

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO BECOME A DOULA



start your own business
supporting families... from home

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE. . .

If it isn't fun, you aren't doing it right!



I am so happy that you have downloaded this guide! **It is the tool I wished I had when I was exploring becoming a doula back in 2007.**

There is no right or wrong way to use this guide. Start anywhere you would like. Flip to get your specific questions answered. Please note that the options for education and types of doula care will vary from country to country.

bebo mia has students in over 49 countries which still blows my mind. I started bebo mia almost 15 years ago to solve all the problems I had as a parent, a new-ish doula and a small business owner. I did it with a baby strapped to me. As a single parent. With no money or investments along the way... it was hard and rewarding and I know it is making such a huge difference on the planet.

Doula work is magic. It is a gift to be a part of. And the world needs more doulas. So have such a good time exploring this interactive guide and getting all the info your heart desires!

Please reach out if you ever have questions... my door is always open.

Bianca

Bianca Sprague
Founder bebo mia inc

So you are thinking about becoming a doula?

It excites you, like a little spark when you first think about it. You get a little wave in your belly... It is the stirring of a new life. For you.

When you get bitten by the birth nerd bug... it is a tough one to shake. We get it!

You probably have a million questions, as you should. We could probably guess some of them

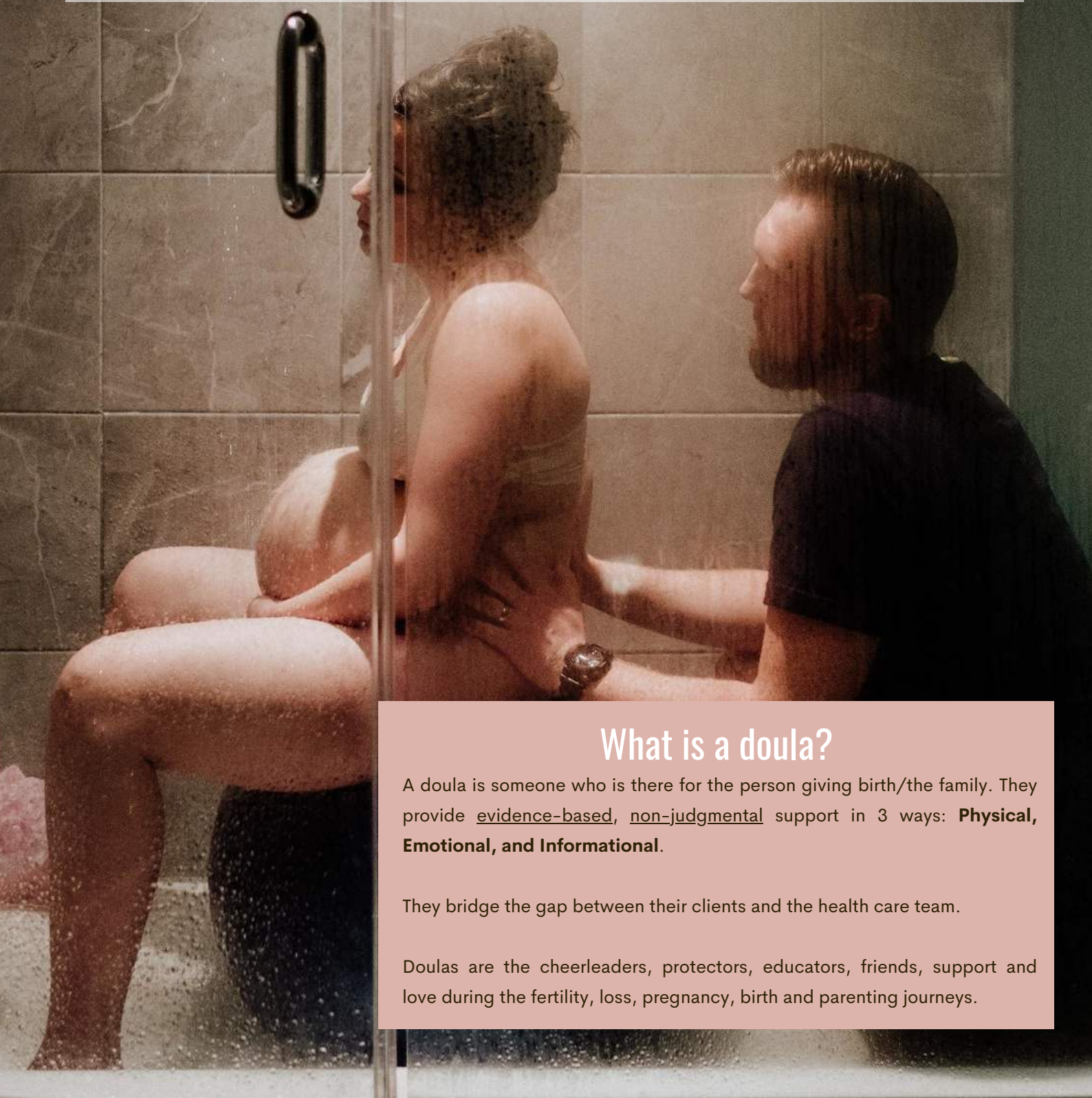
www.bebomia.com
info@bebomia.com
[@bebomiainc](https://www.instagram.com/bebomiainc)

