

# Fourth Trimester Podcast

## Episode 57: How A Postpartum Doula Can Help Build Your Community - Manuela Bakilana & Shakila Marando From Doulas By The Bay

**Sarah Trott:** [00:00:05] My name is Sarah Trott. I'm a new mama to a baby girl and this podcast is all about postpartum care for the few months following birth, the time period also known as the Fourth Trimester. My postpartum doula, Esther Gallagher, is my co-host. She's a mother, grandmother, perinatal educator, birth and postpartum care provider. I've benefited hugely from her support. All parents can benefit from the wisdom and support that a postpartum Doula provides. Fourth trimester care is about the practical, emotional and social support parents and baby require, and importantly, helps set the tone for the lifelong journey of parenting.

When I first became pregnant, I had never heard of postpartum Doulas, let alone knew what they did. So much of the training and preparation that expecting parents do is focused on the birth and newborn care. Once a baby is born, often the first interaction parents have with medical or child professionals, other than the first pediatrician visits, is the six-week checkup with the OB/GYN. *What about caring for mama and family between the birth and the six week doctor visit? What are the strategies for taking care of the partner and the rest of the family while looking after your newborn?*

Our podcasts contain expert interviews with specialists from many fields to cover topics including postpartum doula practices, prenatal care, prenatal and postnatal yoga, parenting, breastfeeding, physical recovery from birth, nutrition, newborn care, midwifery, negotiating family visitation, and many more.

First-hand experience is shared through lots of stories from both new and seasoned parents. Hear what other parents are asking and what they have done in their own lives.

We reference other podcasts, internet resources and real-life experts who can help you on your own parenting journey. Visit us at <http://fourthtrimesterpodcast.com>

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:00:43] Hi Listeners, Esther Gallagher here we have two wonderful doulas Manuela and Shakila from Doulas By The Bay and they're going to introduce themselves further in just a moment.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:00:56] But I wanted to remind you all that in addition to this podcast which you can pick up and refer your friends to all the various platforms for listening to podcasts. We also have our Website [fourthtrimesterpodcast.com](http://fourthtrimesterpodcast.com). We have a Facebook page and we want you to subscribe if you can to our podcast so that it just shows up in your little podcast app whenever we have a new one and if you can't be ever so lovely if you could sponsor us even if it's just a dollar out so that would help us.

[00:01:40] So without further ado I would just love to ask my wonderful cast to each introduce themselves. Why don't we start with you Shakila. Tell us about your business and how you came to be a doula.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:02:01] Thank you so much for this opportunity. Thank you listeners. My name is Shakila Marando. I am originally from India East Africa a mom and mother of two two girls 10 years 11 years old. I am a founder of Doulas By The Bay, an agency that connects parents and professionals say parenting professionals like doulas to work in helping families Pre and post natal and offer them support. I founded the company in 2014. And I've actually been a doula myself for nine years. Thank you.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:02:52] Yeah how. Manuela, tell us all about you.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:02:56] Yes. Hi everyone. My name is Manuela Bakilana and I'm 36 years old and I come from Tanzania. I am married and I have been living in the Bay Area for 16 years. And I have been a postpartum doula for almost six years now. I did my training back in 2012. And I've been working as a doula ever since.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:03:21] Wonderful. That's great. So. Why don't you each take as long as you need to tell us what brought you to being doulas. What interested you in the idea of helping other families. Very curious, very curious. Such a great story. And it's always a great story.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:03:47] I think for me, my journey as a mother. My first born was born in 2006 and I know how much support usually a mother in her entire family needs after having a baby. I was very fortunate. Because I had that dad and then I had my mom and my sister. And sometimes I wonder about families that don't have a big family to support them. You know how they survive for the first four months of the baby's life. Fourth trimester Yeah. So I love what I do. I really do love working with parents just for me every night was for them for many years now.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:04:39] I really do enjoy working with parents I help them with breastfeeding I help them just knowing how to care for the baby on a daily basis I usually establish a day routine for them to help them learn how to help that they can go through the day with their newborn in this world. How can establish a good night routine when the baby is old enough. So I really really enjoy working with families. It seems my calling. I would say you know I do believe that it takes a village to raise a child so long as we can come together and get some help for families from doulas, we can make a better world.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:05:28] I agree that is what this podcast is all about. What about you Manuela, what brought you here?

