

BirthKeeper Strategies

version September 2014

- a. Social movement to change the cultural paradigm to life-giving systems of care and compassion in an equitable, just and thriving world. Transforming the separation of humans from each other, unifying people. Bridging earth and birth within a maternal loving focus.
- b. Grassroots movement through collaborative, non-hierarchical groups, and building coalitions with aligned social change organizations. Individuals respected, heard and empowered, each voice valued. Global, regional and local emphasis. Solidarity with front line groups. Intergenerational. Balance of feminine and masculine.
- c. Honor Indigenous cultures and spiritual guides who understand our sacred connection to Earth- Reconnecting with Mother Earth-we are the earth and it is our mother and its elements are our primal ancestors. MotherBaby MotherEarth –birthright relationship.
- d. Fierce commitment to all of us with humility; honoring our differences is foundational in all committees, groups, decisions, actions and the basis of the growth of the movement.
- e. Open Dialog including differing opinions, uncomfortable topics, honesty and fertile listening.
- f. Function as we want our world to be, following and using our values: seen in how we organize, how we treat each other, in the symbols we choose and the actions we take. Marshaling the skills, tools and resources to make that vision real.
- g. Collaborate using non-violent communication as a core competency of all who work together in groups and gatherings. Use consensus as a group technique [i] rather than dominator model.
- h. Action-oriented. Non-violent public events as unified actions to express our shared values.
- i. Enabling consciousness that moves beyond fear. Transformational learning, support for reactions to triggering topics. Spiritual support and techniques for personal growth and integrity.

j. Effortless, joyful celebrations and ceremonies in which all can participate freely and happily- realizing the importance of all arts-, music, theatre, writing, visual arts etc.

k. Educate to:

i. Primal Continuum as human development from preconception through adolescence.

ii. Why birth matters.

iii. Women and healthcare provider's understanding of implications of decisions on the woman and baby's health without blame, guilt or judgment.

iv. Highest standard of information.

v. Environmental influences on healthy human life.

vi. Like earth, like birth-what we do to the earth we do to ourselves and all future generations.

vii. Autonomous exercise of free will, conscious and clear.

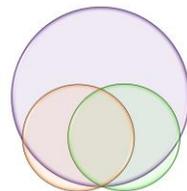
viii. Support and mentor youth as the next generation of BirthKeepers- ecoliteracy, birth education.

l. Be guided by the Wheel of Change [ii] The Wheel of Change is a simple yet profound model for true, systemic change—guiding us to work in an integrated way to shift our inner experience, our actions and external realities—a roadmap for transformation.

m. Create a community of self-defined BirthKeepers that supports an on-going movement. Annual summit.

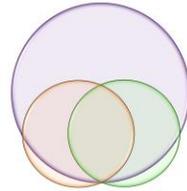
n. Declare BirthKeeper Principles, Rights, Responsibilities for endorsement from supporters.

o. Honor the legacy of the birth activists upon whose shoulders the current movement stands, the original BirthKeepers.



Purpose of BirthKeeper Summit

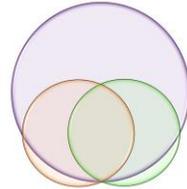
Calling out to unify with others who resonate with the role of BirthKeeper. Inviting already existing, acting and self-described BirthKeepers to help build this movement as well as offer education and support for what is needed to build it locally and globally. Convening of aligned groups and social activists. Inform about our world's current situation. Inspire change. Train and launch actions. Create community.



Strategies of BirthKeeper Summit

1. Attract birthworkers and those in the continuum of prevention: environmental health, social activists, reproductive health, rights activists: to Healing/Repair: therapists, medical professionals: to Lifestyle: attachment parenting, fathers, modern women, youth, grandparents.
2. Numbers of attendees -on site and virtual: regional, affiliated groups, aligned groups, industry segments.
3. Program and Speakers tied into values and strategies.
 - a. Clear statement of current situation, witnessing to current dominator system and its harmful effects- oppression, abuse and violence. Understanding of problems.
 - b. Inspirational healing solutions being done or planned or envisioned.
 - c. Interactive, experiential, virtual, tedx short lectures, small groups, pathways, keynote speakers, panels, workshops, celebrations, music, art, enabling convening of specific groups, central gathering spot.
4. Action oriented. Non-violent training for action and holding actions vs dominator systems
5. Affordable for all: scholarships, keep fees low, venue is public commons.
6. Collaborative- include all organizations who want systemic change.
7. Sustainable-staffing supported as financial resources are available. Affiliated groups can generate revenues.
8. Inclusionary of frontline populations in decisions, committees, outreach efforts and program.

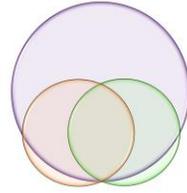
9. Clear goals and plans for outcomes, what will be different in the world?
10. Creation of sacred space and support of individual heart intelligence of attendees.
11. Joyful, fun, engaging arts as container for participation in expansive ways of understanding BirthKeepers strategies and values.