We all wanna know

1. How does the school part work?
2. How do you get clients?
3. Could you do it because you have a job/kids/new to the area etc?
4. How much do they make?
5. Can you do it if you were not very good at school?
6. Ok, but would I make a good doula?
7. What would I even call my business?
8. I was excited and I told someone and now I am doubting myself because of their reaction...

Ok, well, that last one is not really a question, but something that does happen SO often when folks are dreaming up a change for themselves. We will actually talk about that too.

Seriously, all doulas go through this exact questioning and curiosity stage. All of us.



What is a doula?

A doula is someone who is there for the person giving birth/the family. They provide evidence-based, non-judgmental support in 3 ways: **Physical, Emotional, and Informational**.

They bridge the gap between their clients and the health care team.

Doulas are the cheerleaders, protectors, educators, friends, support and love during the fertility, loss, pregnancy, birth and parenting journeys.

HOW WE GET HERE

well, there are a few different paths.



Awesome Birth Experience

Not as many sadly, but really important to keep the flame alive of what is possible.



Birth Trauma

The most common one sadly, and the rage is great fuel for change!



You know you want more with your life

Some event happens and they know their current employment or lack thereof is not going to cut it. This is a purpose driven path and a career as a doula is one of the ways these folks can leave an important mark on the world.



Other

There are a few different feeder paths like being at a friend's birth, or having a nurse, midwife or doula for a parent leading you here.



Professional Expansion

Maybe you are a Massage Therapist or a prenatal yoga teacher and you want to expand your practice.

Regardless of how you got here, welcome!
You are feeling called to be a part of birth. A protector. A witness.
We need more of you!

THE CALLING OF THE CARER

PEOPLE, LIKE YOU, WHO ARE CALLED
TO CARE-WORK ARE MAGICAL.



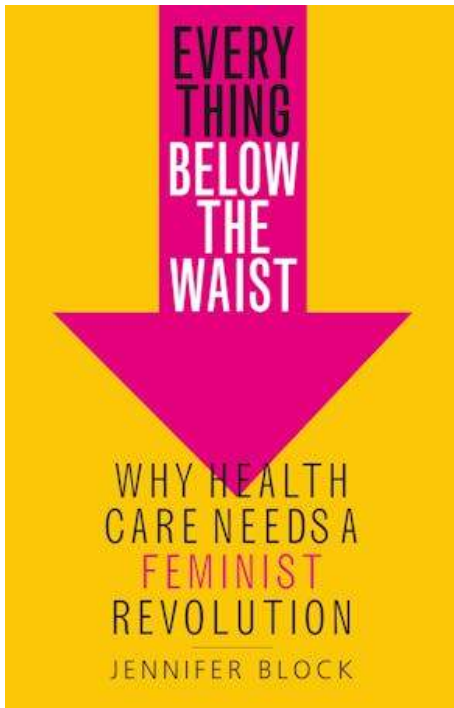
These are the helpers and the healers and the people who take care of community. They volunteer, they help out at the school, they organize (big and small), They make cupcakes for the bake sale, they donate their kids clothes to friends, they fundraise, they host, they take care of littles to seniors in so many ways. They show up. All over the place. That is you. You do that already. People think of you when they need help, need to solve a problem, are looking for advice. It is in you!

Now let's make it bigger... and make you some money while you do it. This is a beautiful business model that is changing the world. *Want to be a part of it?*

How do you become a doula?!