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:05:39] So I come from a family of eight children. And when my youngest sister was born in 1993 when I was 12 I got my first introduction to raising a newborn child. I helped my mother to take care of her. I used to help feeding, bathing and babysitting her and you know just making sure she's OK and happy.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:06:00] After moving to the United States in October of 2001 I worked as a nanny for several families in order to support myself while I attended college. I attended many colleges and some and then I transferred to San Francisco

State University where I majored in health education with a concentration in community based public health. I've always been interested in health care.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:06:23] I also really enjoy working with babies. So after hearing about postpartum doulas in 2010 I decided to do some research and ask people about the doula career. It fascinated me because I was already experienced working as a nanny. In July 2012 I decided to transition to working as a postpartum doula. I contacted Nickie Tilsner who is one of the founders of Cornerstone Doula training and took the comprehensive postpartum doula course with her. Upon completion of the course I volunteered for one family with newborn twins in Daly City. After about two weeks the couple decided to hire me. And that is how my journey as a postpartum doula began and I'm still enjoying it.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:07:09] That's fascinating. You know it's very interesting to me. How many of us one way or another are very well educated not necessarily through college but through training, experiential opportunities etc. We are a pretty smart group.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:07:39] Yes we do continue education as well. When you go to the doula meetings we hear speakers.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:07:47] Yes that's right. The San Francisco Doula Group makes a point of having speakers. I'm The speaker coordinator currently and I've noticed that in the past with the doula group we would look outside of our group for professionals to come speak to us from outside. But there's so many of us who have such interesting backgrounds that I've started to actually see how many of the doulas amongst us have something interesting they want to tell our group about.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:08:19] So yeah I just wanted to mention that you know you're talking about your background education. I want to take a little detour back into your history. You are both from Tanzania. I don't know whether you grew up in communities close to each other or far apart from each other. Certainly in California every community has its unique flavor.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:08:51] But is there anything about growing out there that you would like to talk to our listeners about either or just your own personal experiences of growing out there or maybe you even would venture a comparison and contrast between what you experience as children and young women are in another country and then coming to America

**Shakila Marando:** [00:09:17] This is a very good question. With my experience growing up in Tanzania we found out that our communities are very very close. So for me growing up we know every kid in the entire street. We are very close. And then of course as mothers or families when they know they go through labor and give birth, the entire community will come close and support their mother. So they usually have extended families there.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:09:56] Shakila why don't you tell us some specific ways that the neighborhood really would. Help those new parents. Yeah.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:10:07] So like for us my neighbor will come in you know offer food take care of the siblings that will take them and you know care for the. And definitely since we are very very close if you give if they know that there is a certain family in a community or street has given birth and then everyone come and support that mother. For us we do know that a mother who has given birth, they usually stay in their bedroom and their only job is to breastfeed and sleep basically and the entire community with the extended family, friends or make sure there was food for her, she takes care of herself. She gets plenty of rest. They take over the entire basis of the household, household chores and other responsibilities and make sure that the mother rests, just sleeps and eats and feeds the baby. That's pretty much it. at least the first forty days.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:11:27] Yes. I wanted to add that we have what you call "arobaini" which means 40. So when baby is born, the baby is not supposed to go out too much. At least out of the compound. You can take her out of the house for fresh air. But then after 40 days you have a big celebration of family and friends come by you

know come over to your place and then you have a big feast. It's like your big introduction of the baby to the world.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:11:58] Oh that's delightful. I often suggest to my clients that you know they keep it very very quiet and low key. For the first couple of minimum two weeks but preferably four to six weeks and which still is a short period really. And then think about rather than having one person come to visit and a whole string of people coming to visit one of the time that they just have a potluck. Right. And people can bring food and you can come out with the baby you can go back in the house and you know hopefully it can be outdoors. It is the Bay Area. Many days are sunny and we can do that a lot.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:12:45] But rather than announcing that you're going to see one person at a time you know and never take a nap, you're actually just going to have a little party and everybody can meet the baby. And I like that idea. I think as a tradition I think it's healthy. I honestly think it's just healthier. But I also think in the U.S. we call traditional communities really smart about you know someone's sick they stay home. You know it's like they're protective of that baby even on the big party day. They know enough too that this is you know this is a baby's first time coming into the community. And you have to be respectful of that.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:13:35] You know I have said this part cost a number of times and so finally we have living proof. So we give a lot of credit to Asia for the tradition of the first 40 days. And I said I always say I know it's older than that I know it goes back further than that. It must. You know so I'm so happy to have that confirmed

