



Pregnancy and Birth Coach 20-Day Action Plan

Congratulations on starting your Pregnancy and Birth Coach 20 Steps Action Plan! We are so excited you are continuing your education and can't wait to hear about your experience.

The *20-day action plan* is all about you and your successful career. If you take the time to engage and complete these tasks, you will integrate coaching into your life and your practice faster and easier.

Here are some helpful guidelines for the successful completion of the course requirements:

1. The *20-day action plan* contains more than the required tasks you have to complete for our Zoom meetings. It is meant to be done in conjunction with your test (Not with the 7 weekly lessons and Zoom mentoring sessions). By completing the tasks in sequential order, you'll be able to complete the test at the same time you finish the action plan.
2. Go at your own pace! It's called the *20-day Action Plan*, but you can take as much or as little time as you would like, within the 120 days that we grant for certification.
3. You will need to write your answers in a separate document and please keep all your answers in one document.

Upon completion of the *20-day action plan* and your test, please submit the [Application for Certificate](#).

We hope you'll enjoy the process of becoming a masterful coach!!
Neri Life-Choma and BCM Team

Day 1

Topic: Childbirth Support in Review

Reading Tasks

Complete the mandatory reading list found online in lesson 1.

Videos to watch

Watch the videos found online in lesson 1

1. Pain, Fear and the Medicalization of Childbirth
2. The Culture War between Midwives and Doctors in the US

Task #1

1. Write 100-200 words describing the main agents who take part in women's pregnancy and childbirth experiences. In your response, refer to the different concepts of pregnancy birth, or the different belief systems, these agents hold. Can you try to come up with ideas of how we can build bridges between the different agents and their perspectives of pregnancy and birth in favor of expectant women's empowerment?
2. What are the connections between the ancient collective perception of pregnancy and childbirth as dangerous experiences to the family and the whole community, and the submission to medical authority?

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Jordan B. (1993), *Birth in four cultures; a Crosscultural Investigation of Childbirth in Yucatan, Holland, Sweden and the US*
- Dick-Read, G. (1987) *Childbirth without Fear*. The Original Approach to Natural Childbirth, 5th ed., Harper and Row, New York.
- Davis-Floyd R. E. and Sargent F. Carolyn editors (1997) *Childbirth and Authoritative knowledge; Cross-Cultural Perspective*.

Day 2

Topic: The Coaching Profession in Review

Videos to Watch

Watch the following videos: (Found online in lesson 2)

1. Introduction to Coaching

Task #2

Write 100-200 words about what coaching for pregnancy and birth is for you. The next 20 days are an opportunity for you to make coaching 'your own'. We would love to read about your motivation to integrate the strategies of coaching into your professional and personal life. What inspires you about coaching, and how will it help you grow as a birth practitioner?

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Dilts, R. (2003), *From Coach to Awakener*, Meta Publications, California
- Gallwey, W. T. (1974), *The Inner Game of Tennis: The Classic Guide to the Mental Side of Peak Performance*, Random House, New York.

Day 3

Topic: Why Integrate Coaching?

There are two different points of view from which this question can be answered - the one birth clients hold, and the POV of birth support figure. For that reason, we have created two different videos.

Reading Tasks

Complete the reading list found online in lesson 2.

Videos to watch

Watch the following videos: (Found online in lesson 2)

1. Childbirth as a performance
2. Why Integrate Coaching into Birth Support

Task #3

Write 100-200 words on the idea of leading women and their birth partners to *'optimally / confidently perform during the journey of pregnancy and birth'*. In your answer, refer to the concept of 'optimal performance' in birth, the coaching process and your role as the coach. What can you say about the connection between 'optimal performance' and the level of satisfaction a woman experiences?

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Reiger K. and Morton C., 2012, *Standardizing or Individualizing? A Critical Analysis of the 'Discursive Imaginaries' Shaping Maternity Care Reform*, *International Journal of Childbirth* Vol. 2, Issue 3.
- Goer, H. (1999) *The Thinking Woman's Guide to a Better Birth*, Penguin Putnam Inc., New York.
- Morton, C. H. & Clift E. (2014) *Birth Ambassadors: Doulas and the Re-Emergence of Woman-Supported Birth in America*, Praeclarus Press, Amarillo, Texas.

Day 4

Topic: Reflect on Your Practice

Today is a reflection day; it's all about the way you practice.

Task #4A

Write 100-200 words referring to the following topics

1. What do you see as the major value or contribution in integrating the coaching principles and philosophy?
2. How will you benefit from it?
3. How will your clients benefit from this integration?
4. Which particular problems or difficulties that you currently encounter, can this integration solve?
5. What were you doing so far in your practice that is aligned with the coaching for pregnancy and childbirth approach?