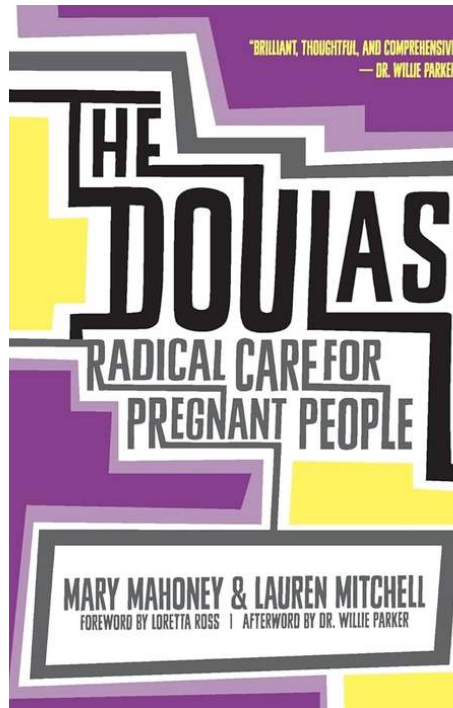
3 BOOKS WE LOVE

Click any of the books to buy



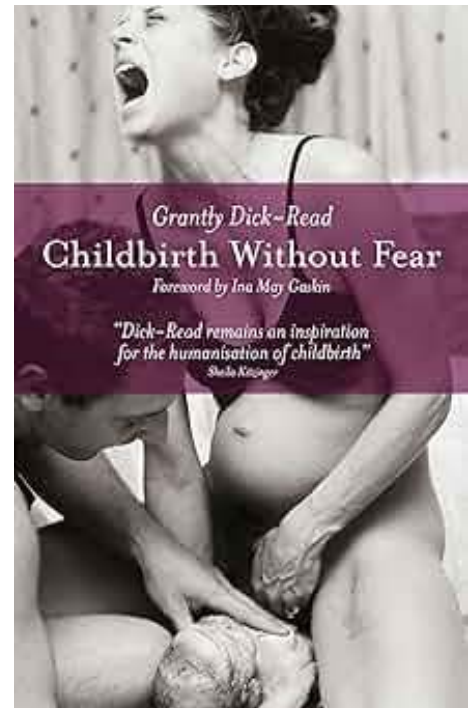
Everything Below the Waist

Run, do not walk, and buy this book! This book will pull back the curtain and really show you the underbelly of the forgotten in science... yup that's females. You will learn so much about how little we are considered in healthcare... and what you can do about it!



The Doulas Radical Care for Pregnant People

Finally a manifesto about full spectrum care for all folks going through their preconception, termination, pregnancy, birth and beyond. Most books are lacking massive areas of accessible and expansive care... this is not one of them! Awesome for the lefty carer.