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:14:05] Yes. Another thing we do is like after a certain period of time also the baby's head is shaved to symbolize a new life and a new beginning. And you know the baby's head is in the womb. So you shave the baby's head to symbolize new life, new beginnings. Yeah yeah.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:14:51] Well I think part of that and correct me I might be wrong in this but I think part of it is if they've survived outside the womb for 40 days they've got a pretty good chance right. Things are looking good.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:15:04] And so now they are actually ready to be a baby. They're no longer a fetus human. Human babies are squirted out into the world a little early. We talk about that a lot like really even though they look big, they're still immature. If they were a different mammal they would still be in the womb developing further until they could do more things. And so you know I think that's part of what's being symbolized is OK the baby has made it to this next developmental phase where they're not so much a fetus yes they're actually a newborn baby. And Mom's good, baby is good, everything's good, and we can celebrate. Yeah.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:15:58] Well you said yes that's correct?

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:16:01] Yes.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:16:02] I love that. Now you know a lot of babies their hair falls out. I'm sure you've noticed some baby's hair doesn't even make it that far. Their hair just falls out. If they had hair to begin with and some babies are just born completely bald right.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:16:20] I wanted to add another thing. Back home we had the advantage of the community society and in the US this was individualistic. One advantage is that when you have people surrounding you, you hardly have any time to be depressed. I first had the postpartum depression here in America. So I think it's good to have people around you if you feel that you feel that you have somebody to talk to you and take care of you.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:16:55] And you never have to worry that your child will be taken care of you will be taken care of. And I think my experience and I certainly experience postpartum depression both times was gosh you know most of the time it's all me all the time. Plus everything else I have to do that the people around me knew nothing about

how best to support a pregnant person - making sure that I was well fed, making sure I was getting enough sleep - not disrupting those things but rather supporting those things. So by the time I had my newborns it was just more of that. More disruption, more a lack of support, more stress. And so less food and less sleep. So of course physiologically I couldn't sustain that and still be feeling pretty healthy and whole a lot of the time. And I think just the sense that you know because you've grown up knowing that everyone around you knows who you are, knows what you need, is willing to support you just as you are willing to support them when their turn comes.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:18:23] Exactly. Absolutely correct. Manuela, I don't think you could have put it more succinctly and more beautifully that you know there's not time but there's also not the anxiety. You're not anxious you know. And I think you know so long as you're not experiencing political forms of deprivation war et cetera you know you can get through this life feeling pretty well if you have this right. So yes thank you for reinforcing that. You know it's very challenging in a highly capitalist society to find community support. Thank goodness for doulas right. Thank goodness for neighbors. If you're lucky enough to have them. As I've said on this podcast before I don't think I really would have made it if I didn't have my wonderful neighbor - it was just she and I - we both say you know we we kind of saved each other because at least we had each other to talk to about what was going on and to offer support. I mean if needed, I could drop my baby with her she could drop her baby with me and that baby would get breastfed if needed and diaper changed if necessary. All of that was taken care of and we only had each other.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:20:01] There was you know the other neighbors were kind of clueless and they're perfectly nice people that they had no idea what to do to help us.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:20:09] Where were your parents, your mom?

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:20:11] My mom was working full time for Headstart which you probably have heard of. She was the Executive Director for four counties and she had three days to be with me.



