

Heal Your Birth, Heal Your Life: Tools to Transform your Birth Experience and Create a Magical New Beginning By Sharon King. 2015. Bristol, UK: Silverwood Books. ISBN: 978-1-78132-374-8.

Heal Your Birth, Heal Your Life is a book that can change your life, and it can also open your eyes to what is possible for pregnancy, birth, and beyond. It is a gentle manual for healing prenatal and birth trauma for mother and her birthing experience, or for the adult seeking healing of his or her early overwhelming experience. The beginning introduces Sharon King, the author, and how she developed this specific approach to healing birth. King has been a student and practitioner of Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) for a long time. This therapy uses tapping of the acupuncture meridian energy points and verbal statements about an issue or challenge to re-pattern that experience in thought, belief, and physicality. She is involved with Matrix Repatterning, an advanced EFT approach that works specifically with any life trauma. King states she has worked with thousands of clients from all walks of life, and is a co-creator in the unfoldment of this therapy that “rewrites” experiences in body and mind. She also lays out how this therapy will not only heal early experiences, but help you prepare for birth if you are pregnant. I was not familiar with her approach at all, but was gradually swept away by this book as I read.

Part 1, “Introducing the Tools,” lays out the way this therapy is used and how it works with mothers and adults with early trauma. King’s tools are familiar to the pre and perinatal psychology enthusiast: Bruce Lipton and the wisdom of cell biology; David Chamberlain and baby sentience; the body’s security system of fight, flight, and freeze. In the latter, King adds “fainting” and “fooling around” as parts of the sequence that add to the authenticity of her approach. She goes over the EFT and Matrix Reprinting protocol in depth, how to use the tapping, and working with limiting beliefs connected to patterns the reader might want to change. Particularly important for this approach is identifying the part of the consciousness that splits off when a trauma is experienced, or an ECHO (energetic conscious hologram). Examples of these unconscious split off beliefs include not feeling good enough, lovable, worthy, capable, understood, wanted, successful, etc. Part of identifying and healing these ECHOs are the process that created them, something she calls a UDIN moment: **U**nexpected, **D**ramatic, **I**solating with **N**o strategy to deal with it. She describes how the Matrix Reimprinting can go back to the moment and rewrite these moments in the energetic field of the body. The trauma does not need to be relived. These ECHOs are combined with the EFT tapping technique. The therapy starts with the beliefs that arise from those moments and re-patterns them. Resources in a person’s life can be included in the process, such as important people, pets, and places in the now. It ends with an exercise for the reader to try.

Part 2 addresses “The Science Behind the Matrix Birth Reimprinting.” Her summaries of how birth trauma happens, and the conditions that are optimal for brain development are helpful to emphasize how precious the early period of prenatal, birth and windows of development are. King weaves in the science of nervous system development, particularly early relationship, rhythm, and movement. She also has a chapter devoted to coherence in the heart rhythm, or HeartMath.

Part 3 is about “Birth Traumas.” As an avid student of healing birth trauma, I was relieved to read this part of King’s book. We need more writing about our perspective. King’s chapters in this section mention many of the patterns I work with as a therapist:

early overwhelming events in utero for the baby and the mother; patterns of birth that may need to be addressed in therapy such as use of anesthesia, induction, instrument deliveries, c-sections, separations, circumcision, and more. She supports these chapters with exercises, stories, and materials from authors and practitioners in the PPN field such as Ina May Gaskin, Wendy Anne McCarty, Marti Glenn, and Joseph Chilton Pierce. The many stories from people seeking change are gentle but deep interventions in their own way for the awareness of the reader.

The last part of the book, "Matrix Birth Reimprinting," describes how to use her approach for specific conditions. These include working with your Self as a baby in the womb, reworking or "rewriting" beliefs from early overwhelming experiences, specific pregnancy and childbirth issues, difficulty postpartum, and working with fathers. It is a full spectrum approach to the pre and perinatal period. There are many cases described, and technical explanations of methods within the Matrix Birth Reimprinting, many of which involved identifying the ECHO, or consciousness that has split off and still operating in the person seeking healing. Many of the patterns King addresses are familiar in the human experience such as feeling good enough, survivor's guilt or other associated beliefs, fears of dying or living, fear of pain, feeling like they did something wrong, feeling unworthy or about the safety of the environment (the world is dangerous). There is a long list of patterns that King has worked with or identified. The book addresses many patterns associated with pregnancy and birth, such as twins and twin loss, miscarriage, difficulty conceiving, breech delivery, depression, and anxiety.

Overall, the book is a satisfying read for the passionate PPN student or birth process enthusiast as well as the individual seeking healing. King is truly a professional worth seeking out, and her book an example for those practicing in the field to emulate. We need more books like this one.

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