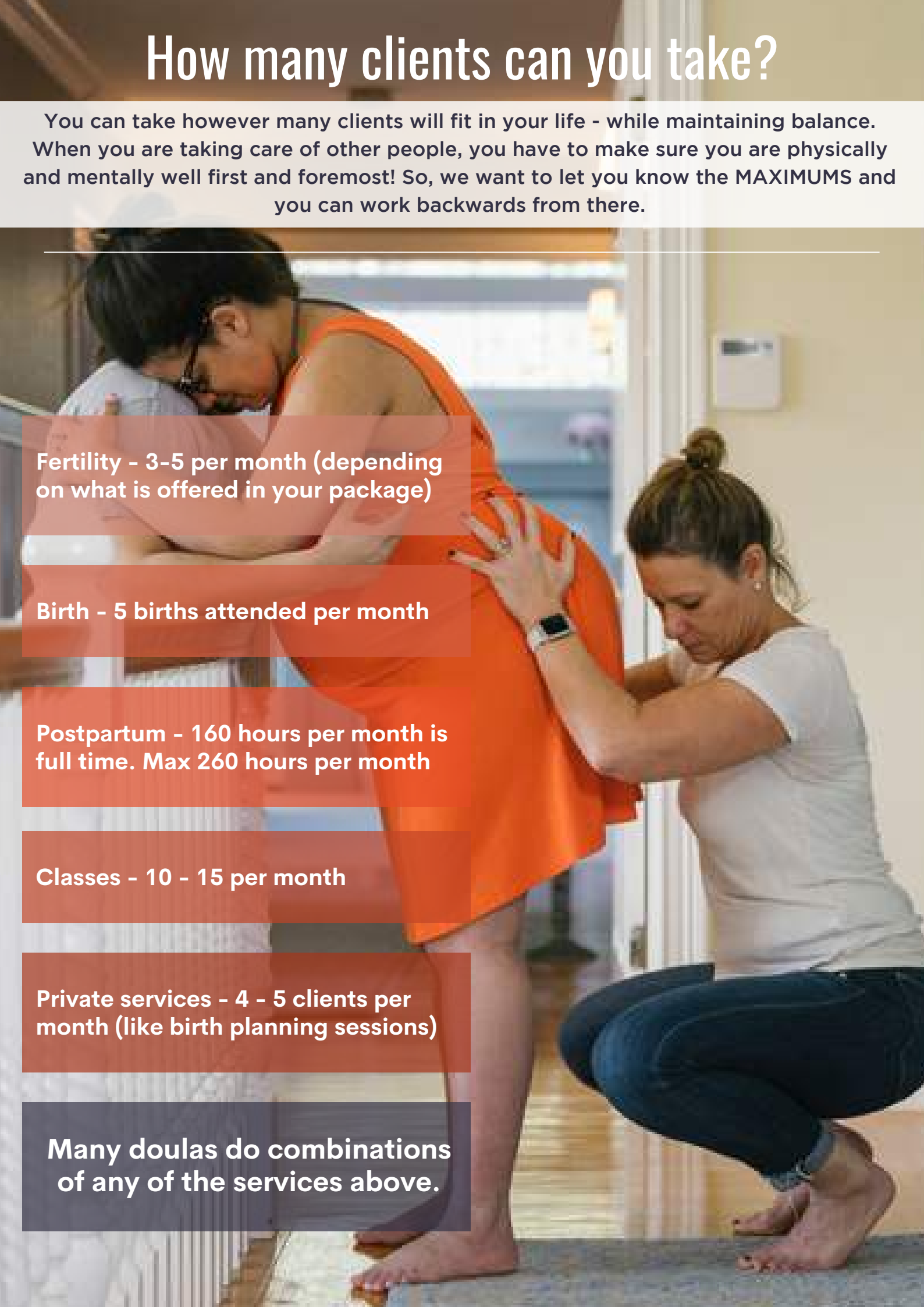


Childbirth Without Fear

Ok, Dr Dick-Read is not a good guy. Like, at all. However, this little gem made significant waves and really shook up the conversation about birth. It was much needed and has had a wonderful lasting effect. This book can be eye opening for what is possible. It provides good historical context for how we got here.

How many clients can you take?

You can take however many clients will fit in your life - while maintaining balance. When you are taking care of other people, you have to make sure you are physically and mentally well first and foremost! So, we want to let you know the MAXIMUMS and you can work backwards from there.



Fertility - 3-5 per month (depending on what is offered in your package)

Birth - 5 births attended per month

Postpartum - 160 hours per month is full time. Max 260 hours per month

Classes - 10 - 15 per month

Private services - 4 - 5 clients per month (like birth planning sessions)

Many doulas do combinations of any of the services above.

HOW MUCH DOES A DOULA MAKE?



LEARN MORE

We have a great blog [here](#) that deep dives into this topic.

The average doula makes about **\$50K per year**. However, it is very realistic to consistently average **\$80K-\$90K per year** after your first year or two when you do a good job as a doula and have strong word of mouth referrals. It is also not unheard of to make over \$100K as a doula!

You can have a very part time doula business that takes 1 client per month and know that you month over month have \$1000 - \$2000 coming in. You only need to leave your house for the birth. **This is why this is such an incredible career for parents with little ones at home.**

Cute Swag Alert



GAME: TEST YO'SELF

Name the object in the photo

*don't worry if you don't know them... it is just for fun
Answers are at the bottom of the page.*



Answers: 1. Rebozo 2. Nipple Shield 3. TENS Machine 4. Peanut ball 5. Amniohook 6. Doppler

QUIZ: SHOULD YOU BE A DOULA?



HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO CHARGE?

Let's figure it out together!

Step 1

Look at 3 doulas who work in your area or as close as you can get to you if there are not a lot of doulas around. What do they charge?

Put that number here: _____

Step 2

How much would you like to make each year?

Put that number here: _____

Step 3

How many clients would be your maximum monthly?

Put that number here: _____

Now, let's do some math (we will make it really easy!)

Put the answer from Step 3 and multiply it by 12 = _____ (annual clients)

Put the answer from Step 2 and divide it by your annual clients.

Step 3

x 12 = Annual Clients

Step 2

/ Annual Clients = Fee

Now, let's look at this number - how does it compare to the range of prices other doulas are charging around you?

You can charge more than the people around you FYI - a good doula training should teach you how to do this! It is just a jumping off point.



THE GROWING NEED FOR DOULAS. . .

