



Jeanne-Marie Paynel (parenting mentor and educator) lives and works in the US. Having been born in Tunisia and raised in France, she now has dual citizenship. She is an avid traveller, bilingual educator, and mindful parenting mentor. She raised her own (now adult) children to be fluent in French and English. (Turning Little Stones podcast *The Gift of Language - Season 2; episode 2* celebrates what a gift this is).

Jeanne-Marie previously worked in Advertising as a Graphic Designer. She chose to re-train as a Montessori educator, describing this as “a true revelation”. She has continued to learn and is now passionate to share this with child carers and parents. Her website <https://voilamontessori.com> details all that she offers including her podcast show, *The Art of Parenting*.

Introducing the work of a Doula

As part of her mature study, Jeanne-Marie trained to become a doula. She explains that a doula is someone who accompanies the birth mother through pre-birth to the birth. She explains to her parents that she “is here until you meet your baby”.

The role of the doula is supplementary to that of the medical team, where the focus is primarily on the physical birth process. As a doula, she is there to provide emotional and psychological support. She explains that birth is “something natural, a part of life”. She sees her role as supporting women to “step into their power”.

Acknowledging that ‘childhood’ is built on the success (or otherwise) of the previous stage, it is vital to appreciate the importance of the earlier stages, including the pre-natal stage. Taking care of this, the child’s first environment will benefit the child’s later stages of development. (*Delving a little Deeper Set 1 – ‘Getting to know You’* considers this in greater detail).

The importance of bonding, the initial attachment

The first 6 to 8 weeks of a child’s life, sometimes referred to as the ‘symbiotic period’, is a time for parent and infant to bond, adjust and adapt together.

The newborn needs to feel safe in their new world. Learning to feel secure in these early days will help them to trust, grow and survive.

Adjustment for the infant involves remembering the mother’s heartbeat, the sounds and smells the unborn child has experienced. For the mother, adjustment involves experiencing closeness with the infant, especially in the ‘golden hour.’

Jeanne-Marie celebrates the role of the parenting partner and encourages their full involvement.



Re-framing our preconceptions.

Jeanne-Marie has found that parents are influenced by the view of the birth process that they have received from others. She believes her role is to help reframe these ideas... if the parent's perception of the birth is that it will be 'painful, excruciating, hard' she wants to help parents understand how the body is designed for birth.

She explains that birth is about learning to collaborate with our body's sensations. By re-framing the received birth messages, she explains that it is possible to have the "most beautiful, natural, unmedicated birth".

And finally...

Jeanne-Marie explains that giving birth is a transition in life. Preparing for the birth is certainly important, but it is the beginning. The birth is also a transition to parenthood. Preparing for this adventure is equally important!

Jeanne-Marie Paynel recommends:

Birth without Violence by Frederick Leboyer ISBN-978-1905177301

Jeanne-Marie's resources, advice and support are available from

www.voilamontessori.com

Her Art of Parenting podcast is available on all major podcasting platforms.

Further information, practical guidance and advice are available through,

Turning Little Stones podcasts &

Delving a little Deeper (Set 1 Getting to Know You)

See website www.turninglittlestones.co.uk for details