



# Supporting Women for Labour and Birth: A Thoughtful Guide

By Nicky Leap, Billie Hunter

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**Supporting Women for Labour and Birth: A Thoughtful Guide** By Nicky Leap, Billie Hunter

Fear of childbirth, the increasing use of epidurals and soaring caesarean section rates are the focus of much apprehension, debate, and controversy in contemporary maternity care. Across the world, support in labour has been shown to reduce obstetric interventions and improve outcomes for women and babies, yet women often report feeling unhappy with the support they receive. This textbook provides a clear and practical guide to supporting women in labour, looking at a range of techniques and approaches that promote a safe and positive experience of birth for women and their families. ?

Written by two highly experienced midwifery authors, this text draws on up-to-date research, identifying how evidence can be applied to everyday practice. It includes narratives from women and practitioners, including midwives, doulas, childbirth educators and students. These are used to illustrate a range of situations where the quality of support is central to the quality of the experience and outcome. *Supporting Women for Labour and Birth* encourages readers to reflect on their experiences and examine the evidence provided by both research and the experiences of women and practitioners in order to explore how this could be incorporated into their practice.?

The only book to deal directly with the practical and emotional issues associated with labour support, it is an ideal text for student midwives and an important reference for practising midwives, doulas and other childbirth practitioners.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

*"The book is unique in that it covers practical and emotional aspects of caring for childbearing women, and is perfect for midwives, doulas and anyone providing maternity care, or supporting a woman having her baby...Throughout the book, stories, drawings, evidence boxes, postscripts, tips and ideas appear like hidden gems in a richly crafted text – they provide insights into the thoughts and experiences of others...There are strategies and tips for supporting a woman wanting a normal, physiological birth to those planning a caesarean birth. The text includes useful resources to help women who are traumatised from or fearful of birth, or who are experiencing or expecting complications. Crucially, the book covers the need for sensitive compassionate support for those women suffering from the loss of their baby. Reflective activities that facilitate the practice of 'walking in the shoes of others', help practitioners to consider the perspectives and emotions of co-workers, as well as the mothers and families they serve...Yes, this 'dip-in-and-out' book is key, and should be cherished by every student midwife, midwife and doula. It is a treasure chest of inspiration, tenderness, evidence, and wise words." – Sheena Byrom OBE, Midwifery consultant, member of the RCM's Better Births initiative, Chair of Iolanthe Midwifery Trust*

*"This is not a 'sit back and be filled up with information' sort of book, it is one that will challenge you and make you think and grow as a midwife. Helping women to work with pain and fear sits at the heart of the book. Sometimes it takes only a word or a dispassionate look to take birth in a totally new direction. 'Who' we are and 'how' we are with women is of more importance than 'where' we are and 'what' we are doing as midwives. The emotional aspects of labour support are key to midwives being able to work with women and be truly present for them and this is dealt with beautifully in the book." – Professor Hannah Dahlen, University of Western Sydney, Australia*

*"I am so inspired – it has been a long time since a midwifery text has grabbed my attention in such a way...Your book will provide inspiration, guidance and also reflective activities for the students over their three years and onwards." – Grace Thomas, Cardiff University, UK*

*"What a read!" – Ali Teate, midwifery lecturer at University of Canberra and Researcher at Western Sydney University, Australia*

*"It is so lovely to have a new approach to labour and birth in a textbook and this is truly the first book that has excited me like this for a long time." – Lorna Davies, midwifery lecturer, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology, New Zealand*

*"A really rich book on a subject very close to my heart – it will be make a great contribution!" – Mary Ross-Davie, midwifery researcher, Scotland*

*"I just wanted to say a huge congratulations on your book - how wonderful it is! I am in the process of getting some copies for my unit - so many wonderful things to do and reflect on and perfect for re-validation too. Such a treat to read. Thank you for creating something so thought provoking." – Ruth Sanders, Clinical Midwife and Researcher*

## About the Author

**Nicky Leap** was born in 1948 and grew up in the West Country, England. She became a National Childbirth Trust (NCT) teacher in the 1970s and was a youth and community worker in London before training to be a midwife. For more than 30 years, Nicky has worked in England and Australia in a variety of roles in midwifery practice, education and research, gaining her doctorate in 2005. She is an Adjunct Professor of Midwifery at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia. Nicky divides her time between living in Bristol (UK) and the Blue Mountains (Australia).

Billie Hunter was born in 1953 in South London. After midwifery training in 1979, Billie worked in diverse settings from inner London to the Outer Hebrides. Since 1992, Billie has lived in Wales and has been engaged in midwifery teaching and research, gaining her PhD in 2002. She was appointed as Professor of Midwifery at Swansea University, UK, in 2006 and Royal College of Midwives Professor of Midwifery at Cardiff University, UK, in 2011. She also holds Honorary Chairs at the Universities of Nottingham and Surrey, UK, and is an Adjunct Professor of Midwifery at the University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.

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