



# Chiropractic Newsletter

## Discover Chiropractic

### Witnessing Births, Witnessing Transformations

As a 4-year-old, I may not remember the specific details of my brother and sister's births, but I truly recall those days, how they made me feel as a little girl, and how they have impacted me throughout my life, which is in the end what truly matters. When my mom found out that she was having another baby, I remember innocently telling the first person we met afterwards with such excitement, and my mom quietly nodding, confirming the news. As her pregnancy progressed, my parents showed me videos of different home births and explained the possible scenarios that I might witness. They explained that if my mom seemed uncomfortable or in pain, I need not worry because it was part of the process. At the same time, when a birth scene came up in a movie or on the TV, my mom never missed an opportunity to tell me that it was not real and that most births did not look like that.

One day, my father came to pick me up early at school and told me that my brother was arriving that day. When we got home, there was the midwife, my parent's best friend, and my godmother. I just remember my house being very quiet and calm. As I saw my mom navigating through her contractions and my dad supporting her, I just felt at ease and excited that I was going to meet my baby brother soon. On January 28, 1996, I became a big sister, a role that I have always carried with great pride and



responsibility, and which is very much ingrained in my identity.

My sister was born the next year. It was April 17, 1997, and in addition to the people who attended the first birth, there were other family members in our home, some of whom did not consider it appropriate for me to be in the room while my mother gave birth, contrary to my parents' wishes. I remember crying from the other side of the door because I was not by my mom's side, like I was the first time. Soon after, my parents called me in, and I met my baby sister. As I put on her yellow onesie, fulfilling a desire to be the first to dress her, I remember feeling so grown-up and important because, from that moment on, I got to help take care of her and my brother.

For a long time, I believed that being present in my siblings' births was the norm, where mom is moving around, resting wherever she needs, and eating whenever she wants. Just an intense and

powerful, but beautiful and respected experience of a woman owning her birth and bringing her children into this world, surrounded by her loved ones. My mother has always had many roles and talents. As an artist, translator, and doula, she showed us how to live by our beliefs and, alongside my father, enriched our childhood with extraordinary experiences and unconditional love.

I will forever be grateful to my parents for giving me a role in the births of my siblings, which inspired me to become a pediatric and perinatal chiropractor, as well as a doula. Living in a country where the C-section rate is almost 60%, where vaginal births are oftentimes unnecessarily intervened upon, and fathers, siblings, family members, and women are disconnected from the birth process, I see many families who do not have a say in the process. Being a part of my siblings' births is one of the greatest gifts my parents have given me, and it shaped my view on birth and family, as well as on health.

Dr. Michel Odent, an obstetrician and childbirth educator, once said "to change the world, we must first change the way the babies are being born." I have often wondered how different our reality would be if more people had the opportunity that I had. The bond between siblings is sacred, filled with complexity and love. I am lucky enough to experience that every day and I

have been so proud of my brother and sister since the moment they were born. How different our world would be if babies were born in the presence of siblings, fathers, aunts, uncles, and grandparents who could witness and feel a kind of love that only comes from witnessing birth.

Mark Twain once said, "The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you learn why." I believe that by changing the way our babies are born, we can transform families, communities, and the world. By respecting and humanizing births, we could achieve individual and collective healing and a just and kinder society. My "why" is to be a facilitator for that possibility to be a reality. Either as a woman, a friend, or a chiropractor, I will be a conduit of love, education, affirmation, and companionship to mothers and families and, along with like minded and inspired women and colleagues, help to transform the way our babies are born.

*-Camille Lopez-Crespo, DC*

*Appears in Pathways to*

*Family Wellness Magazine Issue #82*

