what I am going to share, you will already be aware of and you can easily find more information about... **Lucky you!** There wasn't an Internet, no hand held computers or even cell phones when I was pregnant

in the early nineties. I'm continuously amazed! Aren't we all blessed with soooooo much wonderful information at our fingertips these days?

Within you is awesome power. Power that that creates worlds. And when you spend time tuning in to this loving power, always available, you will tune in more to the miraculous *Light Being* already growing or perhaps will be growing inside of you.

The miraculous *Being* who chose *You* to come through. Who chose *You* to be nurtured by. Who chose *You* to love and beloved.

Tip #1

Deliberate Intent

I'd like to start with what I know to be the most important KEY to experiencing a more joyous pregnancy, birth and beyond...

YOU GOTTA GET YOUR MIND RIGHT!!!

Sorry, I know this sounds abrupt, yet it is vital that you deliberately spend time each day acknowledging, loving and appreciating the awesome intelligence within you and all around you. *The Source* of your Being, the Spirit which is actually animating your body when you sleep. The Life, the Power that creates worlds!

Loving, appreciating and embracing who YOU truly are; a BEING of LIGHT. Truly knowing that you are a Beloved Being of Light and are loved and valued beyond all imagining.

Realizing that you have immense value is a KEY and that you are so worthy of having, being and doing whatever your heart desires. Who you are is a unique, divine, magnificent expression of life. And you can birth, without fear, another Being of Light upon this earth.

Without getting *tooooo* deep about this, let's remember we are energy Beings. Yes we are flesh, blood and bones, yet at molecular and quantum levels; which blows my mind, we are mostly space and swirling energy and our bodies, in essence, are electric. All energy or electricity has a frequency or vibration and believe it or not this frequency or vibration can easily be measured, and sensed.

With every thought you think or word you speak and with every emotion you feel, you are emitting a signal, like a radio frequency or signal. And if you have great emotion (*great amounts of energy in motion*) about what you are thinking and saying, you begin to create or continue to re-create the essence of what you are thinking, saying and feeling.

For some, this might be hard to grasp, yet everything I've studied, practiced and personally experienced says... what you get out of life is so much about your *attitude* and how you feel about *self*. When you think about it, attitude is everything. A great attitude always creates something great. And the opposite is also true.

Whenever you have consistent thoughts, and then say words you are in the process of manifesting something that will feel good to you when you get it, or something that will not feel good to you when you get it. And if you think something long enough, it simply becomes a belief.

What you MOSTLY focus on is a KEY!

So why not simply think and speak more about something you CAN do, rather than the opposite? Why not think and speak more about something that feels good or empowering when you think it, rather than something that doesn't?

Isn't a belief simply a habit of thought? Yet what if this belief is based on a false premise? What if something that you've come to believe true, is actually a lie?

It seems too simple yet most people ignore this. Most people will be convinced that if enough of others believe something; a so called truth, that it has to be true.

What if our idea or belief in something was just someone's opinion or experience and not actually a truth? And then because enough people heard this opinion, it started gaining momentum and then eventually everyone starts believing it to be true, when in fact it was based on someone's opinion or a false premise in the first place.

We don't realize the power we are blessed with. The power we have to create our own reality. Our thoughts and words do make a big difference in our reality.

It took a bit of practice, yet my life changed dramatically when I simply took a couple of words out of my vocabulary. Especially the word; CAN'T.

Before our girls were born, Brack and I stopped saying the words... *can't*, *hate & should*. And then we passed this along to our Joys. There are more words we talked about eliminating, yet these are the 3 biggies and where you might want to start.

I so appreciate Louise Hay and her book *You can Heal Your Life*. A modern book yet in it you will find ancient teachings.

Louise explains a good reason to replace the word; *should* with the word; *could*. She explains that the word *could* makes it more of a choice, instead of a learned behavior. This simple change can yield profoundly positive results. It surely did for us. Our substitute for the word, *can't*, especially for small children is; *unable at this time*. The word can't can be very destructive.

When you set a deliberate *intention* to give more thoughts towards that which is wanted; more life, more love, more peace and harmony, an easy birth... soon you'll be unable to utter any inharmonious words.

Words truly have the power to create. Words themselves have energy, you give life to them, more importantly, when you add emotion to that word, you give more life to them, the frequency gains momentum and also will be more attractive. Attracting more of what is talked about, what is focused on. You give life to them

Magnetic attraction begins with thought and emotion...

I remember when I first heard the words *deliberate intention* and *magnetic power*, they really struck a cord in me and when I started using words and thoughts more *deliberately*, inspiring, uplifting words to myself and others, it was easier to *tune in* to *Divine Creative Power*. I started manifesting more of what my heart truly desired and less of what I didn't.

If you wake up everyday with a deliberate and dominant intention of more well being, focusing your attention more on what is wanted rather than what is not wanted, there will be no doubt that you will deliberately create a more wonderful pregnancy, labor, birth and life experience.

This simple change can make all the difference in the world. Segment by segment you can train yourself to be fully present in the moment, distracting yourself from all the inner and outer chatter and circumstances.

When I was carrying our first baby, I was thinking one day about the word, *contraction* and noticing how the word *felt* to me. Being a Nurse and having read many pregnancy and childbirth books prepared me to know that a woman's body goes through an automatic process of pushing the baby out, which in turn presses on and opens or dilates the cervix.

It really is miraculous when you think about it. Yet this is also why a woman in labor usually experiences so much pain. You have to admit the words *labor* and *contraction* do sound a bit repulsive, don't they?

So before one of my morning meditation sessions when I was carrying Now Joy, I asked to be given a word I could focus on that would soften this natural and powerful bodily process. The word *expansion* came to mind. To me the word *expansion* feels so much lighter and it really makes more sense, as this is what you want your body to do also. Yes, you do want the innate wisdom of your body to help push the baby out, and you also want your cervix to open completely with ease and grace.

As you visualize each day your body opening easily and effortlessly, your cervix expanding easily and effortlessly, like a flower blooming, you will be on your way to the birth of your dreams. A lovely affirmation as you visualize a blossoming flower... "*I am opening beautifully with ease and grace*".

