

# Episode 10. Childbirth

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

birth, parenting, birthing, babies, preferences, important, support, vaginal delivery, labor, choices, doula, plan, people, epidural, deana, jetta, flexibility, parenthood, happen, honoring

## SPEAKERS

Deana Thayer, Future Focused Parenting, Kira Dorrian

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- K** Kira Dorrian 00:04  
What happens when two parent coaches, one a Christian and the other an agnostic Jew, sit down to talk about parenting?
  - D** Deana Thayer 00:10  
I'm Deana Thayer,
  - K** Kira Dorrian 00:11  
and I'm Kira Dorrian.
  - D** Deana Thayer 00:12  
Welcome to Raising Adults, a podcast about Future Focused Parenting.
  - K** Kira Dorrian 00:17  
This episode of Raising Adults is brought to you by Jetta Anderson with Family First Midwifery. Jetta and her team bring comprehensive care and safe birthing options to women and families across the Greater Phoenix area. I know Jetta personally and I can tell you that she is amazing. If I had another baby, Jetta is who I would want by my side.

For more information on Jetta and her practice, go to [familyfirstmidwifery.com](http://familyfirstmidwifery.com). Well, hello, everyone. We are going to talk today about birth and how one can be a future focused parent as they navigate their birthing day and preparing for their birthing day. So let's start with our whys. So Deana, do you want to share a little bit about your why?

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Deana Thayer 00:58

I love what you just said. Because that's my why. My why was for me birth was my entrance into being a Future Focused Parent. And so the way that I set myself up for my birth with a future focused mindset was how I was going to set myself up for parenting after my birth. And that was exactly what I wanted to do.

K

Kira Dorrian 01:19

I love that. Yeah, for me, it was, it was twofold because the twin factor's always a big one when we talk about pregnancy and birth for me. So first and foremost, my birth was really exactly that. I wanted to set myself up for the easiest transition into parenthood possible, which meant making some birth choices that would help me ideally not have Caesarean because the recovery with two babies really scared me. But also just to try and have the most positive birthing experience to empower me to become the mom that I was going to be. And then, secondly, also looking at how can I create the best birthing scenario for for each of my babies to allow them the least amount of time in the NICU and the least amount of recovery time themselves so that all of us could kind of get to, get to the bonding and the rest of our lives, and as easily and gently as possible.

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Deana Thayer 02:15

Yeah, then you get to the cute part. And what you said about their entrance into the world is huge, because for me, this was my entrance into being a Future Focused Parent. But how I had my babies enter the world was their first experience, and I had some, while we never have absolute say, I had some say in creating that. And I wanted that to be a beautiful entrance into the world. That was a gift I could give them as a parent, as much as that was within my power to do so. And of course, there's many factors around that. But I think that is one of the first parenting choices you make. How is my baby going to enter the world and what can I do to set that up well?

K

Kira Dorrian 02:54

Yeah, so why don't you start. Tell us a little bit about... because I would say you and I likely made very similar choices and had very different outcomes. And I definitely want to talk a

little bit about that. But I'd love to start with you and your choices and how that, how that then came to fruition.

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Deana Thayer 03:12

And it's really true because we're pretty similar philosophically. But what actually happened looks pretty different. That's true. So a couple of things that were really important to me, one is taking the time and effort necessary to create good birth preferences. And I've moved away from calling it a birth plan intentionally, even when I teach birth classes and things like that, because it's birth. Things don't always go according to plan, and you can run into any number of just... curveballs. But I do think it's smart to think through and even type out actual preferences. What are the things you're hoping for? What are you envisioning? How would you like it to go if it went exactly how you were hoping? Because that again, gives you a framework. And then of course, there has to be room for flexibility and you have to hold it with an open hand because something could go different. But for me, that was a big deal, taking the time to actually write out my birth preferences and get those out there and make sure that every member of my care team had one. So my midwife had a copy, actually had multiple copies so that her students and her assistants could have a copy. My doula had a copy, those kinds of things. I wanted everyone to know, so that they could help me hopefully make as many of those a reality as possible. And then the second thing for me was around birth location. And I know everyone is very different philosophically around this. So this is certainly not a mandate, but for me, I knew that I didn't want to be in a hospital, unless there was a need for that, or there was a complication that arose or something. And part of that was what I wanted for my baby and their entrance into the world. I wanted to be very gentle and serene, if at all possible, but also just knowing myself and I think it's important to know yourself, and I think for me, if pain medication had been an option, I may have said yes to it. And I really wanted an unmedicated birth. I wanted that, if at all possible. And so I just wanted to be where it wasn't a choice. And that obviously affected my choice of a care provider, choosing a midwife, and my choice of a birth location. So those were a couple of things that I did early on, to set myself up for what I was envisioning on that day. What about you?

