

LAURA UPLINGER:



A Cosmic Collaboration

In the mid-seventies, a new field was born: prenatal and perinatal psychology. In the past three decades, new findings about conception, pregnancy, birth, and the first months of life have caused old assumptions to fall like leaves in a Canadian autumn. Even at the point in history when science was first taking humans to the moon, we still mistakenly believed that the placenta could protect a fetus from practically everything happening to the mother. Likewise, a newborn was considered a *tabula rasa*—a blank slate.

But science is now revisiting this crucial chapter of our very early beginnings and making discoveries that have mighty implications for the kind of adults we become. Recent discoveries in biochemistry and cell biology have added to these scientific revelations about life before birth. For instance, hormones produced by psychological stresses the pregnant mother endures actually influence placental vascular organization. This is startling and highly motivating news.

In 2001, neonatologist Jean Pierre Relier, editor of the prestigious *Journal of the Neonate*, wrote about the fundamental importance of emotional stability in each of the parents at the time of conception for healthy development of the embryo and placenta. A healthy placenta, in turn, prevents intrauterine growth retardation, prematurity, maternal hypertension, toxemia, and early miscarriage.

Laura Uplinger is an international proponent and educator in the field of conscious conception, prenatal and early parenting. Fluent in four languages, she bridges several cultures traveling between Europe and the Americas as a featured speaker for doulas, midwives and obstetricians. In Rio de Janeiro, she has counseled pregnant women in favelas, mansions, and maternity wards. A student of the spiritual teachings of Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov, she dedicates her life to disclosing the relevance of imagination during pregnancy. She is the scriptwriter of an award winning video “A Gift for the Unborn Children,” and works in close collaboration with the Association for Prenatal & Perinatal Psychology and Health.



Thanks to pioneering books such as *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child*, by Thomas Verny, and *The Mind of Your Newborn Baby*, by David Chamberlain, we have become more aware of what goes on psychologically before birth. For the last decade, Dr. Bruce Lipton, a cell biologist, has been deciphering for the lay public recent and exquisite scientific discoveries about the life of our trillions of cells. Especially revealing are Lipton's elucidations as to how our cells take cues from their immediate environment in order to activate—or not, as the case may be—particular functions and specific genes.

From Harvard Medical School, we hear: "What goes on in the womb before you are born is just as important to who you are as your genes." Thanks to recent epigenetic data, it is even possible to infer that the health of a fifty-year-old person may depend more on the way

she or he was formed in utero than on diet and exercise habits.

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 "The power to create is one of the most divine attributes man possesses. In his exercise of that power he enacts microcosmically the great macrocosmic drama of creation. The fusion of the male and female organisms is a sacramental enactment of the great drama of the creation of the universe. When it is performed with the motive of pure and mutual love, the two halves of God, as represented in man and woman, are united."

—Geoffrey Hodson
The Miracle of Birth

Unfortunately, this understanding has not yet reached the general public. In fact, at the dawn of the second millennium, very few people are familiar with the power of prenatal life. I first heard of it in the lectures of the Bulgarian spiritual teacher Omraam Mikhaël Aïvanhov. Nothing of the kind had ever been mentioned in my psychology classes at the university. But sacred traditions have emphasized the crucial importance of conception, pregnancy, birth, and breastfeeding for centuries. Even the Vedic literature, some of the oldest known scripture, makes reference to the importance of the quality of conception.

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 What a momentous freedom to say yes to a cosmic collaboration and welcome the works of life in one's body! Alchemists perceive the sperm as light in liquid state, gold being light made into metal. What a gorgeous image to hold for this miraculous emergence of a human from the union of egg and sperm.

During the months leading to the conception of my child, I was aware that my body was to become a vessel for the making of a new human body. My husband and I sent out a call to the universe—as if posting an ad on a galactic website—stating who we were and what we could offer to a soul who wished to join us. We carried on our daily

activities in a mood of solemn expectation and profound surrender:
Was a soul going to be drawn to us?