**Esther Gallagher:** [00:20:24] She was with me day one day to day three. Yes. Yes. You know I was with my daughter for two weeks and we both were just devastated when I had to go home to be on call for other clients. You know I mean this is very much the experience of America.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:20:44] Yes. And now you know with this demographic of older mothers right. Women who are having their babies till they're in their late 30s and all the way through their late 40s. Many are the time that their parents are retired and therefore can come and stay. But concomitantly they're not always able bodied. Yes they're in their 70s.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:21:11] Yes and no one has to work for clients who will move you from other cities they move here for work. So we will sometimes ask for them to have A family who can come and help us for a few days from another state for work. We have nobody.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:21:33] Yes. And not very often the case. Yes. Yes. Where were your children born?

**Shakila Marando:** [00:21:41] So my children were born over here in Berkeley, California. Yes. I came here when I was 19, so a long time ago. And I came here to go to college.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:21:57] I had a two year old when I was 19.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:22:10] I had my late aunt now who took me in and took care of me as I go through those first years in America. So I went to college. My major was nursing that I was. That was what I was going for.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:22:37] And then gave birth later years later. and then I worked with children as a nanny prior to that so 13 years as a nanny. And then after my kids came, the support that they were like my sister will come and help me. And then I ended up working with one of my. This was my first actually doula client she needs some help

is she talking about doula. And you know I went to do the research and I took a course and you know that's how I became a doula. So such an empowering experience for me. Yes yes.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:23:26] No it's interesting that something that's considered alternative in America and that you know especially a few of us get to experience if we're lucky enough like we hear about it and we let our friends tell us about it because they have the experience. I mean there are still huge swaths of communities of women who have not yet heard the word postpartum doula they have no idea that there are people who actually know stuff about what it means to be postpartum. What it means to be going to a major developmental phase of being a woman that you don't avoid unless you never have kids.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:24:23] And it's too bad that in the US when people hear the word postpartum they think it means depression right. They don't see it necessarily as the normal developmental phase that comes once you deliver your baby that everyone's going to go through. Yes. They think it's a problem. A mental health problem when it doesn't have to be just as you pointed out. While I think physiologically there are going to be plenty of moms who have maybe lots of help in the postpartum period and still will experience some serious difficulties from a social emotional standpoint. I think it's important to note that without support, without knowledgeable assistance, many many many women are going to have a much more difficult social emotional time of it.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:25:34] So usually as a doula we work to support the entire family so we make sure that the mom feels better. Psychologically, emotionally and if she's struggling we do refer out so she seeks some help. Yes. Yeah. Especially when it comes to mental health. We monitor and make sure we get into that history of depression because we know once the baby comes, with lack of support with it or even some support you're going back to experiencing mental health issues. So we do recommend they seek some help.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:26:18] We're rather lucky in the Bay Area because there are so many wonderful mental health workers who are orienting themselves to the special needs of the postpartum parents.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:26:45] Manuela, tell us something that I don't have to ask you about what do you want to know about your work and you and what's up.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:27:00] I want parents to know that they don't always have to feel alone. If they feel like you know the first few months of a newborn are difficult to always ask for help. They shouldn't worry about their finances. It's very important especially for the well-being of the baby because baby's feel the mother's emotions. Some mothers say my baby's fussy, my baby's colicky, my baby just cries. if the mother is feeling down or is depressed the baby senses it and reacts to that. I think that term used is neural mirroring - the baby can mirror the mother's emotions whether the mother is aware of it or not.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:28:06] Yeah. It's an interesting phenomenon. Yeah. These things can be challenging to tease apart. And I want to be sure our listeners understand that we're not blaming moms for fussy babies but rather acknowledging that this is kind of a feedback loop. And that there is help. There is just help. Whether it's just somebody to come help hold your baby during those fussy periods of time so that you can get some respite. Or it's somebody who is going to do that deep dive with you to really root out your anxiety and depression and help you find skills to cope with with those feelings that help you actually feel better. Right. Not just coping but actually helping you escape the loop that you might be in.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:29:14] And the other thing to remember is that it's just a phase. Especially the first three months so parents have to remember to keep their perspective. It's difficult sometimes but hang in there. Take it one day at a time.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:29:39] Sometimes one breathe at a time. Yes. Just breathe. Slow down. I think one of the experiential paradoxes of the first three months postpartum - the fourth trimester - is that on the one hand things are changing so fast.

