7 Foundational Processes of Music During Labor and Birth

**Biological**- Music changes biology- is used to support a laboring mother to regulate breathing, lower blood pressure and respiration, and decrease discomfort.

**Psychological**- Music enhances the ability to use coping mechanisms during labor (childbirth techniques), and may seem as though that time is passing faster than it is.

**Sociological**- Music evokes social support from others and holds the birthing team together including: coach, nurses, doctors, doula, family members, and music therapist.

**Emotional**- Music can be used to match or affirm moods and feelings the laboring mother is experiencing (iso principle) or may be used to help her change her mood.

**Developmental**- Music can support the process of becoming a mother, help her to work through her fears and to let go.

**Spiritual**- Music can enhance and support spiritual processes of the laboring mother and may evoke a peak or transpersonal experience.

**Environmental**- Music can be very important in blocking out extraneous sounds in the birth environment that may interfere with the laboring woman’s entrainment process. Music also provides a “sound blanket” which fills the space and wraps the birthing mother in sounds of comfort and safety.

**Functions of Music in Labor**

1) Support breathing  
2) Induce a calm, relaxing state  
3) Facilitate movement/position change  
4) Enhance comfort  
5) Evoke imagery  
6) Build energy  
7) Create or change a mood  
8) Express feelings: sadness, frustration, joy, fear  
9) Fill the space with pleasant sounds masking sounds of medical equipment  
10) Pass the time  
11) Reminisce, think of pleasant memories  
12) Help the birthing woman to let go of anything that is holding her back  
13) Enjoy the experience  
14) Connect with the baby  
15) Connect with her birth partner

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