As I mentioned before, there are many wonderful recordings of *guided imagery, affirmations, prayers and meditation*, specifically for birth. I was inspired to record one called; *The Birth of your Dreams*, in which I incorporate deep rhythmical breathing, and positive affirmations with soothing music to disappear in.

You can find it here:

<https://now.ultimatelifeuniversity.com/store/K9sdzvtV>

For more beautiful affirmations, please visit: <http://birthbuddy.wordpress.com/resources/affirmations/> and <http://www.louisehay.com/>

Tip # 2

Emotional Freedom

Granted it isn't always easy to think thoughts of appreciation when you are in the midst of a negative situation. Since our first day of birth, in fact even before we are even born and still inside our Mother... our mental, emotional and physical programming began.

You literally felt when your Mother was emotional.

Because we are made up of vibration we aren't, as most think, separate from our Mothers energy. If our Mom was consistently joyful or fearful while we are in her womb we consistently learned what her emotions felt like. Then consistent sounds and words were heard and the corresponding *vibrations* or *emotions* connecting with those words were *felt*. It's no wonder why we have fears and phobias that just seem to automatically be built in.

Please, there is no blame intended. And I truly believe that everyone is doing the best they can in any now moment. You don't know what you don't know, right? Where we are *emotionally* is directly due to our life's programming. Even while in the womb.

I believe that the root of all negative emotion stems from fear of being separate from who we were originally created to be; our true identity.

Many volumes have been written on the subject of mind programming or being brain washed and many teachers will also say: let fear be your best friend, it's there for a good reason and it can save your life. Thank goodness for our emotions; guidance from our conscience our built in moral compass. Our emotions are literally, divine guidance.

Yet if you are plagued with fears and doubts, if your thoughts and emotions are clearly NOT serving you and you desire to be quickly FREE of them... EFT is your answer.

EFT stands for *Emotional Freedom Technique*. EFT is an emotional form of acupuncture without the use of needles. Instead, we tap with the fingertips to stimulate certain meridian energy points while the client is tuned in to the problem. There is also a non tapping EFT and involves a personal guide.

Normally I wouldn't coach someone to focus on the problem too much, I'm more of a solution seeker, yet with EFT it is necessary during the Tapping Process. As you tap or focus on; when and what your experience is or was, you are clearing the 'static' which interferes with a clear signal.

EFT was introduced to the world by Gary Craig in 1995 and is based on the successes of Dr. Roger Callahan, a psychologist, in dealing with emotional problems.

Gary explains that *negative emotions* are linked to a disruption in the body's energy system. Tapping balances electricity in the meridians of the body by sending healing pulses. It is theorized that by tapping acupuncture meridians these disruptions can be reduced or eliminated and that is what causes the positive shifts in emotions. Along with improvements in emotions, it is common to also have positive shifts in your physical body.

Millions of people now have used EFT for pain relief, ending insomnia, improving performance, eliminating bad habits and phobias, reaching ideal weight, creating abundance, easier pregnancy and birth, and much more. It is very easy to do and the technique has proven to shorten the typical talk therapy process from months or years down to minutes or hours!

At first it looks a bit odd, (tapping on your face & body) but it works! And it works quickly. A lot of times you will experience *a one-minute miracle!*

This quote by Dr. Eric Robins captures the essence of EFT...

“Someday the medical profession will wake up and realize that unresolved emotional issues are the main cause of 85% of all illnesses. When they do, ‘EFT’ will be one of their primary healing tools... as it is for me.”

I have personally used EFT on everything, I mean everything! If I’m feeling a headache coming on, I tap. If one of our daughters is feeling frustrated, sad or angry about something, we tap. If I’m feeling good, I tap to feel great! It works wonders with phobias. In fact you can easily clear something out of your mind and body that you have suffered with all your life. It’s so easy and it works fast!

Although I experienced fearless and painless births without EFT, it took long intense study and practice. Again, lucky you! You don’t even have to believe in EFT for it to work, it works regardless of whether you believe it or not.

Can you imagine freeing yourself from limiting beliefs in minutes? Freeing yourself from past traumas and fears you have about a future event, such as pregnancy and childbirth?

You CAN experience emotional freedom! Freedom that allows you to blossom into your brilliant self and rise above whatever hidden or subconscious programs you might have running. Thoughts preventing you from a more conscious, a more ecstatic birth!

Anyone can easily learn how to do the Emotional freedom Technique. There are also many Certified Practitioners who specialize in EFT for pregnancy and childbirth, I would start by getting a free manual to learn the basics at:

www.emofree.com

www.childbirthjoy.com/childbirth_EFT.html

Tip #3

Nutrition, Breastfeeding and Super Foods

My passion in the field of nutrition and super foods began at 19, in the late 70's, while I was a patient in the hospital for almost a year. I'm now in my 5th decade of life and I've never stopped studying this most fantastic subject.

The word nutrition itself means; 'The process of nourishing or being nourished, especially the process by which a living organism assimilates food and uses it for growth and replacement of tissues.'

I joined the Navy at 17 and I'd been through Hospital Corps training, (*a Hospital Corpsman's duties are equivalent to a Nurse*). I had served all throughout the hospital and was then a patient on the *Med/Surg Ward* which I had been working on for a year. I'm convinced that the time spent around so much illness and dis-ease early in life was paramount in fueling my passion to help others... to not get sick in the first place!

In Hospital Corps or Nursing school (surprisingly enough) there was very little time spent focused on the importance of foods or nutrition and I soon found out that the Physicians I worked with were also *untrained* in the subject.

I really had to dig deep and learn on my own from leading edge periodicals like; '*The Body Forum*' and leading edge thinkers who had stepped way out on limbs, such as Dr. Benjamin Frank who wrote; *The No Aging Diet*, and Dr. Hans Kugler, now a highly revered anti-aging researcher, to name just a couple.

I love what Hippocrates, who is known as the *father of medicine*, said...

“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”

Before I tell you about some of nature's most delicious super foods, I'd like to share a most fantastic inner alchemy or process that happens naturally in a woman's divine body temple during childbirth and shortly after.

Did you know that nature vaccinates us at birth? Yes, in an ideal birth, the mother will pass onto her unborn child life giving, essential micro flora, also known as friendly bacteria.