Right. The baby is growing and developing. All the time. Yes. You can barely keep track. Right. And at the same time things seem to be going so slowly. And you can feel trapped right. Just like oh my gosh are we ever going to get out of this. very challenging phase. So it is paradoxical.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:29:39] It's also a phase that helps us prepare for the rest of parenthood does. And you know it's going to ease up but you're still going to need those skills that you developed as a new parent when you're an old parent. I really appreciate the reminder, Manuela.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:31:02] Well how about you Shakila, anything you'd like to talk about in terms of well maybe how doulas help families. I know with your agency you help connect people to various forms of doulas isn't that correct?

**Shakila Marando:** [00:31:23] Yes that is correct. So for us we do have different parenting professionals. We have birth doulas who help mothers when going through labor and birth. And also we have postpartum doulas who come after the mother goes home and support her there. And usually they are very knowledgeable when it comes to breastfeeding, how to care for the baby. And our job as doulas is really to empower the family. So by the time we leave the family, they have all the skills necessary to care for the newborn and themselves.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:32:11] And we do care for the entire family from siblings to immediate family members. You know, making sure that after the baby comes they transition well and you know are healthy through the first three or four months. And we also offer nanny services. So after moms go back to work and they are looking for nannies.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:32:42] No kidding. That's great. I am often wondering where I can send my parents who are saying OK now it's time for us to find a nanny. I know of one or two agencies but it's fantastic I'm so thrilled to know that you also provide that service.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:32:59] We started providing it because of being asked by different mothers for such services because it's an immediate need after the doula leaves.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:33:11] And most of our our moms are going to be returning home to full time work at some point. Yes.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:33:19] And also we do offer placenta services and breastfeeding services. So it's like a one stop shop. Once you are expecting we will be there with you. Yeah every step of the way. It also now Doulas By The Bay is working on launching its first educational portal for parents.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:33:54] So everything will be online in terms of education for expecting and new parents. So anything from how to care for your newborn, breastfeeding, introduction to solids, how to search for a better child care, all the education will be available in this portal and you can find out more information by visiting [doulasbythebay.com](http://doulasbythebay.com). Parenting Education.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:34:34] Fantastic. That is wonderful wonderful news. Well now of course listeners will be listening to this podcast in the future. Get out there and look for these things because they may already be there.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:35:18] Now you both if I'm not mistaken have done night time doula work. Is that correct?

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:35:26] Yes. OK.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:35:28] So I am not currently remembering having a nighttime doula on this show. That doesn't mean we absolutely haven't because I know Sarah does some of the podcasts without me. But I'm always curious myself but I always want our listeners to hear about what a well-trained nighttime Dula is going to provide by way of caring for families. So Manuela, what can you tell us about how you take care of families at night.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:36:11] So the shift usually begins at 10:00 p.m. and ends at 6:00 a.m. and I usually assist the mother with breastfeeding. Or if the baby is taking a bottle I assist with reminding the mother to pump milk and make sure it's ready and then once was I take care of the baby, once the baby has eaten and has been swaddled and put back to sleep, I help the mom with some laundry. Sometimes I make soup. \And I will sterilize the bottles. Obviously check on the baby to make sure the baby's fine. Well that's typically my shift.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:37:06] And I bet you encounter moms who while they're breastfeeding if they're not also sort of sleeping or dozing through that breastfeeding have questions and concerns - is out the case? Do you have those moms who sometimes have to ask you questions about their baby or they're not sure about their bleeding or they're having breastfeeding issues. Do you encounter that at night?

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:37:34] Yes, often Moms have questions about breastfeeding especially latching the first few weeks. Latching or getting enough to eat. So those are the types of questions I get about watching them. I'll usually suggest something that could prop up some pillows or hold the baby in a football position and that usually seems to work.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:38:04] Yeah. Helping Moms to feel flexible. And like it's OK to try different things especially once they've been in the hospital because they often feel very much like there must be a right way to do this that they can't remember what it is because the nurse came in and did it. Yes, right. Rather than oh this is my body this is my baby. I can try different things. Hey, help me with this. You know there's someone to help if they have a nighttime doula which is helpful.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:38:40] I know in my work, and I only do daytime postpartum care but, in my work I'm striving as you say to get the parents to that place eventually when they're ready to kind of be on their own with these things. And so I want them to feel flexible like they're not going to break their baby as they try upside down and backwards you know it'll either work really great or it won't work at all and you can try you know. But