Task #4B

Practice active listening and ask questions which will make everyone you encounter today feel that you are curious to learn more about them or their current situation, and get to know them better.

Day 5

Topic: Establishing Rapport

Reading Tasks

1. [Pacing and leading: how to conduct the coaching conversation](#)
2. [NLP Communication and Sensory Acuity](#) NLP Academy
3. Neri Life-Choma, [Who is the Birth Expert Here?](#), Birth Coach Method blog

Videos to watch

1. [Best Methods to Build Rapport - Anthony Robbins](#)

Task #5

For the next few days, practice sensory acuity with the goal of establishing rapport with everyone you encounter: match someone's physiology - even one gesture or an aspect of their posture. Or maybe match their tonality - adjust the pace of talking to match theirs, or your volume. Write 100-200 words on this experience. I strongly encourage you to practice sensory acuity when being interviewed by prospective clients or meet current clients.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

1. O'connor J. and Lages A., 20014, [Coaching with NLP](#).
2. Lang, E. V., 2012, [A Better Patient Experience Through Better Communication](#), J Radiol Nurs. 2012 Dec 1; 31(4): 114-119.
3. Dr. Angus McLeod, 2014, [Rapport and neuro-coaching](#), Training Journal.

Day 6

Topic: The GROW Model of Coaching

Reading Tasks

Complete the mandatory reading list found online in lesson 3.

Videos to watch

Watch the following videos (Found online in lesson 3)

1. Structure and Strategies of Coaching

Task #6

In the next few days, engage in at least three conversations while following the GROW model of coaching. These conversations can be with your clients, but they don't have to; you may choose to begin your learning process by coaching friends and relatives, as long as you ask for their permission.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Whitmore, J., 2009, *Coaching for Performance: GROWing Human Potential and Purpose - The Principles and Practice of Coaching and Leadership*, 4th Edition, Nicholas Brealey Publishing

Day 7

Topic: Integrating the GROW Model of Coaching into Birth Support.

Task #7

Read the following scenarios and generate strong search questions that you think will *prenatally* help facilitate clarity around belief system, wishes, and goals or motivation of the clients involved.

- I. In my last birth, I was breathing heavily, my exhales laced with tears as the waves of pain washed over me. I told the nurse: "Okay, I think I'm ready to get that epidural now, I know I said I probably wouldn't do it, but I'm changing my mind now."
Our nurse looked down quickly as she tucked in a fresh sheet on my bed before she responded. I had another contraction and a feeling of dread at the look on her face as I wondered, *Why wasn't she saying anything? Was there a problem with my labor or our baby?*
I didn't have much time to think about it before another contraction hit me. When it was over, I looked up at her completely exhausted and waited for an answer. "I'm sorry, Lena, but Lisa doesn't do epidurals because she is a midwife," she replied, keeping busy in the room.
My in-labor brain had trouble processing what she was saying at first, but when it finally dawned on me that she was saying that I literally could not get an epidural, I was shocked and horrified. *How had I missed this crucial piece of information when choosing who would deliver my baby? Was I hearing her wrong?*
- II. When I became pregnant with my second child, I felt a lot of self-imposed pressure to prepare for his birth. Labor for my firstborn had ended in a cesarean section after my contractions stalled and his heart rate dropped. Regardless of all my efforts to have a VBAC, the same situation repeated itself, and I still remember my OB saying: "We're going to have to do a c-section, and we don't have time for an epidural." In the weeks after we went home, I struggled emotionally. I would put him down to sleep in the middle of the night and then let myself cry, sobbing into a pillow so I didn't wake him up. I was horrified thinking about what could have happened to both of us, and disappointed over not having the birth I had worked so hard for. I felt embarrassed and ashamed to have put myself and my baby through this traumatic experience.

Day 8

Topic: Prenatal Coaching

Reading Tasks:

Complete the reading list found online in lesson 4.