Program Pathways suggestions:

1. **NURTURING** *Regenerating –nurturing women . MotherBaby* is respected and supported. Change hearts and minds of humanity. Bringing the sacred back. Restoration of empathy- simple changes can be done- ie: skin to skin after birth. Embodiment-sacred uterine energy. Transformational healing and growth practices. Internal *spiritual techniques* -practices to change behavior. Support of Maternal love. Transform separation into one community. Reclaim oneness.
2. **CLEAR** *Consciousness-personal psychology. Internal oppression .* Institutional influence. Perinatal psychology. Unwrapping fear (sexual abuse, birth trauma), Free will, consent. Reclaiming women’s primal power.Paradox of both/and. How to become an integrated human being?
3. **RELATED** *Eco- home. MotherBaby MotherEarth.* Indigenous. Earth spirituality. Rights of Future Generations. Environmental health. Eco-feminism. Legacy, ancestors. Sacredness of Mother Earth. Cosmology. Deep Womb Ecology.Creation Spirituality. Black Madonna. Youth/ecoliteracy.
4. **EMBODIED** *Biology .How neurological basis effects physiology .* MotherBaby as one ecology. Preconception/ birth effects.Changes in birthing capability. Epigenetics. Reproductive health. Sex. Prenatal care. Environmental affects. Evolutionary biology. Functional medicine. Hormone disruption.
5. **PRESENT** *Modern women -* dealing with what pressures? Fear of yearning to be a mother. Time needed to heal afterbirth. Community needed to feed and nurture woman. New wave feminism. Fathers, parenting. Intergenerational. Original Birthkeepers legacy and hand-off to new generation. Economic needs. Education of children. Health and wellness of children-special needs. Autonomy, personal sovereignty. Business, work,vocation.
6. **SOCIAL** *Culture (patriarchal, consumer, colonizing) structural changes .* Corporate and privatization are harmful. Change paradigm, language,story. Birth Revolution. Rework the corporation; Transcultural. Activism. Non-dominator paradigm. Non-violent

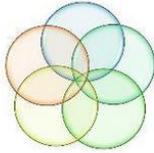
communication. Feminism. Restorative Justice. A just community enables grieving, forgiving and restoring as a natural part of healing. Focus on vulnerable populations who are on the frontline of the largest impact. Global impacts.



BirthKeeper Values

Integral, holistic, inclusionary, collaborative, expansive, hopeful, courageous, honesty, fertile listening, relational, transformational, solidarity, respectful, dynamic, unifying, self determination, free will consent. Faith that humans have capacity for change and that nature is infinitely creative.

Birthkeeper, we invite you to join us!



A Birthkeeper is anyone, anywhere, who feels called to support and protect the critical PRIMAL CONTINUUM of human development.

We respect and protect the relationships that support the life-giving capabilities of WOMEN & MEN.



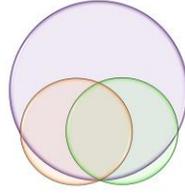
We are especially devoted to protecting the sacred MotherBaby relationship that is the root of a healthy society.



MotherBaby is our first relationship



We Honor our primary relationship to our MotherEarth who sustains and nourishes all life.



FOOTNOTES

[i] [i] What is consensus from Starhawk, The Empowerment Manual

The fundamental right of consensus is for all people to be able to express themselves in their own words and of their own will. The fundamental responsibility of consensus is to assure others of their right to speak and be heard. Since our society provides very little training in these areas, we have to unlearn many behavior patterns in order to practice good consensus process (see "Overcoming Oppressive Behavior," in this handbook). Consensus does not mean that everyone thinks that the decision made is the most efficient way to accomplish something, or that they are absolutely sure it will work. What it does mean is that in coming to that decision, no one felt that her or his position on the matter wasn't considered carefully. Hopefully, everyone will think it is the best decision; this often happens because, when consensus works properly, collective intelligence does come up with better solutions than could individuals.

[ii] Wheel of change: <http://www.stproject.org/strategy/wheel-of-change/>

“Transformation is profound, fundamental change, altering the very nature of something. Transformational change is both radical and sustainable. Something that is transformed can never go back to exactly what it was before.” –excerpt from *What is Transformation?* Learn more about the Wheel of Change in [What is Transformation?](#) . Get specific about how to put it into practice with [Transforming Organizations](#) , or visiting our [Tools for Transformation](#) page.

Hearts& Minds: Our hopes and dreams, thoughts and feelings, what we believe is possible or impossible; the ideas, perceptions and beliefs that shape our experience.

Behavior: What we do and don't do, our choices and habits, the norms and unspoken agreements by which we interact with others.

Structures: The external systems in which we live and work: the hierarchies, processes, practices and cultures of our organizations, communities and society.