yeah I think moms need somebody nearby. In those cases who can you just say OK let's try. It's nice to have that. I bet your moms are hungry at night too. Oh yeah.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:39:26] So yes sometimes you know sometimes they just want a glass of water when someone want have someone there who can give a glass of water or bring them some snacks. And sometimes they just want to sleep throughout the night. So the milk will be ready. All I have to do is just make sure it's warm and give it to the baby. They just want their rest.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:39:53] In the morning when you wake up and you give them feedback. They say that was awesome, I feel so refreshed. I needed some sleep.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:40:04] Yeah. Yes, sleep is good whenever you can get it. Day or night. Yeah.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:40:11] Yeah I just I'm going to circle back around. But I actually saw a reference to an article that said women need more sleep than men. Just in general and I thought oh I want to find out about that. See what the science is around that because I can relate. It's not specific to postpartum. I don't know about you but I'm always telling my moms look, you're healing, you're recovering, you're making milk like crazy. You know all those cows out in the field have to do is eat grass. Right right. They're also trying to do six other things so bad comparison. But the point being that they rest. They eat and they rest and they make milk.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:41:09] And they don't have to worry about hospital visits right.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:41:19] Or making their own food. Visitors come visitors coming yeah they're just out there with a bunch of cows. You already know what's going on. So so yeah. So I have to remind moms why it is so important to try to sleep any time a baby sleeps. Day or night. And not imagine that if they got to sleep last night they're going to go for the Daytime. These things don't work that way. We're on a very different timeline. It's why in Tanzania you stay in the bedroom. Yes, for 40 days. It's why in all of Asia you're supposed to just lay low for 40 days so that if you're sleepy you just sleep. And

when you're hungry, which is all the time that you're not sleeping, you're eating. That's why the whole village makes you food. Yeah.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:42:19] Somebody told me that the number of 40 represents transition or trials. For example, like in the Bible They talked about the number 40 a lot. 40 days and 40 nights. So yeah makes sense. A lot can happen in 40 days.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:42:47] So what about you Shakila, tell me about your night doula practice.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:42:53] So my night doula practice, similar to Manuela, I get work at 10:00 p.m. and then stay up until 6:00 a.m. in my work. Most of the time were the mothers stable to talk and they are looking for more information, I do like to educate a lot. So and also when I the opportunity to work during the day, I do educate moms a lot. How do you swaddle. How do you burp. Also I'm a breastfeeding educator so I love breastfeeding and I get to help mothers with that as well. So we try different positioning that works.

Anything that you know they might be facing that is challenging. Definitely I do remember the minute I walk in I ask them about that day. If they have any questions any challenges that they face during the day which ours comes up usually during that conversation you know what to do. So you know teach them how to structure you know routinely you know for that baby take naps. Also mommy's well rested, babies who were rested, that way baby does not crying a whole lot during the evening, sometimes not preventable and just to prepare mothers that this is normal. Babies do become fussy in the evening and you know it phases out like in six or eight weeks.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:44:19] I like to tell parents you know everybody's kind of ratty at the end of the day. Even if you've had a great day. Yes. You know you've had a lot of stimulation. Even if you napped through some of that you were still in your environment. Yes. And sometimes it just makes you irritable. And so there's just that phase of heading in the direction of quite sleep and nighttime and being well fed and all those things. And it's tricky. I mean. I Like to say my dad still has colic.



**Esther Gallagher:** [00:45:02] I love my dad. But boy as the day wears on it gets harder every year. And he's 85. I say when he was 35. But we all were. I mean, he was just the loudest example.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:45:22] Yeah. So I do a lot of education just to make sure we never leave work. Three months four months the families get to go by themselves and also making sure mom is well nourished. During the day in between the night, making sure we have snacks around. I love to make breakfast because I know that usually you know moms when they wake up in the morning they just rushed the baby and before they know it, it's 10:00 a.m. and they haven't eaten anything.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:45:54] So it's true. And sometimes you have to, especially in the early days you actually have to spoon food into moms while they're breastfeeding because if you just set it down on the table, you come back at 3:00 PM, it's still there.

