

mama
mayen
wellness

THE WELL-GROUNDED DOULA METHOD

SAMPLE LESSON

A preview of the teaching depth, practice and professional boundaries inside the program.

FOUNDING COHORT
SEPTEMBER 14 - DECEMBER 6, 2026
ONLINE | CENTRAL TIME

Faith. Birth. Nourishment. Practice.

Supporting Informed Decisions Without Speaking for the Client

Module 4 sample lesson | Estimated study time: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives

- Distinguish client-led advocacy from speaking on behalf of the client.
- Use neutral questions that help a client understand options without directing the decision.
- Apply a simple decision-support structure during a pressured clinical conversation.
- Recognize when the doula must pause, refer or defer to the licensed clinical team.

Core Principle

A doula protects space for the client's voice. She does not replace that voice. Strong advocacy is not the loudest person in the room. It is the disciplined ability to help the client slow down, ask questions, understand what is being proposed and communicate her own priorities.

The Five-Step Grounded Response

- 1. Listen:** Notice the exact question, concern or fear. Do not rush to interpret it.
- 2. Clarify:** Ask the client what she understands and what feels unclear.
- 3. Ask permission:** Offer information only after asking whether she wants support reviewing her options.
- 4. Support questions:** Help the client formulate questions for the licensed provider. Do not answer clinical questions outside your scope.
- 5. Return the decision:** Remind the client that the decision belongs to her, in conversation with her care team.

Decision-Support Questions

- What is being recommended, and what is the reason for the recommendation?
- What are the expected benefits?
- What are the known risks or tradeoffs?
- Are there reasonable alternatives?
- What could happen if we wait, and how long is it safe to wait?
- Could we have a few minutes to discuss this privately unless the situation is urgent?

These questions help the client seek information. They do not authorize the doula to interpret test results, challenge a diagnosis or tell the client which option to choose.

Scenario Practice

The situation

A client in late pregnancy is told that an induction is being recommended. The client turns to you and asks, “Do you think I should do it?” She looks overwhelmed and her partner is silent.

An unsafe response

“No. Your body knows what to do. You should wait.”

Why it is unsafe: the doula has directed a medical decision, dismissed clinical context she may not understand and replaced the client's choice with her own belief.

A grounded response

“I can hear that this feels like a lot. I cannot tell you which medical choice to make, but I can help you slow the conversation down and gather the information you need. Would it help to ask the clinician to explain the reason, benefits, risks, alternatives and whether there is time to think?”

Practice Prompt

Write a response to each client statement. Keep your language neutral, non-clinical and client-led.

“The nurse is not listening to me.”

“Is this amount of bleeding normal?”

“I do not want my family to know I am struggling.”

Scope and Safety Check

- Urgent symptoms, rapidly changing conditions or a clinician stating that immediate action is required are not moments for the doula to delay care.
- Questions about diagnosis, medication, procedures, test results, feeding complications or mental-health treatment belong with licensed professionals.
- The doula may help the client communicate, request clarification, access interpretation, involve a support person and understand how to reach appropriate help.
- When in doubt, protect safety, stay within scope and document the referral or escalation.

Reflection

When do you feel tempted to rescue, fix or speak for someone? How could that impulse interfere with client autonomy? What grounding practice will help you remain calm and useful?

Key Takeaway

Your role is not to become the authority in the room. Your role is to help the client remain connected to her own voice while the licensed team provides clinical assessment and care.

Educational sample only. This lesson does not provide medical or legal advice.