Videos to watch

Watch the following videos (Found online in lesson 4)

1. Prenatal Coaching
2. Coaching for Building the Best Support Group for the Birth
3. Listen to the recorded relaxation and affirmation by Neri Life-Choma

Task #8

Write 100-200 words explaining the significance of prenatal coaching to the journey of pregnancy and birth. In your answer, give examples from your experience with your clients: Can you recall experiences in which an undesired experience, or an aspect of it, could have been prevented by a series of prenatal coaching sessions? Describe how you would have coached the mother using tools and techniques of coaching for pregnancy. Or maybe you came up with a prenatal discussion you're eager to conduct with a current client, based on a challenge she recently has shared with you.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Neri Life-Choma, [Six habits of thinking that can sabotage your client's' birth.](#)
- Self-affirmation activates brain systems associated with self-related processing and reward and is reinforced by future orientation

Day 9

Topic: Eliciting Clients' Accountability

Reading Tasks

1. Life-Choma N., 2015, [Accountability Vs. Responsibility in Childbirth](#), Birth Coach Method blog.
2. Life-Choma N., 2018, [Are your clients hiring you to avoid a cesarean?](#) Birth Coach Method blog.

Videos to watch

1. [Confessions of a labor and delivery nurse](#)

Task #9

Write 100-200 words on the topic of eliciting your pregnant client's accountability to her satisfying birth process, with no attachment to the outcomes. In your answer refer to :

- Explain the connection between the 'W' in the GROW model and the concept of client's accountability.
- Explain the importance of eliciting your client's accountability to her process.
- How will you refrain from evoking a sense of responsibility to the pregnancy and birth processes?
- Give examples from your own practice for areas in which your clients manifest lack of accountability. How will you resolve this?

Day 10

Topic: Facilitating Alignment

Reading Tasks

1. Life-Choma N., 2016, [How Doulas Can Align the Vision, Thoughts and Actions of Expectant Moms \(or How to Close the Gaps?\)](#) , Birth Coach Method blog.
2. [The patient engagement imperative](#), American Nurse Today, February 2014 Vol. 9 No. 2

Task #10

Read the following birth scenario.

Write 100-200 words explaining the concept of aligning client's beliefs with their wishes for their birth and the actions they take towards achieving them. Point out areas in which the scenario below demonstrates lack of alignment , and make suggestions for prenatal coaching questions which you might ask in order to facilitate an alignment between the client's beliefs, wishes and actions.

I really wanted a birth with zero interventions. I knew from the start of pregnancy I wanted to attempt my first birth drug-free! I had wretched medical care throughout my pregnancy and switched doctors four times. It wasn't until my second round with my original midwife that I felt comfortable with actually delivering in a hospital. I knew with my complications, an unassisted childbirth was not a smart idea, but because of how risky a hospital birth could have been, I felt I was better educated about my body. With the switch back to the midwife, I was able to deliver at a hospital I felt safe at. The "birthing center" of this hospital is wonderful! And I KNEW my birth plan would be followed!! They are very anti-intervention, baby-friendly, and homey. I was also excited because I was able to go home 6 hours after delivery! After many incidents of false or early labor that would stall because my little guy was posterior - Friday morning at 5am, I called my labor support, woke the hubby, and packed up my girls to head to the hospital. The day before, I was a "tight 3" at my appointment. I was checked at L&D and was "a good 3, but not yet a 4" with contractions 7-8 apart. So I was instructed to walk for an hour and the nurse would come find me once my MW came in for her shift. I was super excited! I walked around the atrium with my headphones on and started dancing away - getting those contractions to 3-4 minutes apart. The nurse comes out and says "They want you to go across the street and see the OB and MW right now." "What?!?! Why would they do that if I'm HERE RIGHT NOW IN LABOR??" Well - the adrenaline made labor basically come to a screeching halt. I was FURIOUS! I was so confused about why I was in the office. Finally the MW came in and explained that she had to speak with the OB about augmenting if I did show early labor signs, and to schedule an induction date since I was over 38 weeks at this point. She checked me and I was still a 3. Well yeah, after that - what do you expect?!

Day 11

Topic: Coaching for Coping with Labor Pain and the Fear of it

Reading Tasks

Complete the reading list found online in lesson 5.

Videos to watch

Watch the following videos: (Found online in lesson 5)

1. Ina May Gaskin on Labor Pain
2. Coaching for Coping with Labor Pain and the Fear of it
3. Coaching Your Birth Client through the Dilemma of taking an Epidural - Webinar

Task #11

Read the following scenarios and generate strong search questions which you think will help facilitate a better perspective on labor pain, one which will reduce mother's fear of the whole experience of birth and will allow a healthy experience.