Not only does a woman have the ability to conceive, nurture, carry, and birth, she also can supply life giving super nourishing protective fluid to her newly born miracle. Her own very tasty *Colostrum*.

I chose to breast feed each of my daughters for over a year. I do realize that this is not for everyone, yet I know to the core of my being that if at all possible, a baby's first meal needs to be; his or her Mother's Colostrum (the first fluid which comes right after birth) no matter what you have to do!

Colostrums are in fact the #1 most super duper food and have been proven to be the most important meal of a Being's life! Colostrum has been referred to as *Liquid Gold* and a woman carries it within her miraculous body.

So much has been discovered and written about what miracles Colostrum has within it, and why it is so very important! Here I'll share just a few absolutely amazing ones for you.

Colostrum is really considered a non-milk substance. It is rich in nutrients, antibodies and everything a baby requires to be fully nourished and it starts appearing a few hours before the baby is born. This perfect superfood is also a

very potent, protective liquid, which gives the baby a lot of immunity until his or her own immune system is set up.

Donna Gates, author and lecturer of *The Body Ecology Diet* has the most awesome explanation of how our divinely orchestrated inner ecosystem, in other words, our immune system begins. In her book she explains that this information is not well known, yet is essential information and it is information that every single person, pregnant or not, in this country, on this planet, especially any health care professional who is working with people to help them create a healthier body... needs to know!

First let's go back to the baby in the womb. All of us know that a baby starts off from two simple cells, an egg cell and a sperm cell and the baby starts to grow in the womb in a relatively sterile environment.

He or she is floating around in the amniotic fluid, which is very much like water in the ocean and grows inside this womb for nine months, not exposed to any bacteria from the outside world.

Now... close to the time when the baby is ready to be born, the Mothers cervix starts to dilate ever so slightly, usually about two centimeters and the bacteria that is in her birth canal begins to enter the baby's world into the amniotic fluid, which the baby is always drinking. The amniotic fluid begins to go down into her or his digestive track.

Ideally the mother will have large amounts of very friendly bacteria in her intestines and birth canal. So when the baby passes through, he or she will be exposed to this as well. She basically inoculates or vaccinates her baby with this healthy bacteria.

Isn't this just amazing... we are naturally vaccinated at birth!

So the baby moves from an absolutely sterilized environment into this world that is inundated with bacteria. Some of that bacteria is going to be positive, some of it will be neutral and some of it could be pathogenic bacteria; the type you do not want to pass along to your newborn. Thanks to our Creator and Mother nature we are protected from any pathogenic bacteria in a very special way.

Remember, days before the baby is actually born, the Mothers body has been preparing to feed the baby by creating Colostrum. Ideally soon after the baby is born she or he will be put to the Mothers breast and receive the most valuable meal, the most important life enhancing formula of her or his life.

You might not know this... babies are born with an open gut. The term *leaky gut* has become a popular label recently and you probably think it's a bad thing. Yet the gut is open for a specific reason. The Colostrum contains proteins and peptides and transfer factors, plus very important substances that have to get into the babies blood instantly to begin to protect him or her. So when the gut is open or permeable, the Colostrum and the nutrients in the Colostrum actually go in immediately and begin to give your baby the immunity he or she requires.

At first the Colostrum, doesn't have any sugar, and actually as soon as the baby's gut starts to fill up with it, the intestine seals itself up, and in about six hours the Colostrum changes ever so slightly and becomes quite rich and sugary, and at that point it begins to create friendly mucus in the babies digestive track.

The mucus adheres to the baby's mucosal lining and the friendly bacteria or micro flora, which has been passed to the baby through the amniotic fluid inside the baby's digestive track, begins to stick onto that mucus.

This is the beginning of the our immune system! This is how nature establishes the inner ecosystem inside each of us. The bacterium enters the baby's body, and then the first substance; Colostrum, creates a bed for the micro flora to adhere to. As the baby continues to drink the Colostrum, that is very rich in sugar, which the micro flora love, are fed by that sugar and the *micro flora* grow and grow and grow. As the days, weeks and months go by, a baby has a fully functioning inner ecosystem set up inside his or her intestines.

Why does nature choose to put something like this in place inside of us as we are entering this world? The micro flora that come to live inside of us, do many, many important things.

During an ideal birth, nature goes through a very methodical process of establishing an inner ecosystem (exactly as it was meant to be) with the correct balance of beneficial micro flora.

Since 85% of our immune system is located in the gut, the micro floras are an integral part of keeping our gut healthy. They have to be there! Our immune system is not strong if we don't have micro flora living in our intestines. They are essential for you and your baby's health and immunity.

Colostrum is liquid gold because of its tremendous health benefits. There is no question why it comes first and sets the stage for a healthy body and life. And the best part of it is, when we have large amounts of micro flora, we don't have to be afraid of getting any disease, no matter what it is, because they keep our body and blood slightly alkaline and research has proven that

pathogens and cancer causing substances cannot live in an alkaline environment.

Keep your body clean and well balanced by eating lots of cultured and fermented foods!

Now that we've learned all about Mother Natures #1 Food; *Colostrum*, let's move on to some new foods you might not be so familiar with.

Eating healthy, nutrient dense and richly colorful foods is very important. Yet even more important, **digesting** these foods is paramount to a long healthy life. Without lots of micro flora living in your digestive track you will not digest your foods, no matter how healthy that particular food is.

So **how** do we create a magnificent healthy inner ecosystem? It is so simple... we simply eat more cultured or fermented foods.

Cultured and or fermented foods are ancient. They have been around a long time but sadly they are not very popular in this modern day world of refrigeration. These foods are superior in life enhancing micro flora as well as hundreds of times more nutrient dense. A whole lot of goodness in a tiny package. They literally are living foods, because they contain large amounts of intelligent micro flora.

Everyone has heard of yogurt, which has been around for centuries. Kefir and cultured veggies are not so popular in the U.S. yet they sure do pack a punch against those pesky invaders we might get exposed to. They have been around for centuries in every culture around the world. And they are available at your local health food store and even some grocery stores now.

Remember having lots of friendly micro flora living inside our intestines is what our bodies want. These *living alchemists* literally keep us from getting food poisoning or any discordant energy we might pick up along our way. They rejuvenate and most important... they are *essential* for a strong immune system!

