Before deciding where and how to have your baby, it’s important to determine your values and needs. These things will determine your choice of birth support provider and place of birth.

The purpose of this exercise is to help you realize what is important to you about your birth, and help you set priorities. Use this to help talk with your care-providers about what you want. You can also use this when preparing your “Birth Plan”.

Instructions: Number in order of priority, place #1 next to the most important item, then rate your priorities from most important to least important. You will also rate what’s most important about your midwife or doctor.

WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU ABOUT YOUR BIRTH EXPERIENCE?

___ To have the most advanced safety equipment “just in case.”
___ To avoid using drugs in labor
___ To avoid pain
___ To avoid having a cesarean section
___ To have minimal interference
___To have a medical doctor present
___To labor and give birth in the same place
___To have my partner (family member) be present during the labor and birth
___To have other supportive people present (friends, family members, doula)
___To have my other children present
___To be in quiet, peaceful surroundings
___To be able to welcome the baby gently (dim lights, warm room, etc.)
___To have the baby with me after the birth (no separation)
___To labor and/or give birth in a watertub
___To be able to use a bath or shower for pain relief
___To feel at one with the energy, my partner, the birth attendants throughout the birth
___To be able to do what I choose in labor (change positions, walk, drink fluids, eat)
___To maintain a spiritual perspective throughout the birth

Wild Card (write your own): _______________________________________

WHAT IS IMPORTANT ABOUT YOUR DOCTOR OR MIDWIFE?

Instructions: Rate your doctor or midwife

___S/he has much experience and knowledge about normal birth
___S/he believes in and can facilitate a natural birth
___S/he has much knowledge of complications and emergencies and knows how to handle them
___S/he charges a low fee, takes my insurance, takes Medi-Cal
___S/he has a high regard for me and my partner’s intuition and desires
___S/he will be available throughout the experience, but not interfere with us except for when we ask for help
___S/he will be there in early labor, throughout the birth, and follow up in the postpartum period
___S/he will participate totally, tuned in to our feelings

___S/he can be depended upon to do the right thing, make decisions, and take over during an emergency

___S/he will consult us before doing anything, encouraging our responsibility

___S/he will be with me during labor, birth and if there are any complications

___We feel like friends instead of being in a “professional relationship”

Wild Card (write your own)___________________________________

Adapted from: Special Delivery: Creating the Birth You Want by Rahima Baldwin and Terra Palamarini-Richardson (Celestial Arts Publishers)