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Kira Dorrian 05:29

Well, you know, what I had originally planned was a home birth. And I wanted a midwife and I wanted an unmedicated birth, and I wanted all those things, and a lot of that was based on the education that I had, and the work that I did as a hypnobirthing instructor. And then we found out we were having twins, and in Washington State, it's illegal to have twins anywhere but a hospital. There are a few midwives that will go rogue. But we

couldn't find them. We found one midwife who had hospital privileges. And we did meet with her, and liked her very, very much. But the concern became that if we were transferred to a hospital, she had privileges but not delivery privileges. So I would go to some OB that I had never met before at a hospital that I actually didn't really want to be at. So then we started looking into okay, who are the OBs that are going to support the kind of birth that I want? I wanted a vaginal delivery at all costs. That was very important to me, partly because that was really the best for the babies, and most likely going to prevent a NICU stay. And partly because the thought of recovering from a Caesarean with two babies felt really scary to me. So we were looking for doctors that were going to really really fight hard to get me that vaginal delivery and we landed on our OB who really did. I mean, she was, she was pretty phenomenal at the very end of the birth, as you may recall. I don't think our listeners know this, but Deana was actually my doula. So she has known my children since the moment that they were born and attended my birth from pretty much start to finish. So, so those were the things that were really important, you know, my plan went off plan when we found out we were having twins.

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Deana Thayer 07:21

Almost straightaway, there.

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Kira Dorrian 07:22

Yeah, and really just kept going off plan, as you may recall. And so, so that was sort of the setup was okay, finding, if I have to be in a hospital, finding a doctor that was going to fight really, really hard to at least have that vaginal delivery, and that also knew that I would prefer not to have the pain medication and prefer not to have any kind of pitocin or any of those other things. And a lot of that was, was again, based on the things that I taught in my childbirth classes. I actually don't think there's any issue with getting epidurals or any of those things. I in fact, is one of the reasons that I have stopped teaching hypnobirthing is I think that any, any program that is dogmatic about what you should be doing just started to make me very uncomfortable after a while, because some women are more relaxed if they have an epidural, they have a better birthing experience. Those women should have an epidural.

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Deana Thayer 08:11

Absolutely, hands down.

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Kira Dorrian 08:13

Yeah. So I think it's about, it's about setting yourself up for the birth experience that feels best to you, that's going to set you up for the best transition into parenthood. So, but at that time, I did not have that point of view, I was pretty much as dogmatic as I was teaching. And so that was all, that was all very much what I wanted. But as you know, the birth went completely sideways. And the only redeeming factor of that birth was that it was vaginal. And I have a really strong memory of the doctor because my babies were actually suctioned out, both of them. And I remember my doctor saying at the bitter end, I know you don't want a C-section. And so we have to get these babies out right now. And it was so... I remember it stuck with me because she was adamant she was not going to let that happen. Cuz she knew how important that was to me, but also letting me know we're at crunch time now. So if we're not going to have that happen, we need to do this next step. And so I really, I really think ultimately, I picked a great doctor who really did support every step of the way, and fought right alongside us for what my bottom line was.