As I said, a good health food store will always stock cultured or fermented foods. Try them! Start out with very small amounts, just as you would when feeding solid foods to a baby for the first time. It might take a little while to get used to the funky smell and sour taste, (as they are packed full of potent goodness) a little bit does go a long way. In a short time you will insist that some be on your plate, no matter what you're eating.

Now that you know how to ensure that your baby has a strong immune system at birth... and for life, I'd like to share a little more about so called Super foods. Super foods are foods in very small amounts that are especially nutritious, rich in antioxidants, phytonutrients, vitamins and minerals. The best ones are grown without pesticides or added preservatives.

For instance a handful of Wolf-berries, commonly known as Goji berries with a small side of sunflower seeds, can immediately give your body a boost of good fats, high quality vitamin C, vitamin E, magnesium and selenium and infuse life giving energy to your liver, strengthen your eyesight, boost the immune system and improve circulation. And one of the most important advantages; increase the body's alkalinity. All very good stuff, and its all in just a handful!

Another favorite food I ate almost everyday while I was pregnant was avocados. They are full of good oils or fats, the kind that won't make you fat. I even made face and body masks with them. And I didn't have one stretch

mark! My kids used to say that I sound like a broken record because practically everyday I say, “*An apple and an avocado a day, keeps the doc away*” and it really has. It can keep stretch marks away too!

One of my favorite Nutrition experts, David Wolfe describes what ‘*Super foods*’ can do for you...

“Super foods immediately help nourish our brains, bones, muscles, skin, hair, nails, heart, liver, kidneys, pancreas, and most importantly our immune system. Over the long-term, super foods work to correct imbalances and guide us towards a more natural and original diet. When we consume super foods it becomes dramatically easier to achieve our ideal weight, diet, and food habits. Super foods ease our efforts to detoxify and make the transition to more healthy foods a snap... all we have to do is enjoy their gifts!”

A fun and easy way to maximize your organic fruits and veggies is by juicing them and making smoothies. Juicing vegetables gives you all the good enzymes, vitamins, minerals, co-factors, chlorophyll, antioxidants, phytonutrients and all other nutrients your body craves. I believe there is not a better way to energize and alkalize your body naturally. One of our family favorites is kale, cucumber, carrot and apple.

And lucky for us, there are some new fantastic *super foods* available now... and we don’t even have to climb the Himalayas to get them. They are easily available in health food stores or can easily be ordered on the Internet.

Bon Appetite!

Tip #4

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy, herbs and essential oils have become very popular in the last



couple of decades, and they also have been intimately linked to the physical, emotional and spiritual well being of people since the beginning of time. I've studied and practiced with them for over 25 years.

I find it very fascinating that the Egyptians were masters in using essential oils and aromatics. There are many hieroglyphics on the walls of Egyptian temples that depict the blending of oils and describe hundreds of recipes. For those of you who love reading Holy Scripture, did you know that there are almost 200 references to

Essential oils in the Bible? Amazing!

Essential oils and plant extracts are the most powerful part of the plant itself. They provide exquisite fragrances to balance your mood, lift your spirits, dispel negative emotions, and create a romantic atmosphere. And there are *specific essential oils* especially helpful during pregnancy and childbirth. They can be a wonderful gift that you can give to yourself ... and your baby.

Whether you plan to be at home, at a birthing center or in a hospital, you can easily incorporate essential oils, by either diffusing them in the air or applying a few drops to your massage oil and rubbing them directly on your body. In my experience, there was nothing more comforting than having my feet

massaged during my pregnancy. Having someone gently massage you during your labor can also be a glorious way to relax in between your contraction/expansions and adding the perfect essential oil to the mix will be the blissful icing on the cake!

If you have never used aromatherapy, begin slowly and test some of the many aromatic scents ahead of time. Talk with someone knowledgeable and become familiar so that you know what may be pleasing to you as opposed to what may bother you during labor. Remember, your senses tend to be heightened during pregnancy and the birth process.

I do want to mention that here are certain oils you will want to AVOID during pregnancy and the birth process. Please be sure to check with your midwife or health care provider before using them.

Here is a list of some of my favs, ALL SAFE for pregnancy and childbirth:

Ylang Ylang. When my friend Dr. Jan Viafora (*remember Jan attended Star Joy's birth and gifted us the most wonderful pictures*) came back from her trip to Bali, she brought me a gift of pure ylang ylang oil and when I first smelled this exotically strong scent, it sent me directly to heaven! This essential oil has many amazing properties and with regular use has been proven to lower blood pressure, calm your nerves and relax you. It is said that it can bring back the feeling of self-love, confidence, joy and peace.

Lavender is by far one of my most often used essential oil. I consider it to be a universal oil. If in doubt, choose Lavender. Lavender's influences are too many to list here, yet I love lavender for its ability to calm and balance both physically and emotionally. Use it for headaches and high blood pressure.

Mixed with carrier oil, like fractionated coconut oil, it is excellent for preventing or erasing stretch marks.

Neroli is a very good anti-depressant and it has been successful in treating anxiety, fear and apprehension, which is common during pregnancy. It is said that Neroli encourages confidence, courage, joy, peace and sensuality. Neroli brings everything into focus in the moment. Neroli smells delicious. You will smell and feel like you're on the Islands of Hawaii.

Geranium has been used for centuries for skin care and hormone imbalances. It is also used to regenerate tissue and nerves. When it is diffused in the air, it may help release negative memories, ease nervous tension, stress, balance the emotions, lift the spirit and foster well-being, peace and hope. And it smells wonderful!

Rose has been used for the skin for thousands of years. It's beautiful fragrance is intoxicating and aphrodisiac-like. It helps bring balance and harmony, allowing you to overcome insecurities. It is also stimulating and elevating to the mind, creating a sense of well-being.

If you are a bit overwhelmed by all the so-called pure oils out there in the market place, be sure to look for *Certified Pure Therapeutic Grade (CPTG)* essential oils. These will be the most consistently potent and the purest oils on the planet.

My all time favorites can be found here...

<http://www.mydoterra.com/ninajoy/>

Tip # 5

Prayer, Meditation & Guided Imagery

Prayer and Meditation during pregnancy is a wonderful way to prepare for childbirth. When you slow down your thoughts, especially those run away negative thoughts, by concentrating on something else, something that you are desiring, you are literally *training your mind* not to be distracted by outer circumstances.