The need for doulas is growing year over year!

The Future Market Insights for doulas in the US alone is an almost **\$15 Million per year** industry. This number is supposed to double in the next decade. We believe this is going to happen even faster due to the recent increase in doulas being covered by multiple insurance plans, Medicaid, and Tricare.

People know that having a doula protects them in this current environment of harm in the hospitals.

This means doulas are busy! It is a great time to get into the field.





Ana Robinson recommends Bebo Mia.
January 28, 2021

Choosing bebo mia was in of the best decisions I could have made. I found out about bebo mia through other Doulas who had gotten their certifications through other organizations and wished they would have chosen bebo mia.



THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO WORK AS A DOULA

There are ways to be a doula that will fit into each of your career goals, skills, and time constraints.

1. **Self-employed:** This is the most common one. You get to work for yourself, or maybe you and a partner or two. You call the shots, you make the decisions and you wear all the hats. This is not for everyone, and a good doula training should teach you how to do this!
2. **Agency:** This is more appealing to people who want to be a doula and like being an employee. The agency handles all the marketing and booking and payments... you just go doula. The agency pays you a portion of the fees that they collect from the clients.
3. **Hospital Program:** Some hospitals have programs where they hire doulas and you float on the L&D floor supporting people in labor or the immediate postpartum.
4. **Insurance Doula:** You can be contracted or credentialed with an insurance provider which would keep you VERY busy. The rates are not as high for the work, however the volume is there and you do not have to spend as much time marketing or growing your business which can work out in the wash.
5. **Non-Profit or Charity:** You can set up a not-for-profit (NFP) or a charity where the donations cover your salary and any other expenses for the services you offer in the field of preconception to the postpartum period. There is a fair bit of set up initially for this model.





One of the bebo mia alumni studying for her certification with her little asleep on her lap.

Can you be a doula with kids?

Most other jobs and side hustles geared to moms and parents are typically low earning and a lot of work like babysitting, house cleaning, and similar tasks.


Doula work allows us to make a difference and help families all while not sacrificing our own.

Finally a career that is not the constant battle of work versus family! This is the type of work that the majority of the time you can be home with your kids. We do recommend that you have a few ways to organize last minute child care, and this is something that a good doula training should teach you.

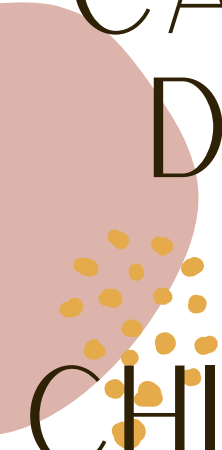
bebo mia was founded by a mom with a 7 week old baby who knew that she needed to figure out a new career that meant she did not need to use a daycare and she was close to her baby as much as possible AND was paying the bills... this is literally the origin story for us here.



One of the bebo mia alumni attending live class while nursing.



CAN YOU BE A GOOD DOULA IF YOU ARE CHILDLESS OR CHILDFREE BY CHOICE?



We know this can be a stressful belief for people who want to be Doulas. For some reason, there is a misconception that a childless Doula is not worthy of supporting birth. Our students without dependants, without fail, ask how they will be taken seriously. Some people will think they don't have the lived experience of birth, therefore cannot be good at protecting it.

This logic makes very little sense.

Every woman and queer person who is called to protect birth, educate parents and parents to be, and do the deep soul work of being a carer is worthy and ready and needed.

Here are just a few reasons why being a Doula without children is a gift :

1. You do not have your own birth or parenting experiences to interfere with holding space for your clients... or creating a bias for you.
2. You are able to typically leave faster to get to labors because you do not have to worry about finding last-minute childcare.
3. You probably aren't as sick as often because you don't have children in daycare or school.
4. You can be more present in the space with your clients without having the mental load of worrying about children (or getting texts from the childcare provider or other parent) – this is especially great for longer labors.

We also want to put a reminder here that just because somebody hasn't had a child does not mean they do not have pets and people that they are caring for.

Childbirth is NOT a prerequisite for being a birthworker!

HOW DO YOU GET CLIENTS?

This worry you may have will only be applicable to folks who are choosing to do the self employed or private practice route. All the other options for working as a doula, you do not have to find your own clients.

Getting those first 5 are important to kick off the word of mouth for your business to start gaining momentum. Once you know this, it takes the pressure off new doulas.

Get those 5 and do a good job and ask them to tell their friends.

It is a nice cycle that grows and grows.

How do you get the first 5??