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Deana Thayer 09:19

Yes. Here's the bottom line. And I think that's important when you're creating your birth preferences. Think about your bottom line, because it will help you know what you would say yes to, if you can still say this other no down here. And that's really huge as you're kind of getting ready for this. And you're right, you want to preserve as much of that as you can. Things will and can and do go sideways. But find what, what you could preserve in the midst of that. And for you, that was the vaginal delivery. And it keeps the birth from becoming a trauma. Birth is a huge event. And it can - if it doesn't go the way we're hoping, or it goes really wonky and we weren't ready for that, or hadn't even prepped for that possibility - that can be a trauma. And people actually have stress around that. And then you can't go into parenthood very healthy.

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Kira Dorrian 10:05

No. Well, and I mean, to be perfectly honest, I think that was one of the things that made my transition so hard was because at that time I had this dogmatic view on birth, which I don't have anymore. I think it would be very different now. Because I was, I was so dogmatic about it. There was a few, all these feelings of failure and all the I mean, and I'm a childbirth educator, like how am I going to face my students and all this, it was just really messy. And another one of my strongest memories from the birth was when it became really clear that this had gone super sideways, and that I was going to need pitocin and going to need an epidural and all of these things were going to happen, that you Deana actually kicked everyone out of the room and said that we need a few minutes. And you basically said, we need a few minutes so that you can cry about this. Like, you need to feel all your feelings about what's happening right now because this was not in your plan. And

I think that was hugely empowering to be validated and acknowledged. But what I will say is that what I learned from that experience has made me a better educator by a mile. But also, I had to learn flexibility from the beginning. And as a control freak and someone who leans type a, really being forced into flexibility was really an appropriate setup for having two babies at the same time. And so in some ways, it was a blessing.

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Deana Thayer 11:31

Forced flexibility. There's a phrase.

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Kira Dorrian 11:34

Wow, this is an exercise in letting go. And it was. I mean, I'm sure you would agree, having been there. It was just a consistent, okay, where are we? What's going off the plan now, what's going off the plan now, what are we preserving, but even preserving that vaginal delivery? I mean, I just can't imagine as challenging as my transition into parenthood was, I cannot imagine what it would have been like if I had also had that C section. So I'm so grateful that we were able to preserve that bottom line, but saying that... some people can't. And so I actually think that one of the best things people can do around birth is have their bottom line be that everyone goes home. The bottom line is that everyone's okay.

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Deana Thayer 12:11

Yeah, healthy is the bottom line. Are we safe? And, and that's actually how I help my clients talk about their criteria for interventions is, is everyone safe right now? Is everyone okay? If somebody is not okay, please say yes to the intervention like, let's hold that loosely.

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Kira Dorrian 12:28

That's why we have them.

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Deana Thayer 12:30

They're available because they actually do save lives literally. And yes, there are times where they're overused and yes, there are times where they're used preventatively and not diagnostically and it can become where oh, this is prophylactic, now. You just have to have it. And and I think it's fine to work to advocate and resist some of those trends in maternal care. But I think we have to keep the big E on the eye chart, which is, is

everyone safe and healthy, and that that is a win and that that is a birth victory?

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Kira Dorrian 12:59

Yes. And here's the other thing that I noticed. You know, again, one of the reasons that I stopped teaching hypnobirthing was because I kept getting these emails from moms that made the most amazing choices and worked so hard on their birthing day. And for whatever reason, felt like they didn't have a hypnobirth because it didn't match this exact image of what it's supposed to be. And to be fair, there are lots of hypnobirthing teachers out there that don't teach it that way. And I have great admiration for them. But the frustration that I have is that people, at some point we get so hooked on our birth preferences, and so hooked on birth should look this way that we lose sight of the fact that being a mother is all about sacrifice. It's all about what do I have to give up to protect you? And sometimes the bravest choice is saying, I got to throw that stuff out the window, that birth plan is gone because I have to take care of you and that is my job and that those women are just as important. They should feel just as empowered, just as much like they became a mom that day because they fought for their kid and they were willing to give up everything that mattered to them to protect their kid.