In my experience, there is so much value in spending a few minutes everyday quieting your active thinking mind. When I first learned and started a daily meditation practice back in the 80's, I remember that I was so serious about it, and then became very frustrated right away, because no matter how hard I



tried to just concentrate on my breathing or just ask and let go and let divine answers come, I just couldn't stop thinking! My thoughts weren't slowing down... they were coming at light speed!

I did learn that with a little practice, you can slow down your active brain. Consistent practice is key. Focussing on something besides yourself is a good place to start.

It can be as easy as sitting in a comfortable upright chair for just 8 to 10 minutes a day and focusing on your breath moving in and out. God breathed life into Being. Why not start there?

A friend once shared with me that “*life is a meditation*” and that the mind is a tricky thing. Is it possible to stop thought? Maybe? This is where your *intention* is very important! Where do our thoughts go after we think them?

Meditate on this for a moment...

‘Every thought that has ever been thought, still exist.’

Remember, energy can never be destroyed.

It does take practice, yet it is sooooo worth it, and when you start each day with *deliberate intent* to blend more fully with who you are, the embodiment of *Christ* and the wonderful and amazing *miracle* growing inside of you, the rewards will be great. Greater than you can imagine!

In my experience, the time I spent listening to the soothing music, which accompanies guided meditation and affirmations were some of the most precious and fulfilling moments spent with my unborn child.

When my labor did begin, I was more prepared because I had trained my mind to concentrate on something other than the powerful sensations going on in my body, and most importantly, this is when I learned to use my breath as a natural anesthetic.

Yes I was still fully present and aware of everything going on, yet I was in a natural, joyful state, where the mind quiets down and allows the more powerful all knowing part of us... to shine through.

Meditation is like Multi-Vitamins for your brain.

Good to take every day!

Here are some amazing benefits of a daily Meditation practice...

For Emotional Wellbeing

- *Lessens worry, anxiety & impulsivity,
- *Lessens stress, fear, loneliness & depression
- *Enhances self-esteem & self-acceptance
- *Improves resilience against pain & adversity
- *Increases optimism, relaxation & awareness
- *Helps prevent emotional eating & smoking
- *Improves your mood & emotional intelligence

For a Super Mind

- *Increase mental strength & focus
- *Increase memory retention & recall
- *Better cognitive skills, creative thinking
- *Better decision making & problem solving
- *Better information processing
- *Helps ignore distractions
- *Helps manage ADHD

For a Healthier Body

- *Improves immune system & energy level
- *Improves breathing & heart rate
- *Reduces blood pressure
- *More longevity
- *Lessens heart & brain problems
- *Lessens inflammatory disorders & asthma
- *Lessens premenstrual & menopausal syndrome
- *Helps prevent Arthritis, Fibromyalgia & HIV

Tip # 6

Powerful Effects of Breathing Properly

I would have to say that how you breathe during labor and childbirth is one of the most important aspects to master. I also must say that my experience of fearless, painless, non-medicated childbirth is mostly do to the way I breathed before, during and after.

The subject of breathing is a subject I could write volumes about, yet for now, lets just talk about... Breathing for a more joyous birth experience

With many years of practicing *Hatha yoga* and *Pranayama* or the *Complete breath* as well as experiencing *Rebirthing sessions* in my 20's, I had a pretty good head start before my pregnancies. With much practice, I learned to use my breath as a way to relax and let go of fear and calm myself during life's stressful situations.

Fear can be your best friend or it can be your worst enemy. When fear takes over your mind, your body automatically starts producing adrenaline. Adrenaline causes the uterus to tense and blood to flow to the extremities leaving the uterus with insufficient oxygen, which in turn causes the pain commonly felt during a contraction. To remove fear is to remove pain.

With a daily practice of focused breathing, you can learn to master the *belly breath* and then you will master the art of *deliberate relaxation*. This will in turn help you to relax into the powerful sensations of labor and childbirth. It's

amazing what deep diaphragmatic breathing can do for you and the little miracle baby body inside of you!

Here are some of the benefits of deep, mindful, controlled Breathing:

- * increased inflow of oxygen purifies the bloodstream and promotes detoxification of all the organs of the body.
- * rejuvenation of your glands, including your pituitary and pineal glands, which are the higher sensory glands.
 - * especially helpful in releasing the build up of stress.
- * promotes healthy heart functioning and strengthens heart muscle performance.
- * more efficient digestion due to increased oxygen reaching the stomach and digestive organs.
- * healthier, more powerful lung performance, increasing stamina and physical performance. (Especially helpful for childbirth!)
- * deep rhythmic breathing promotes a calm, balanced body and inner serenity.

Breathe your baby into being. You both will be highly rewarded, enlivened and blessed beyond belief.

Tip # 7
Physical Exercise

My Dad was very influential in my life growing up. He made a career as a High School Physical Education, Health and Social Studies Teacher and Coach for all Sports. In fact, he introduced the first ‘Golf Class’ offered in High Schools in the mid-west. I started very early being focused on health and physical exercise and I just loved always showing off for my Daddy!

I joined the Navy at 17 and when I was 19 I was in a car crash and broke my back in two places. After being wrapped in a body cast for a couple months, surgery and a chair back brace for a year, there were times I thought I would never walk or live without pain. My Doctors even told me I probably would never be able to have children without great difficulty.

Yet with the help of Hatha yoga, I proved them wrong. Hatha yoga is simply a system of physical exercises and breathing control. I’m convinced that practicing this system was the reason I was able to birth my Joy’s, not only fearlessly and with very little pain.

I was 24 when I went to my first Hatha yoga class at a YMCA and after a few years of study, I became a Teacher. I’ve said many times that practicing Hatha yoga saved my life. Purely a God Send!

It does take discipline, as most things worthwhile do. Yet I know that practicing *prenatal yoga* was instrumental in helping me to have a smooth, less stressful pregnancy, easier childbirth... and beyond!