Well, you talk to people!

You tell people at your kid's school, the daycare, the dance class, your church or place of worship, your family and extended family, your friends, your yoga class, your chiropractor, your family doctor, your partner's friends, your neighbors, your Facebook community, your dog groomer... literally everyone.

You get really clear what you want to do and for who and it becomes your perfect formula for building your client roster.

This is something that we help with in so many ways both free and low cost!

SNEAK PEEK INTO THE FOUNDATION OF DOULA WORK.

Want to see what is behind the curtain of doula work? Everything we do is through evidence-based care using the model of informed consent. This is literally our touchstone. We have an acronym that makes it easy to support our clients.

B – Benefits

R – Risk

A – Alternative

I – Intuition this is the MOST important!

N – Nothing or No

If you can understand this concept, you are ahead of the game!

When supporting clients through Informed Consent, you cannot be attached to their decisions and outcomes, just keep supporting them! This can be challenging if their views are different from your own if you were in the same situation. With great training, you will feel more comfortable with this concept, especially if your beliefs are different from that of your clients.

Also, this tool can be used for anything in your life... should I get bangs? Is this daycare right for my family? Do I want to go on a second date with them?



WHO YOU SHARE YOUR (SECRET?) EXPLORATION INTO BECOMING A DOULA WITH...

YOU ARE DOING SOMETHING BRAVE BY EXPLORING YOUR CURIOSITY AND DESIRE TO BE A PART OF THE REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND JUSTICE COMMUNITY. *REALLY BRAVE!*



Here is a strong suggestion we have for you to protect your heart... ready for this?

Don't share your desire to possibly become a doula with everyone.

Share this with people who will cheer you on, help you research and guide you with the informed consent process. Yes, use your B.R.A.I.N. to decide where you want to train and certify, how you want to practice, heck even deciding your business name. *Find a person or two that will do this with you.*

Here is why we are suggesting this... People in general fear change. It is scary for our minds to process. There is more risk in the unfamiliar. This is very simple neuroscience. Soooo, to protect ourselves, we can sabotage people who start behaving in a way that feels too different to us. The people around you are not doing it because they mean to cause harm, it is because it scares them.

This can dim your light as you are already doing something vulnerable. It is scary for you too to think about a new career, being in a program, meeting new people etc. You don't need to hold their worries too.

Confide in a few people who will be ready for the task - and the people you choose may be surprising. They may not be your bestie, partner, sister, parent. This may be someone a bit more removed from you. In fact, it typically is.

Once you have laid it all out, circle back to your main people and present it to them.

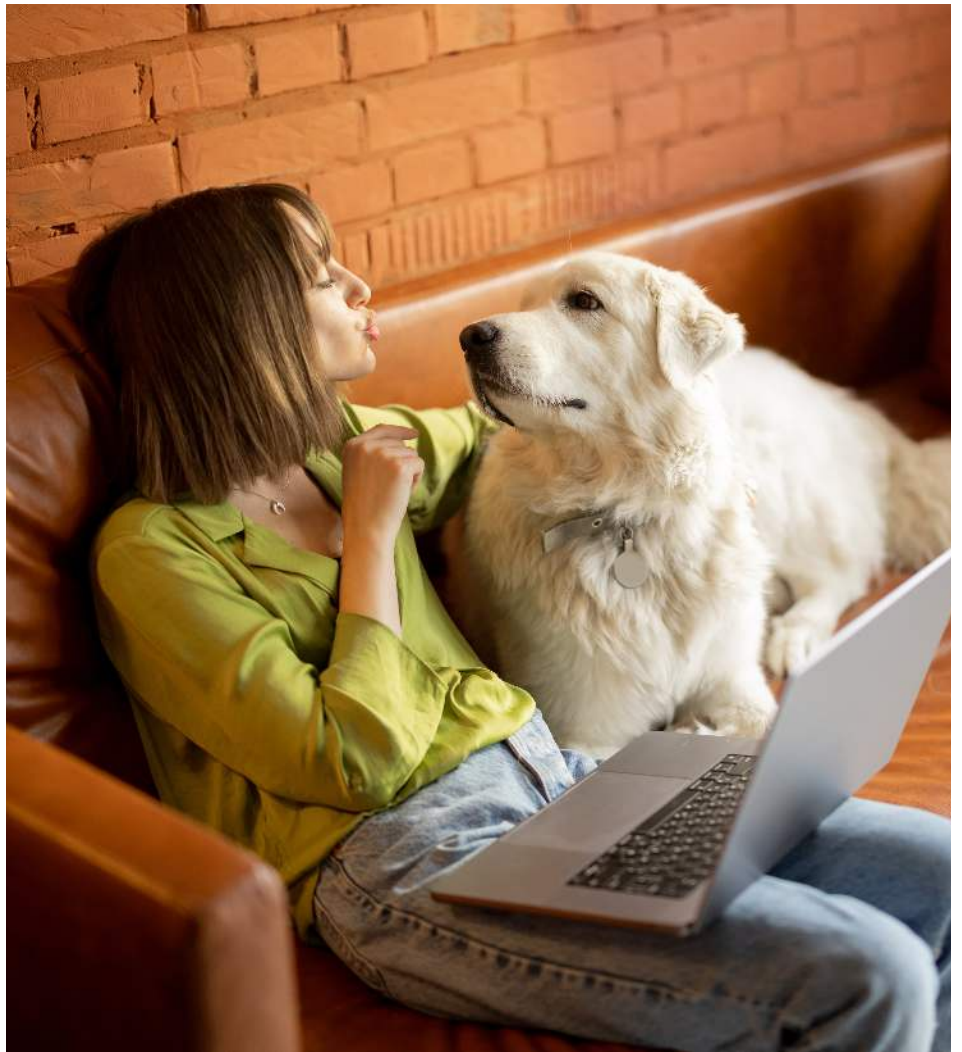
This can be the difference between you exploring your dreams or having them stay in the 'maybe some other time' bucket with everything else you have back burned or sacrificed.