- I. I was so afraid of childbirth, that I elected a c-section. However, I went into labor a week prior to the scheduled cesarean. My contractions intensified during the forty-minute drive to the hospital, and I expected to be in an operating room soon. By the time I was in a bed waiting for an initial exam, every contraction burned deeply and made me curl my toes and groan. But I felt calm and in control because I was about to get my C-section and be done with this. It had only been two and a half hours since that first twinge in my belly, and the majority of those hours had been very light pain indeed. I was surprised to find out I was already 7 cm dilated, but I still refused to dismiss the idea of a cesarean until the epidural was placed and working.
- II. I knew having a baby would be tough. Something crazy happens in labor. Your body takes over and you are just along for the ride. You definitely can't stop those forces.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

- Sandelowski, M. (1984) *Pain, Pleasure and American Childbirth, From twilight sleep to the Read Method, 1914-1960* (Found in the lesson page)

Day 12

Topic: Coaching for Coping

Task #12

Write 100-200 words explaining the significance of practicing labor support tools as part of each coaching session. In your response, refer to the following:

- How will this practice contribute to your client's level of preparedness for her birth?
- How will you wrap-up the coaching conversation and suggest to practice labor support tools?
- How will the practice increase your client's accountability for her desired birth experience?

Day 13

Topic: Working with Affirmations

Reading Tasks

1. [Self-affirmation activates brain systems associated with self-related processing and reward and is reinforced by future orientation](#)
2. *The Art of Coaching for Childbirth* by Neri Life-Choma, pp. 61-65

Task #13

Today, I ask you to write an affirmation. It doesn't have to be related to childbirth, but you can definitely benefit from jumping right into coaching a current client on a certain challenge by using an affirmation.

Follow the guidelines in my book and have fun with the process.

Define the challenge and the goal of the affirmation. Don't forget to begin with the motivation. Use as many metaphors as possible and make it vivid.

Don't forget to emphasize the importance of reciting the affirmation daily.

You may also record it and just listen to it daily.

Recording yourself leading the relaxation and awakening can help you master it!

Day 14

Topic: Coaching through Medical Conditions and Impositions

Reading Tasks

Complete the reading list found online in lesson 6..

Videos to watch:

Watch the following videos: (Found online in lesson 6)

1. Coaching through Medical Conditions and Impositions
2. Resolving the Advocacy Dilemma in the Doula Practice - webinar

Task #14

Write 100-200 words suggestion for coaching a client who just came from a doctor's appointment, in which her caregiver told her that she now induces every patient at 39 weeks of pregnancy. The doctor's advice and recommendation is supported by the findings of a major study. The doctor claims, your clients continues, that the study proved beyond doubt that this routine induction reduces patient's chances for cesareans and increase vaginal birth. Write the coaching questions you will ask, and integrate the BRAIN model in your suggestion.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

1. [Outline medical tests and exams throughout pregnancy.](#)

Day 15

Topic: Building Healthy Relationships in Our Field

Reading Tasks

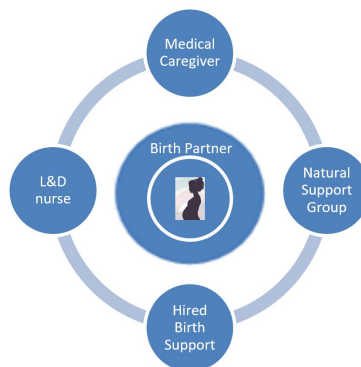
1. Barrett, S. J., and Stark M., [Factors Associated With Labor Support Behaviors of Nurses](#), Journal of Perinatal Education, winter 2010
2. Ballen L. E. and Fulcher, A. J ., 2006, [Nurses and Doulas: Complementary Roles to Provide Optimal Maternity Care](#), JOGNN, Volume 35
3. Neri Life-Choma, [Your Client Chose A Hospital-Based Birth: Now What?](#), Birth Coach Method blog

Videos to Watch

1. [Confessions of a labor and delivery nurse](#)

Task #15

Write 100-200 words describing how the integration of coaching principles and strategies into your current practice will help bring everyone who attends birth (the mother's natural emotional and social support group, birth support figures that she hired, and the medical caregivers) to collaborate in favor of the mother's best pregnancy and birth experiences as possible. Please read and watch the videos in order to understand the nurse's position. In your answer, please refer to the diagram below.



Day 16

Topic: Coaching for a Healthy Closure

Reading Tasks

Complete the reading list found online in lesson 7.

Videos to Watch

Watch the following videos: (Found online in lesson 7)

1. Coaching for a Healthy Closure and through Early Postpartum

Task # 16

Write 100-200 suggesting a coaching conversation which intends to facilitate closure of the following birth scenario. In your answer suggest strong search question and engage the PAL exercise, or some aspects of it.