**Manuela Bakilana:** [00:46:09] So try to eat whenever the baby wants to eat.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:46:21] If you wait until you weren't breastfeeding to eat you'd never eat. And if you did eat, you'd never sleep. Right. So just have to eat when your baby eats.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:46:40] Encouraging parents to care first for themselves is kind of unnatural - that's not really how it works after having children. you really think about them first. But I try to encourage parents to think about them first. As far as making sure you get time to sleep, Eat well and healthy meals then that way you can be able to better care for their newborn. It's just to remind them that take care of yourself first. That we can be able to better care for the newborn.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:47:20] We're going to start to wrap up now. Believe it or not. Is there anything that you can think of that you'd like to say that we didn't touch on yet. Or do you feel pretty complete. What do you think?

**Shakila Marando:** [00:47:38] I would like to encourage mothers when they have a baby or the journey of having a baby, just to seek that help from people. Either friends or families making sure not to be shy. To ask for help. And also to take time for yourself too. Whenever you are able to, you can even go out with your partner. In the day, even a one hour date.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:48:20] Yeah. I think people don't realize maybe prior to having a baby that by about the time the baby's four weeks old, it's time to introduce a bottle. And you know unless you're going to be able to exclusively breastfeed your baby because you're not going back to work et cetera that you know it's time to introduce at least one bottle a day. Which means that of course first your partner can have the satisfaction and fun of feeding the baby but then gradually you can have those date nights with your partner or date afternoons or date mornings or whatever works best for everybody.

[00:49:09] Or pump and make sure you have a reserve to sneak out for an hour. Come back. The partner can fortify that relationship. While you connect with other moms, the community of like-minded people. Be Kind to yourself - you just went through birth. Things are definitely different. Life is definitely different this time so be kind and take it a day at a time.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:49:39] Shakila. I'm imagining, correct me if I'm incorrect, that part of what your agency also does for moms and certainly this portal seems like an opportunity. It helps pregnant and new parents to connect to the community to find out what else is going on with parents. Everything from infant massage classes to I don't know Family Dance night or whatever's going on that helps them meet new parents or things like that which is such a nice thing to have on offer. So that's great. I'm glad to hear that.

And I think for those of us who tend to get into the downward spiral of isolation because we're shy, we have a particular challenge with connecting with other people. That's part of the difficulty of giving yourself that opportunity to be in community even if all you do is hire a birth and or post-partum doula. And I always put the emphasis on postpartum if

you have to choose between the two. Honestly, I would go for postpartum. And I do both so that's my bias.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:51:18] But just if you can start with one person who's there to care for you. Yes. And that can help lead you in the direction of more and more community outside of your home. That will be a special boon to you. Oh. Yes. Yeah.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:51:39] Well I am so thrilled to have finally had to come on our podcast and get to hear about this really comprehensive agency you have.

**Shakila Marando:** [00:52:04] Yes you can find more information on how to be connected with a doula or any services that you might need pre and post-natal wise by visiting [www.doulasbythebay.com](http://www.doulasbythebay.com). Our email is [info@doulasbythebay.com](mailto:info@doulasbythebay.com). We have doulas who go all over the bay area.

**Esther Gallagher:** [00:52:54] Yeah. So wonderful. Okay well listeners thanks for joining us one more time on the Fourth Trimester Podcast. And we look forward to you joining us next time. Take care.

**Sarah Trott:** You can find out more about Esther Gallagher on <http://www.esthergallagher.com/>. You can also subscribe to this podcast in order to hear more from us. [Click here for iTunes](#) and [click here for Spotify](#). Thank you for listening everyone and I hope you'll join us next time on the Fourth Trimester. The theme music on this podcast was created by Sean Trott. Hear more at <https://soundcloud.com/seantrott>. Special thanks to my true loves: my husband Ben, daughter Penelope, and baby girl Evelyn. Don't forget to share the Fourth Trimester Podcast with any new and expecting parents. I'm Sarah Trott. Goodbye for now.