Find what's going to work best for you!

 Mariah West recommends Bebo Mia.
December 1, 2021 · 🌟

I had such a great experience receiving my training through Bebo Mia. The entire team is so supportive and they really set you up for success.



THE TYPES OF TRAININGS AVAILABLE

Weekend Training: Back in the day this was all that was available and thank goodness more options hit the market. At this point, you cannot learn everything you need to know to be a confident doula in a weekend. As adults, we cannot just keep stuffing information into a full cup, so after a couple hours you are not retaining the lessons, making the weekend info even less than you think. AND it can be hard to leave your kids or travel to a location that hosts them.

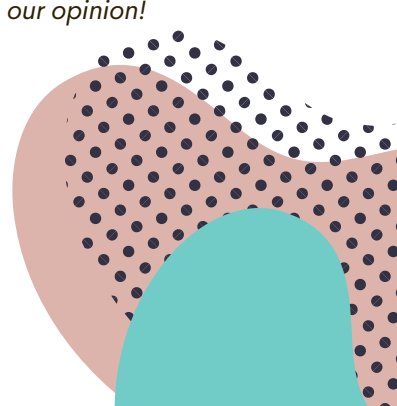
Self Study: All you self-motivated folks, this may be a good option for you. There are a few ways to do self study. There are video series or packets you do online. If you like creating your own schedule (and sticking to it), add this to your list of possibilities.

Extended & Live Lessons: There are online and in real life programs that meet over several weeks or months for a more comprehensive guided learning experience. This can really increase your community experience and these programs tend to have more to offer. *These are the cream of the crop, in our opinion!*

 Karalyn Fite recommends Bebo Mia.
August 9, 2022 · 🌟

If you have any hesitation, just take the leap of faith and sign up. You won't regret it!

bebomia.com



HOW TO PAY FOR YOUR DOULA TRAINING



LEARN MORE

We have a great blog [here](#) that can really help with this!
You do not want to miss out of what the blog has to offer.

There are several ways to pay for your training.