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Deana Thayer 14:07

Absolutely. And then you can literally change the paradigm even about a C section to becoming: birth was something you did, not something that happened to you. Because I hear that a lot too, that there's guilt around, oh, it didn't go the way I'd planned. And they actually feel somehow that they were a failure. And let's get rid of that. Please. And and let's just say that you're right, birth is the first example of what you're going to be doing the whole rest of your parenting journey. It's a long letting go. And some things are gonna go great. But we also need to lose the idea around parenting that it all has to - and should - look a certain way tied up neatly with a bow. Certainly, I think there are some guiding principles that most people could agree on. But it is not a cookie cutter, one size fits all proposition. And that starts with birth.

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Kira Dorrian 14:55

Right. And so I think it's still about having the plan. Like we're not saying, well, what's the point, it's all going to go by the wayside. It might not. And then you want to plan. You don't want to wing it, right? We want to have a sense of what's important to me on my birthing day, but always coming back to that bottom line that what's most important is everyone comes home. Everyone's healthy, everyone's safe. And getting clear that however it unfolds, everything from best case to worst case, that all of that is just a part of the

journey to becoming the parent. And all the choices you make are about becoming a parent, and they're all successes. And as long as you are working with that in mind, then you're crushing it.

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Deana Thayer 15:37

And then that also honors when it doesn't go the way we want but allows honoring for when it goes great. Because you wouldn't have not wanted your preferences there because what if they all got honored and you had exactly the birth you wanted? And those times in parenthood when it goes exactly as it should and you're patting yourself on the back. Let's celebrate those. There is nothing wrong with that. We don't want to take away from those people who have exactly the birth they want, but there has to be room for the letting go, for the holding it loosely and honoring when it doesn't go the way we had it all scripted beautifully on paper. Can we talk a little bit about labor support? Because I think we should make a shameless plug for that. And you mentioned that I was your doula and the who of birth can be just as important as the how, the why, the where, that we've talked about in terms of choosing birth location and all of that. So I want to just say that surrounding yourself with good labor support is huge. And it can take many forms. But I would say unswervingly - even the research backs this up - that doulas are a huge help at birth. The outcomes are better for both mom and baby. Women tend to have shorter labors, tend to be more successful at having an unmedicated birth, if that's what they're wanting, and even have more success at getting what they're hoping for because there's good advocacy for them. So I'm grateful to say I had good labor support. And I would love to hear from you too, just what did that mean to you? How was it helpful? And what would you say to other people considering that piece of planning for a birth?

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Kira Dorrian 17:16

Oh, man, I mean, you know, one of the things I share when I teach childbirth classes, is what happened in my birth and how, how important your role was. And that is, that the labor support, a doula specifically, is someone in the room who likes you a lot, but doesn't love you, at least at that time. You didn't love me, you know, things have changed. Yeah, we were friends and colleagues, but we didn't feel about, the way about each other that we do now. But what I'm really saying is that it's someone who's not the mommy or the daddy or the grandma or the auntie like, they're not, they're not subjective. They're objective. And so I won't bore our listeners with the story, but there was a really pivotal moment in my birth that even as a childbirth educator, I would not have been able to problem solve, because I was the mommy and my husband was the daddy. And really we, we were always going to be those roles first and foremost. And so having someone in the room who didn't have that role whose role was really to be birth advocate, you were able

to problem solve that scenario in a way that none of us could, despite my education and my background, which says a lot about how important a doula is, and how important labor support is. But you also were able to spell David and give him a rest and then certainly in the insanity of what ended up unfolding with the actual birthing, just that extra pair of hands and someone who was kind of present with me while Dave was over with our two babies who were off to the NICU and I mean, it was just such a shit show. Having that extra person there was just immeasurably important and it couldn't be my mom. As much as I love my mom. She's my Mom, right and pretty attached to me, and not that you weren't, but it's just so different, right?

