



## DID YOU KNOW?

A doula is a trained professional who provides expert guidance for the service of others and who supports another person through a significant health-related experience, such as childbirth, miscarriage, induced abortion or stillbirth, as well as non-reproductive experiences such as dying.

# Doulas Improving Birthing Outcomes

**Doulas play a crucial role in improving birthing outcomes by providing continuous physical, emotional, and informational support to expectant mothers and birthing parents. Research has shown that the presence of a doula during labor and delivery is associated with reduced rates of interventions, including cesarean sections and epidurals, and shorter labor durations. For Black moms and other mothers of minority groups, who may face higher rates of pregnancy-related complications and medical interventions, having a doula by their side can help mitigate these risks and increase the likelihood of a positive birth experience.**



# Advocacy and Cultural Competency

**BIPOC Doulas bring unique cultural understanding and sensitivity to their role, which is invaluable for mothers from diverse backgrounds. They can advocate for their clients' preferences and needs within the healthcare system, ensuring that their voices are heard and respected.** Additionally, BIPOC Doulas can bridge language and cultural barriers, providing personalized care and support that is tailored to the specific needs and traditions of their clients.



# Creating A Safe & Comfortable Environment



**Doulas create a safe and comfortable environment for expecting and laboring moms by offering continuous support, reassurance, and encouragement throughout the birthing process.** Their calming presence and hands-on comfort measures, such as massage, breathing techniques, and position changes, help mothers feel empowered and confident in their ability to give birth. For Black moms and other mothers of minority groups, who may face systemic racism and discrimination within healthcare settings, having a doula who understands their unique needs and experiences can provide a sense of security and trust.



# Postpartum Support & Mental Health Awareness

**In the postpartum stage, Doulas continue to play a vital role in supporting new mothers and birthing parents as they navigate the challenges of early motherhood.** They offer emotional support, practical assistance with breastfeeding and newborn care, and guidance on self-care and recovery. **BIPOC Doulas are particularly attuned to the mental health needs of their clients and can help identify symptoms of postpartum depression or anxiety early on.** By providing non-judgmental support and connecting mothers with resources and professional help when needed, Doulas contribute to better mental health outcomes and overall well-being for mothers of minority groups.



# Dealing With Loss



**Doulas are trained to provide compassionate and non-judgmental emotional support to individuals and families experiencing loss. They offer a listening ear, validation of feelings, and a safe space to express grief, sadness, anger, or any other emotions that may arise. By acknowledging and validating the unique experience of grief, doulas help individuals feel heard, understood, and supported during this challenging time.**



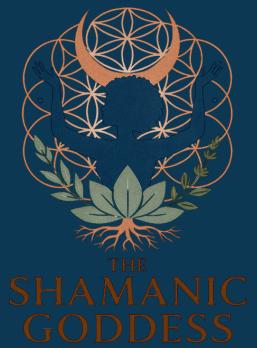
# Providing Information and Support

**Doulas can provide individuals and families with accurate and evidence-based information about the grieving process, including what to expect physically, emotionally, and mentally.** They can help clarify misconceptions, dispel myths, and provide guidance on self-care practices and coping strategies. By empowering individuals with knowledge and resources, doulas help them navigate the grieving process with greater understanding and resilience.

In addition to emotional support, doulas can offer practical assistance and resources to help individuals and families cope with loss. This may include helping with funeral arrangements, connecting them with support groups or counseling services, and providing information on bereavement resources and rituals. By offering practical support, doulas alleviate some of the burdens associated with loss and facilitate the healing process.

**Doulas serve as advocates for individuals and families, ensuring that their wishes and needs are respected and honored throughout the grieving process. They can help facilitate communication with healthcare providers, family members, and other support professionals, advocating for compassionate and culturally sensitive care.** By advocating for their clients' rights and preferences, doulas empower individuals to make informed decisions and feel supported in their choices.





The role of BIPOC Doulas is essential in providing culturally competent, and personalized support by improving birthing outcomes, advocating for their clients' rights, creating a safe and comfortable environment, and supporting postpartum mental health. Doulas contribute to positive birth experiences and better maternal and infant health outcomes for all mothers, and birthing individuals regardless of their race or ethnicity.

In addition, the role of a doula in helping individuals and parents navigate the grieving process of a miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth, or the loss of a loved one is multifaceted and invaluable. Through compassionate emotional support, accurate information, practical assistance, advocacy, and continued support, doulas offer a guiding hand and a source of comfort during life's most challenging experiences that include bringing in new life or the loss of a loved one.

### **For More Information and Resources Contact:**

Dr. Deilen Michelle Villegas, Ph.D., DNM - Board Certified Holistic Health Practitioner, Traumatic Stress Expert, Trauma Recovery and Behavioral Specialist, and Certified Full Spectrum Doula

[www.TheShamanicGoddess.com](http://www.TheShamanicGoddess.com)