I arrived at the hospital at 8:00PM crying, knowing I won't have my planned home birth after 48 hours with rupture of membrane and not progress in my labor. This course of events was so totally different from what I wanted and planned! The OB convinced me that I needed Pitocin to move the process along, and I finally agreed. I also agreed to taking antibiotics. In the hospital room with me, was my husband, my mom, my doula, and my home birth midwife who was helping by giving me massages. A Pitocin drip was started around midnight and was increased at a fast rate throughout the night. This left me unable to catch up with the pain of the contractions. By 4:00 AM, the contractions became so strong that I could not bear the pain, and all the while my cervix was dilating so very slowly. By 5:00PM, I had undergone many manual exams and ultrasounds - more interventions I had wanted to avoid - but I relented. Around 8:00 PM I started pushing. I tried all kinds of positions: on all fours, squatting, people holding me up. Not too long after I started pushing, the formerly cheerful doctor started hinting at a possible Caesarean section. I kept pushing, and the doctor kept mentioning a C-section. I asked him why he was thinking a C-section might be necessary but he never really answered my questions. We were looking for an explanation, as Xander had shown zero signs of distress the entire time. We asked the doctor to leave and I totally broke down. Everyone tried to calm me down. Around midnight, Mike informed the doctor that he was dismissed from our case. The nurses were on my side trying to protect me. A well-known and respected obstetrician, and for us an angel of God, arrived and cared for me. He sat on my bed and calmly explained several reasons why a C- Section delivery was the safest and best route for me and my baby: Xander was in a posterior and possibly an asynclitic position, I had been pushing for so long with little progress, my water had been broken for so long, which has its own set of risks And the list went on. So, I agreed.

Day 17

Topic: Coaching in Early Postpartum

Reading Tasks

1. The Art of Caching for Childbirth, by Neri Life-Choma, pp. 69 - 72
2. [Comparing Mothers' Postpartum Concerns in 2 Clinical Trials 18 Years Apart](#)
3. [WHO recommendation on companionship during labour and childbirth](#)
4. [7 Foods That Could Boost Your Serotonin: The Serotonin Diet](#)

Videos to Watch

1. [Ask the midwife about a postpartum recovery](#)

Task #17

Write 100-200 words explaining the role of the coach in detecting early PPD. Describe the steps you will take in light of some alarming signs in your client. In your answer, explain how you will make sure not to take on the role of the therapist and work within the coaching scope of practice.

Recommended Resources for Further Enrichment:

1. Bennet s., Indman P., 2016, *Beyond the Blues: understanding and treating prenatal and postpartum depression.* (consider purchasing)

Day 18-20

Completing Your Final Exam and Certification Requirements

In the next few days, I am asking you to review the course materials with the goal of reflecting on what you've learned in this course and completing your final exam:

1. Log in to the members' website in which the course lessons are hosted. Begin with lesson 1:
 - a. Read the objectives and topics discussed in the lesson. Make sure you're familiar with the terms and objectives.
 - b. Scan through the textbook pages required for the lesson (*The Art of Coaching for Childbirth*), and make sure you're familiar with the content.
 - c. Go over the notes and/or screenshots you took while completing the reading list and watching the videos, which were associated with the topics of lesson 1.
 - d. Log in to the final exam using your username and password, and answer the questions associated with lesson one.
2. Move forward to lesson number 2, and complete steps a-d with each following lesson.
3. Submit your final exam.
4. Please submit the [application for certificate](#).
5. Please pay your \$60 annual membership fee using PayPal account: neri@birthcoachmethod.com

Congratulations! The password for the bonus lesson: *Establishing Your Pregnancy and Birth Coach Practice*, will be emailed to you as soon as we get the notification about your final exam submission. Please check your inbox. If you didn't receive it within 48 hours (Monday-Friday), please notify us at info@birthcoachmethod.com

To Your Success!
Birth Coach Method Team

Bonus Lesson: Establishing and Promoting Your Coaching Practice

Reading Tasks

1. Wheel of Life exercise
2. [How to start your business](#)
3. <https://www.earlytorise.com/start-coaching-business/>

Videos to Watch

1. Establishing Your Pregnancy and Birth Coach Practice

Task

Write the answers to the following questions in order to create your elevator speech.

1. What motivated or inspired you to enroll in this course?
2. Do you experience any challenges in your current practice that you're hoping to resolve by integrating coaching?
3. Do you recognize recurring challenges, shared by many of your clients, that you are hoping to resolve by integrating coaching?
4. What are the three most important professional goals that you hope to accomplish by integrating coaching?
5. What are some goals that your clients share that you hope to help them achieve through coaching?
6. What inspired you the most in this course? What did you learn that spiked your enthusiasm for your profession? What are you eager to try?

Ready... Set... Coach!