Yoga asanas or postures are designed to move and hold your body in different positions. You are consistently focused on slowly inhaling and exhaling, using your breath to relax and allow space in your body, which is perfect for pregnancy, labor and childbirth. The wonderful thing about a prenatal yoga practice is; you will learn deep relaxation for the whole body and mind, as

well as learn to specifically focus on the training of your pelvic floor muscles to relax at will.

Pushing your baby through your pelvis and into the world is demanding not only on you, but also on your pelvic muscles, which have to stretch to proportions previously unimaginable. So even if you've never thought much about them or maybe never even realized you had any, you'll want to pay attention to your pelvic muscles during and after pregnancy. And not only do these muscles play an important role in delivery, they keep your urine from leaking when you cough or laugh (a skill set you're only likely to notice when it's gone).

Fortunately, there's one exercise that experts agree can help prevent problems with your pelvic muscles after birth and even make your labor go a little smoother: Kegels. If you do only one exercise during pregnancy, make it this one.



What's a Kegel? Named after gynecologist Arnold Kegel, these exercises engage and strengthen your pelvic floor muscles, which hang like a sling

between your hips to support your bladder, uterus and other organs and control the flow of urine and the contraction of the vagina and anal sphincter. The goal of a Kegel is to contract the pelvic floor muscles for short periods of time, completing several short sets a few times a day. The exercise is fast and free and once you know how to do them, you can do them just about anywhere... when you're stuck at a red light, waiting in line or watching TV. When you condition these muscles it can make childbirth and recovery much easier, much quicker.

Doing Kegel exercises are easy and well worth the effort. It's fun and very pleasurable and you and your Mate can do it together! Kegel exercises are not just for us ladies either. Your man can also find them pleasurable and studies show that having strong PC muscles and doing Kegel exercises also has proven sexual health benefits for men.

AND continuing to do them after childbirth is so worth it, because strong and conditioned Pelvic Muscles help to bring everything that has been stretched and crowded and moved around inside of you during your last trimester... come back to center!

When I was pregnant with my daughter Star Joy I followed a yoga audiotape, specifically designed for pregnancy and it was wonderful. It gave me step by step instructions on exactly how to do Kegels. An invaluable tool!

A tip for easier practice at the end of your pregnancy and what helped me so much, is to practice asana poses in a warm shallow pool. You can float between asanas and the water is so supportive when you are at your heaviest.

Nowadays there are many Prenatal yoga instructors on DVD and you can find Prenatal yoga classes just about everywhere, which can be very up-lifting and

fun to do, allowing you to be around other women who are also focused on enjoying this precious time.

During pregnancy, yoga asana's are a gentle way to keep you active and supple and prepare your body for childbirth, plus there is an awesome bonus: after the birth your body will restore itself to your pre-pregnancy weight in no time!



NAMASTA

Labor and Birthing in Water



In my opinion there is nothing more relaxing than a warm bath and there is nothing more brilliantly natural and nurturing to both Mom and Baby than waterbirth.

If you read my birth experiences, you already know that I delivered three Waterbabies in the early-90's. This was long before most people had even heard of it in the United States. Let alone a Doctor of Obstetrics

I'd like to share a bit about the history of women giving birth in water. You'd be surprised how far back it goes. And why you might want to consider it, when it comes time to deliver your own baby.

Our biological link to water is a powerful link. 70% of our planet's surface is covered in water and after some 40 weeks spent in a liquid-filled womb, a newborn's body is 90% water. Wow!

Growing into adulthood the human body is still approximately 60% water. In fact water has often been referred to as *'the cradle of life'* based on evolutionary theories that life originated in the ocean more than 3 billion years ago.

Historical artifacts and records tell us that the history of waterbirth began almost as long ago as birth itself.

In Egypt, ancient rock carvings are rumored to depict the water births of pharaohs some 8000 years ago. Similarly from as early as 2700 BC the Minoan civilization on the island of Crete created temples in which women labored and birthed in water.

In California, the Chumash Indians tell stories of women laboring in natural pools and shallow inlets with dolphins hovering nearby. Within the Hawaiian Islands it is believed thousands of generations have been birthed in water.

In fact, historical speaking, from the Southern Islands of Japan, to the Panama Indians, to the Maoris of New Zealand, waterbirth appears as not an innovative practice but rather an ancient one.

There is one fact however that can be universally agreed upon. The advent of modern medicine brought about a low point in the history of waterbirth.

The first recorded account of a waterbirth in the modern Western world occurred in a village in France in 1803. After laboring for some 48 hours a woman was helped into a warm bath by her doctor in an effort to soothe her and provide temporary pain relief. Shortly after entering the bath the woman's stalled labour quickly progressed and her baby was born before any effort could be made to remove her from the bath.

However despite the obvious success of the use of water in this case and publication of the event in a French medical society journal, it would be the early-1970's before the history of waterbirth would be revisited by the medical profession in earnest.

Leading on from studies on the safety and value of waterbirth, performed in the Soviet Union in the 1960's, by Igor Tjarkovsky. In the early 1970's a number of French and Russian obstetricians began utilizing water as a pain control measure and in some cases as a birth option.

Meanwhile in Australia water births began to make an appearance, predominantly for midwife-assisted home births. What was unique about the efforts of these midwives and obstetricians was their motivation, to ease the transition from the womb to the outside world, to mitigate the effects of birth trauma, and normalize the birth process.

Their primary concern was that modern-day maternity care, with all its interventions, was creating traumatic births for babies. Among these physicians was the French obstetrician Frederic Leboyer who concluded that children could be quite literally affected for life by the nature of their birth.

I am so blessed to have met Igor while in Russia and will forever be grateful. His work of assisting women to give birth in the water and water baby training has come a long way and is now quite well known throughout the world.

There are many websites you can visit regarding these two subjects and I would encourage you to explore the idea of at least having a portable warm water tub available to relax in during your labor and to find a physician, midwife or doula, who is open to the idea.

I could go on and on about how wonderful waterbirth was for me, but I guess I already have in my stories. I pray that you will create for yourself, no matter which method you choose, your own... *Vortex of liquid Love*.

And finally... It has been an honor and a privilege to share with you our extraordinary pregnancy and birth experiences and the few tips that were instrumental in creating the births of my dreams.

The following BOOKS and RESOURCES were and I believe still are; gifts from God! I pray you will find them helpful on your journey to the...

