

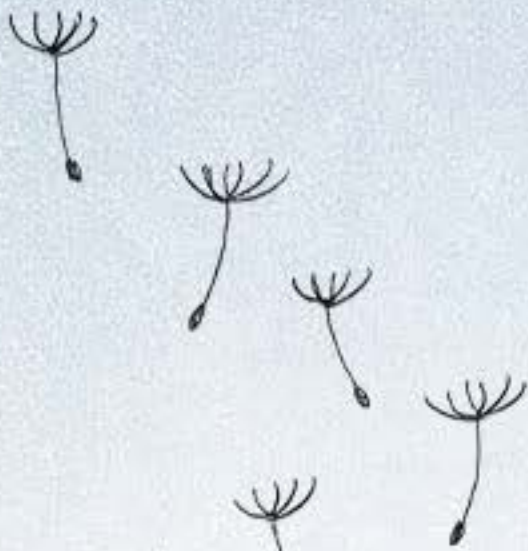
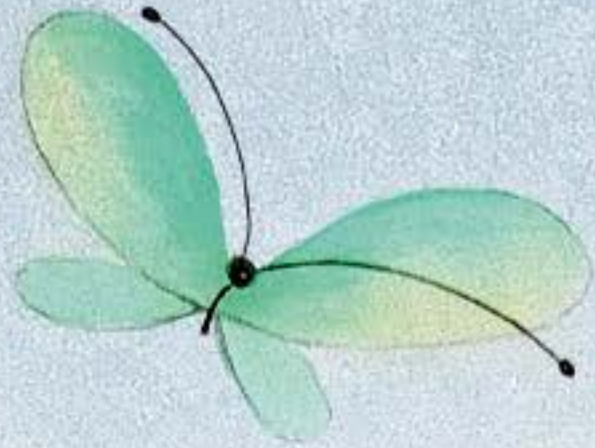


LET'S MAKE HISTORY,
BY TELLING OUR STORIES
2021



MY LABOR, YOUR FIRST CONTACT WITH FRIENDLY BACTERIA

Diana Geoconda Andrade Rodas



It all began in the body of a new mother who carried in her womb the most cherished of her dreams: a longing named Martina.

The uncertainty of the first months of pregnancy made the wait last for what seemed like forever, until on November 12, 2015, you, dear Martina, decided to begin your journey into this world.

I must confess that I harbored a fear of the unknown process of natural childbirth, because of how often my friends and even colleagues had rejected this procedure due to the risk of maternal depression, as well as media propaganda that makes us believe that natural childbirth is a painful, heartbreaking, lonely experience. It was precisely this "culture of fear" that momentarily made me waver in my decision. However, it was my conviction that the friendly bacteria and saprophytes in my vaginal canal would colonize your skin, your airway, and your digestive tract, that made me hold fast to what I felt was most important. I was willing to give you everything in my power, dear Martina, so that your immune system and the rest of your organs would function properly.

The microbiome, a trending topic in the medical field, is a set of friendly bacteria and the respective genetic material that we normally have throughout our body, which helps regulate our metabolism and prevent the development of various diseases.

We could compare it to a rich and diverse jungle, as the researcher Dulcenombre Gómez Garre of the San Carlos Clinical Hospital in Madrid tells us; yes, a jungle that has a transcendent effect on the environment inhabiting us, enriching the variety of organisms in our bodies. Its absence would make relevant parts of us fail to function properly, so much so that human behaviors such as self-medication and cesarean deliveries have turned this jungle into a monoculture, leading to the onset of multiple metabolic, neurodegenerative, cardiovascular, neoplastic, and allergic diseases.

That's why I ultimately made the decision to bring you into this world by natural childbirth. After 48 hours of coaxing you to come out of your precious biological cradle, on November 14, 2015, you opened your eyes to the light for the first time. There you were, all puffy, pink, wet, and full of all those friendly bacteria that allowed your biological system to fit into with this world and that until now had prolifically prevented the onset of multiple diseases that might be harbored in your little body. It was a tough 48 hours, but every second was worth it, knowing that you would be in better condition to healthfully adapt to this world.



Gazing at your tender little body snuggled up on my belly, trembling and wet with love while you gave your first cry and the umbilical cord was still beating, was the most wonderful feeling I have felt. I was so enraptured that the professionals who attended us during the delivery gave us a moment alone so that you and I would have an intimate space with room for only deep and true love. And as I watched you, it only took a few minutes for you to start looking for your source of nourishment, that golden liquid loaded with friendly bacteria that flowed drop by drop from my breasts to your inexperienced and delicate lips.

It has been five years since that I made that decision and I have to say my choice has proven to be the right one, because in general you have been a very healthy girl; you've only taken antibiotics twice in your life, you've never been hospitalized for any reason, and you enjoy enviable health. You are a happy and balanced child, just like your microbiome!

There is no better way to thank these sweet and selfless friends called bacteria than by sharing our experience!



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