On a clear May morning when the air was full of the scent of spring blossoms, we welcomed the soul of our child as we conceived. “Dear One,” I recall saying inwardly, “if we are conceiving your physical body this morning, may you have a vast and luminous life.”

The formation of a child in the womb is analogous to the way a fruit grows on a tree. Just as everything matters inside and around that tree, every detail of the life of an expectant mother matters. And for Spirit, matter matters. A European physician from the sixteenth century, Paracelsus, wrote: “Woman is the artist of the imagination, and the child in the womb is the canvas whereon she painteth her pictures.” The family of words *image*, *imagination*, *magus*, *matrix*, *matter*, *mama*, all contain the root sound *ma*, which means “mother” in Sanskrit.

The formidable period of our formation before birth sets the stage for the way we relate to life. From the teachings of Rudolf Steiner in the early 1900s, we learned that, “During pregnancy, the mother’s joy and pleasure are the forces that provide her baby with perfect organs.” In 2004, renowned obstetrician Michel Odent demonstrated the same notion in an embryology lesson.

As I am writing these lines, I have in front of me a beautiful painting representing a human fetus in the spiraling shell of a nautilus; above, in silvery letters, I read the following invitation: “Parenting Your Baby Before Birth—Explore the Relationship.” Our relationship with our children begins when we start wanting a child and dreaming about bringing a new being into the world. In fact, prenatal parenting sets the tone for the kind of mom or dad we will become, and that tone will be heard throughout the child’s life.

Recently, I was delighted to read what a Harvard Professor of Religious Symbolology said to the young men of his class: “The next time you find yourself with a woman, look in your heart and see if you cannot approach sex as a mystical, spiritual act. Challenge yourself to find that spark of divinity that man can only achieve through union with the sacred feminine.” True, Professor Langdon is only a fictitious character in Dan Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code*, but my heart rejoiced to see this important perspective so eloquently spelled out in a runaway bestseller.

Somewhere in the last pages of his seminal book, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*, Thomas Cahill wonders what is germinating the future of our civilization. What shape might human civilization take, I



wonder, if parents would bring renewed consciousness to conception and the early life of a child?

Brazilian psychiatrist and Jungian analyst Eleanor Luzes suggests that our times require the anthropological advent of the *Homo sapiens frater*: individuals capable of altruism, people who cherish and foster brotherhood on Earth. Luzes believes it is imperative for every high school and college around the globe to teach young people how to conceive and raise a child who will grow up to be wise and creative, aware of his or her kinship with all life.

Initiatives like the one launched by childbirth educator Tamara Donn in England gather pregnant women for a beautiful collective experience. In Donn's specially designed Birth Art Café, women meet every week to paint, sculpt, read, or eat croissants and oat cakes

<p>§ Few moments are more empowering or harbinger more freedom than the conscious conception of a child §</p>	<p>while sipping herb tea and chatting. Relaxing music supports and enhances the synergy springing from a circle of joyful bellies teem- ing with life. Likewise, French Architect Olivier de Rohozinski has created beautiful designs—plans for city parks in which preg- nant women can stroll among trees, flowers, and fountains. These special parks include a lodge for expectant moth- ers to come together and sing, weave, sculpt, and draw, forming their own little cohort and craft village. Imagine a world in which cities all over the planet implemented such plans.</p>
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Even the best socioeconomic and political measures will not be successfully implemented if we go on procreating the unconscious way, ignoring the principles at work in conception, and in a pregnant womb. During pregnancy, a mother gives of her own substance to form her child's organs and psyche. This child will one day walk the Earth expressing peace, wisdom, and generosity—or indifference, rage, and fear. The power to birth a new civilization is the very power nature has given pregnant women. Hope for a brighter future depends on a collective understanding of this, and a collective acceptance of our shared responsibility. Everyone then becomes part of the endeavor. Fathers, families, communities, and nations all rally to support and inspire each and every mother in the monumental adventure of forming in her womb a healthy baby, and raising that child to be centered, intelligent, creative, and caring—a future citizen of the world. In fifty years' time, conscious conception and gestation could indeed redeem our species and change the face of the world.