Birth of *YOUR* Dreams... and Beyond

Joyous Books and Resources

Waterbirth International, I wanted to give special praise to Barbara Harper and her Waterbirth International family. Waterbirth International began in 1988, in Santa Barbara, California; by a concerned group of women and men who wanted to ensure that waterbirth was an available option for all women.

From that humble beginning in the living room of Barbara Harper and Harry Kislevitz (more than 30 years ago), Waterbirth International has become a leading voice in seeking a gentler, kinder and yes, easier way to welcome babies into the world.

I met Barbara on my way to Hawaii, when I was 7 months pregnant with Now Joy in 1990. Barbara is an amazing women and has made huge strides in her life to share the joy of birthing in water. Please visit her website for loads of Resources, Articles and Products at: <http://www.waterbirth.org>

BOOKS:

You Can Heal Your Life, by Louise Hay. This book was the starting point of my letting go of fear and pain. Truly a Godsend for me. <http://www.louisehay.com>

Mindset of Miracles, by Pamela Ann Ezell. “If you are reading these words, it is because your soul is searching for something for the touch of the Divine, for joy, for comfort, for hope, for happiness.” <https://www.amazon.com>

Orgasmic Birth, by Debra Pascali-Bonaro. This one-of-a-kind Resource is the next frontier of empowered, intimate childbirth. <http://www.orgasmicbirth.com>

Sacred Birthing, by Sunni Karil. James Twyman, an Internationally renowned musician, film maker and writer wrote: “This is a powerful book of sacred messages for birth and beyond and an incredible resource for Conscious Parenting!” <http://www.sacredbirthing.com>

Birth Reborn, by Dr. Michel O'dent. *One of my all time Favs!* A must have if you are considering waterbirth. <http://www.wombecology.com>

Birth, by Catherine Milinaire. An oldie but a goodie, with lots of photos.

The Water Birth Book, by Janet Balaskas. Another ground breaking book from the early nineties... and still is.

Water Babies, by Eric Sidenbladh. A book about *Igor Tjarkovsky* and his methods for delivering and training children in the water. Amazing!

Birthing From Within, by Pam England & Rob Horowitz. Dr. Michel O'dent wrote that it was a landmark in the history of Childbirth.

The Joyful Child, by Peggy Jenkins. A wonderful source book of activities and ideas for releasing children's natural joy. She cleverly changed the words in children songs. It was written for *children of all ages* and has been our bible, for a joyful life.

Ocean Born, by Chris Griscom. A breathtaking photographic book, illustrating the worlds *first ever* ocean born baby, named Bapu! It is an *Absolute* must see! <http://chrisgriscom.com>

Dolphin Connection, by Joan Ocean. This heartwarming book is the story of Joan Ocean's first meeting with the whales and dolphins in 1984, and her intimate friendships with cetaceans, as she creates a field of innocence where the dolphin is the teacher. Swimming in the ocean, she experiences a human-dolphin communication that releases expansive, multi-sensory knowledge in the entire body and its thought forms. <http://www.joanocean.com>

Dolphin Healing part 1, 2 & 3. If you love dolphins you will love this read!
http://www.idw.org/html/dolphin_healing_part_1.html

What To Expect When You Are Expecting, by Heidi Murkoff. This book has proven to be an all time world best seller and one of my favorites for down to earth practical info!

DVD's and Websites:

WaterBaby Video, *by Karil Daniels*

<http://www.waterbirthinfo.com>

Orgasmic Birth, *by Debra Pascali-Bonaro*

<http://www.orgasmicbirth.com>

Ecstatic Birth, *by Sheila Kamara Hay*

<http://www.ecstaticbirth.com>

Birthing in the Squatting Position

<http://www.1cascade.com/ProductInfo.aspx?productid=5909>

Prenatal Yoga

[Bliss from Within By Zoe](#)

<http://www.artofliving.org/yoga-and-pregnancy>

There are numerous CD's and Videos helpful in the area of deep diaphragmatic breathing. An excellent one from Binnie Dansby:

<http://www.binnieadansby.com/shop/downloads/Breath%3A-Key-Relaxation-and-Peace-Mind-MP3-Download>

For Inspiring, Uplifting and Calming Recordings:

Healthy Pregnancy and Successful Childbirth”

<https://www.healthjourneys.com/audio-library/kids>

[https://www.selfhelprecordings.com/product-category/all-recordings/family/
pregnancy-and-childbirth/](https://www.selfhelprecordings.com/product-category/all-recordings/family/pregnancy-and-childbirth/)

The Ultimate Birth Hypnosis Program

[“https://us.hypnobirthing.com”](https://us.hypnobirthing.com)

About Me...

I was born in Port St. Joe, Florida in the year 1958. My Mom told me for her my birth was like a hard bowel movement. I was lucky to be programed this way about childbirth.

I personally feel like a Dolphin out of water and consider myself a Professional Student. I've been blessed beyond belief and conscious for many years that there is a Divine spirit which lives within my body as well as all around me.

When I was 17 I enlisted in the U.S. Navy. I wanted to be a Dr. and help people, so I quit school, took the GED and joined the Naval Hospital Corps. My plwork (play/work) was equivalent to a civilian Nurse, and I loved it!

My time in the Navy Hospital Corps was very fulfilling and at the time I couldn't imagine doing anything else. However my life drastically changed when I experienced a car crash and ended up on the same "Ward" I'd been working on for almost 3 years, with a couple of fractures in my spine, with nerve damage and neck whiplash. I didn't walk for quite awhile.

Yet being laid up in a body cast for a couple of months and then surgery six months later gave me much time to meditate on pain, illness and disease. I couldn't help wonder why there was so much of it!

This led me to many years of study in subjects like; the Science of Nutrition, Anti-aging practices and Preventative Medicine, Psychology and eventually more Holistic approaches for a healthy life.

When I was in my 20's I traveled to I worked with many physicians and studied and practiced with teachers of Ancient healing wisdom of body, mind and beyond. I believe God/Source led me to learn more eastern ways of healing.

Most of my life I've been passionate about, gentle birthing, writing, teaching, learning, healing, being a mom and traveling the world. I have visited places like China, Japan, Russia and many European countries and have lived in Hawaii and Tahiti, which were my favorites, as I love spending most of my life swimming with dolphins, whales and little fishies.

