

**Dooula evaluation for Marissa Farrell 10/8/05 - birth date 9/1/05**

Mother Alyssa  
Father Richard

Marissa was my doula for the delivery of my second child Ryan Anthony at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA.

Her services began as my yoga instructor. From there I asked her to assist me in the VBAC labor and delivery of my second child. Knowing that Marissa had been through a cesarean herself I was confident that she would be additionally empathetic of my situation.

She began by coming to my home for an in home visit and consultation. We talked a lot about what I envisioned for my birthing process, my goals, history and current birthing plan. My husband and I were also involved in taking Bradley classes so we talked about using natural childbirth methods and ideas associated with the class as well as postnatal details. After our session Marisa made a list and preliminary birth plan that Rich and I further elaborated on for our final birth plan.

After meeting with me alone Marissa took some time to meet with my husband and I one on one to discuss her role and keep my husband at ease with the process. We went over her expectations and any questions that we had as a couple. She also brought us physically through some laboring positions and techniques that we could use together when she was and was not present.

From here Marissa came to a prenatal visit of mine to meet with my OBGYN. She asked questions and helped me go over my final birth plan and goals for my birthing process with my doctor. I found this very helpful as I was a VBAC patient and it was hard for me to sort through all of the details and risks with my doctor. She presented herself professionally with the doctor and gave a real sense of being there to help with the medical process rather than compete with it. This was important as I knew we all needed to work together.

From here she and I were in contact several times via email or the telephone to “check in”. She was encouraging and positive every step of the way. I was also fortunate enough to have Marissa as a yoga instructor, this gave me the chance to talk to her at least once a week in person, even if only to say hello it helped to strengthen our relationship and comfort level.

When it came time to labor my husband and I did the initial laboring at home. Once my contractions were under 5 minutes apart we all meet at the hospital on the labor and delivery floor to have me checked. From the moment she arrived at the hospital Marissa was with us, mentally and physically. She was there helping me labor, answering questions for the medical staff and offering emotional support to myself and my husband. She was positive and enthusiastic at every turn, even as we rounded the 20 hour mark. Ultimately my birth ended in a cesarean. However I have no regrets, I was educated and

well supported by Marissa and my husband and in the end Marissa made me feel accomplished and proud of the laboring and effort I had put forth even though the outcome was not what we all had hoped for.

After the birth Marissa came to the hospital to visit me. She was supportive and kind and I was very glad to see her. She gave me exercises to help in my recovery and offered postnatal advice.

Having Marissa as my doula turned out to be much more than I had anticipated. She added to the experience and I will be forever grateful to her for her kindness and support.