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Deana Thayer 19:05

It really is. And that's why we like to talk about making that distinction of why your partner isn't your labor support person because, or a family member or a close friend, because they're going to have this emotional tie to you, where they just want to make whatever is hard stop happening and go away to the exclusion of all else. And sometimes there can be a different answer, creative solution, a strategy that really works that no one can come up with, because they can't see the forest for the trees because they're so in it. And I actually love what you said that you and David were mom and dad first. And I think a good labor support professional allows for that. Lets you be the parents first and lets you be the parents only when that's needed, and not have to also try to be sort of a medical personnel and sort of a person who knows a lot about birth. And you do see, I love that you said that because as birth educators, which both of us are, it's easy to think...and those of you out there listening who maybe are in the birth world or a practitioner of some kind, it's easy to think I'm not going to need professional labor support of any kind because I know the ropes. I know the anatomy and physiology of birth. I know the phases of labor. I know what this all looks like. I know the things I'd say yes to and no to but guess what, when you're in it, that is not always the case. It is very intense, emotionally, it's very primal, we go to a place in ourselves that's very deep, and doesn't always allow for this kind of higher order thinking and complex problem solving. And sometimes you really do need an outsider who can just look at the situation and process it for what it is and help you as a team come together to something that, that feels good so that you can move forward in a, in a way that can preserve as much as you can have those birth preferences but also might be something you've never even thought of or considered.

K

Kira Dorrian 20:53

I also think in terms of being future focused. One of the things I see new parents struggle with the most women especially, I, just it's unfortunate, but it's true, is asking for help. New

mothers especially but parents in general, we live in a culture of I can do, right, especially for women. We're career minded now. And we are achievers. And we're used to being able to go and solve the problem ourselves. And then we have a baby. And we feel like asking for help is some kind of weakness. And I think that actually recognizing that you need help from the start, even in your birthing room, like, I don't know that I can do this by myself. And maybe that's okay. And I'm going to actually ask for help now. And that's going to set me up for asking for help later. Yeah, and continuing to ask for help when I need it, so that I can get my needs met and be the best parent to this little person.

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Deana Thayer 21:44

What a great point. That's kind of your first example and first putting into practice of, I'm going to get good support around me. I'm going to do it for my birth and it leads into I'm going to do it in my parenting.

K

Kira Dorrian 21:49

And I think you and I would both agree that we are passionate about parents getting that support. I really truly believe support is the key to a successful transition into parenthood. And the parents who struggle are the ones that either don't have access to it because they don't live anywhere near it, or are really afraid to ask for it. And I think that really the, the birthing time is this opportunity of becoming empowered to do what needs to be done for your little person.

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Deana Thayer 22:26

There's no question and, and we are unashamedly saying, if you don't have places to turn, reach out to us. Kira does amazing prenatal parent coaching. So even if you're still expecting, and you want to talk through some of this and some of what might happen afterward do that. I do birth consulting. So if you want to talk through what are your preferences around birth, and how do you set yourself up well and surround yourself with the right people and, and feel supported so you can have a beautiful entry into parenthood, get that help. We are really passionate about connecting people with resources. We don't want people to be floundering, facing things that are big and can be scary like birth. And I think that's even the reason we talk about it. It's the reason we educate about it. One of the best ways to remove the fear from something is take off the shroud of mystery. Let's educate, let's talk about it. When we're talking about it and examining it and looking at it from these different angles, it's less scary. Let's get it out into the light. Let's talk about it. And we don't want someone heading into birth, or certainly parenting, alone. So reach out for that. Both of us do private coaching, would

love to chat with you, and just help if you're working some of that out. We're going to close with a quote today about birth. And I think this is so true. This quote is by Jane Weidman. She says, giving birth should be your greatest achievement, not your greatest fear. I think Kira and I couldn't agree more.



Kira Dorrian 23:48

Absolutely. So as always, for more information on us, our coaching, but also just what we do and on the podcast, you can go to [futurefocusedparenting.com](https://futurefocusedparenting.com). Or for information specific to this podcast, [raisingadultspodcast.com](https://raisingadultspodcast.com). Raising Adults is produced by Kira Dorrian and Deana Thayer and recorded in my laundry room. Music by Seattle band Hannalee. If you like what you hear, please give us a five star rating. Tell your friends, share it on Facebook and Instagram. It's amazing how much those positive reviews and word of mouth is the key to a successful podcast. So if you like what you hear, give us that five star rating and we can bring you more of it. Thanks for listening.



Future Focused Parenting 24:27

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