I have had many experiences swimming in the wild and telepathic communication with dolphins and whales and while I was pregnant, the clarity and strength of our communication was much more amplified.

Being accepted into the 'Pod Mind' was beyond amazing and undoubtedly was a place I could easily deliver a baby knowing the special midwives who live in the sea.

Personally I've experienced 3 fearless, nearly painless, super-conscious, pleasurable, water births. To some it might seem very unconventional, yet it was perfect for us.

I believe that if your INTENTION is to have a fearless, painless even pleasurable childbirth experience... or anything else for that matter... YOU CAN!

In Christ I live,
njoy



Brack, Nina, Now, Star and Iam Joy Cherry

Yayyyy... just for you ebook lovers, here's a Bonus Story I wrote back in time....

"I'm Not Waterlogged Yet, Just Dolphin Filled"

"I awoke at 5:00 am and started tuning in to God, said Good morning and started breathing and praising the Almighty for a few minutes when a strong feeling to go swimming came over me. I got up, through on my suit and headed to my favorite ocean spot.

It's about a half hour drive to the Bay and I always enjoy listening to the International Christian network. They always offer great speakers and music almost all the way. One of my favorite Pastors, "Chip Ingram" from 'On the Leading Edge' program was on, I could feel my vibration raise!

The last 10 minutes of the drive to K Bay is a steep and winding road and as usual the radio station went out of range, so I turned it off and started to visualize myself swimming with the fishies and dolphins. My body was tingling and my mind was calling the dolphins using the power of praise. I thanked the Lord... for a WOW dolphin encounter.

I finally reached the bottom and turned right, leading me to the waters edge. Familiar beach houses on the left and right, nothing has changed in 22 years! My final destination, the ocean at the end of the road. I was almost there!

It was about 6:00 now and very quiet, just a couple of cars parked along the narrow road. As I walked to the waters edge I was pleased to see that the ocean was calm and then I glanced out to see if they had arrived yet. No dolphins in site.

The air was still and the waves were calm, yet still powerful enough to silently move towards shore and make that unmistakable clicking and clacking sound, when the water is powerfully pulling back through the smooth boulder rocks. In this case, black lava rock, creating a meditative and unique musical tone. I can sit and listen to this sound for hours.

I was alone. The sky was clear above me, yet in the far distance I could clearly see a dark wall of rain meeting the ocean. I stood there breathing deep and taking it all in.

After a few more minutes, lo and behold, a rainbow appeared and I thought; "Praise God the magic begins."

I stood there, maybe ten more minutes, still no dolphins. I felt a gentle nudge to go ahead and get in anyway dolphins or not. So I walked back to the car, got my gear and headed towards my favorite entrance to the deep blue.

I've been going to this spot for over 22 years. A long time dolphin friend used to live in a little house on the waters edge and she had the perfect spot to enter the water, a naturally carved out channel between two large lava rocks. A perfect and private channel and doorway to the deep for those who know the spot.

After putting on my mask and fins I entered the warm water and swam out, feeling like a dolphin myself, swimming in the direction of our usual meeting place.

Again I was in the silky salty water swimming above stunningly colorful fishies, having their yummy breakfast on the flourishing reef.

I swam out about a half mile. I felt safe and sound and ready for more, listening intently for the sounds of the Spinners, as I swam and dove under.

I don't know how long I frolicked in the water like a dolphin, but it wasn't long. I do remember closing my eyes, and holding my breath at one point to listen for the chitter chatter and whistles of dolphin sonar.

Don't know if you've ever snorkeled, but when you are breathing through a snorkel it's pretty loud. All you can hear is your own breath in and out. I think it is my favorite way to bask, swimming and breathing slowly and rhythmically through a snorkel.

There's nothin like being in open water and closing your eyes, knowing nothing is in your way, effortlessly floating, suspended in time and space and just being, basking in liquid love.

I remember that I stopped breathing for a bit to listen. Only the sound of the sea did I hear. I also sang a song and I prayed that the dolphins would hear me.

I spent a few more minutes of silence, closing my eyes and holding my breath and when I opened them, behold, there was a dolphin on my right and one on my left and 20 more underneath! My first thought was "you heard me!!!" I immediately started giggling and talking through my snorkel to the growing Pod, my family under the water.

Each one came close to greet me. I recognized the markings of some. Each one having scars, or jagged dorsal fins, or nicks and scratches on their tails. Each one sleek and beautiful! I hadn't had a dolphin encounter for over a month of being on the Island, and never before alone with so many! I was in pure bliss!!!

It wasn't long t'ill a little one came straight towards me. It's rostrum pointing straight at me. I was being sonar-ed. He was checkin me out.

I was again welcomed into a pod of beings so advanced, so playful, so fearlessly swimming close to me. I felt like I was part of the Pod, part of the family.

For a long time I followed along side of a couple, observing their behavior in love. They actually were making love, belly to belly gracefully undulating together as one.

Dolphins make love all the time. For just brief moments though. This day I was close enough to see the male's penis enter into his female lover. It was a quickie! It was precious!

I had seen this many times, yet this time it looked like they were deliberately teaching me something. They didn't care if I was looking, they didn't care that I was a human. So many of them making love, swimming belly to belly. Yippee, there's gonna be lots of newborns in the spring.

Some were calm, some frisky, playing with each other, making love, playing with leaves. Jumping and spinning up and out of the water. I didn't feel like a human, I was undulating, swimming like a dolphin, diving deep, with my arms glued to my side and legs together. I was the only human present.

I was even invited to play the leaf game. The Leaf Game is where the dolphins catch a floating leaf with their right or left flipper and they pass it off to another. It's amazing to watch!

After about an hour or so alone with these beautiful dolphies, I surfaced and looked to see where we were and spotted a kayak. It was my cue to head back in. To say goodbye for now.

I mentally asked them to come close again so I could say farewell.... and within a minute here they came again very close to me, surrounding me with a big energy hug and a gleeful farewell.

It never ceases to amaze me that they hear me when I mentally reach out to them! I said my thank you's and headed back to land.

By far this was the most magical dolphin encounter to date! It's been two days and I'm still feeling the bliss!"

Written by
Nina Joy
2013