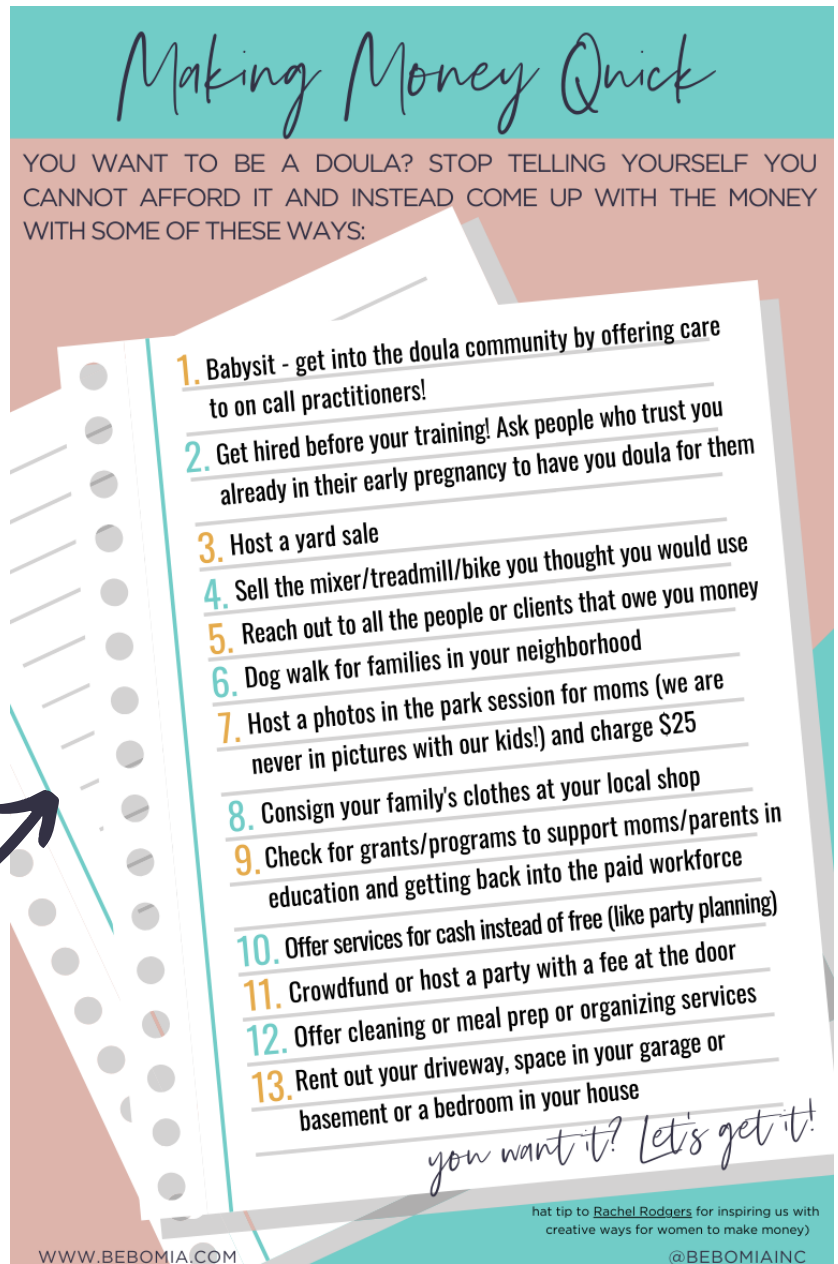
Some of the training organizations have payment plans (check the interest/penalties before you lock yourself into a crummy payment plan). They are all different ranges for cost.

Annnnd, if you want it, let's get it!

Start with this script: "I want xyz because abc. I don't have the funds available right this second. However, I can generate the money I need. I need x dollars and here is how I'm going to get it..."

Next task... come up with a get cash quick list. We will kick it off for you.

Remember - the purchase of your doula training MAKES you money in the end. It is not like saving to buy a bag or a trip... this is an investment in your career. Each year you put it off, you are leaving money on the table!



Know about the (hidden) fees!

HUGE WARNING HERE! As you explore the options for your doula education, please be aware of the hidden fees! Almost all the doula training organizations post their tuition fees and it is unclear how many extra fees they will have before you get close to certification. There are certification fees, book fees, memberships fees, continuing education fees, exam fees, recertification fees and more! Some of them will be more than \$500/year just to stay certified with them.

bebo mia has zero hidden fees. We are the first and only to offer this. This is something we are so wildly proud of!

HEART WORK NEEDS A COMMUNITY

We are so excited that you are curious about becoming a doula! **You will need a community of people** who get you, who know the ins and outs of this work, who are super birth nerds just like you. The magical thing about doula work is the massive network that comes with it. You are about to step into an alternate universe that is really exciting.

You will get new friends. New cheerleaders. A new passion and outlook on life.

You will be transformed.

You will be a doula.

Welcome!
xoxoxo



DOULA TRAINING: FERTILITY, BIRTH & POSTPARTUM

REGISTER NOW



Full spectrum 3 in 1, 17 week long program with your hand held the whole way!



DOULA TRAINING: BIRTH DOULA CERTIFICATION

REGISTER NOW



A stand alone birth doula training that will kick start your doula career!



DOULA TRAINING: FERTILITY SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION

REGISTER NOW



Serve those who are trying to conceive through 1:1 care and support groups.



BECOME A
DOULA
TODAY

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