

# Your Medical Mindset—How do YOU make medical decisions?

By Janelle Durham, Inspired by Kim James' and Laurie Levy's Worksheet , which was adapted from Your Medical Mind by Groopman & Hartzband.

## What health care tools do you use? (Are you a Naturalist or Technologist?)

Natural Remedies or Self-Help ←————→ Technology/ Medicine

## When / How Often do you use your health care tools? (Minimalist or Maximalist)

Only when I really need to. I try to avoid using. ←————→ As prevention, and at the first signs of a problem.

## Do you believe your tools are going to work? (Doubter or Believer)

I'm skeptical of treatments and of health care providers. I worry about side effects. ←————→ I believe in treatments and trust health care providers. I focus on the benefits.

Understanding your general preferences may help you choose the health care providers and tools that are right for you. For example:

- A Naturalist who Believes in Minimal Intervention might choose a home birth with a midwife. If complications required a transfer to a hospital, she may still want minimal interventions. She may need help trusting technology and communicating with caregivers (who may be Maximal Technologist Believers.)
- A Technologist who Believes in Maximal Interventions to prevent and treat problems before they become more severe may opt for a hospital birth with an OB, and may even request an elective cesarean. She may need reassured that a vaginal birth is safest for her and her baby.
- A Maximalist Believer who's somewhere between a Naturalist and a Technologist may choose a doula AND an epidural AND take multiple birth classes.
- If a pregnant Maximal Technologist has a Minimal Naturalist partner, the partner may need help understanding her pain medication preferences

Talk with your partner: Which terms best describes you? How will that influence the choices you make in advance and choices you make in labor?

# Your Decision-Making Style: All Decisions

## How much information do you need to make a decision? (Cliff Notes or Encyclopedia)

Only the most important facts. Too much info just stresses me out.



As much as possible. I find it reassuring to have all the data.

## Do you prefer to trust an expert or to make your own decisions? (As Recommended or Self-Guided)

I work with professionals whose expert advice I trust more than my own knowledge.



Even though I trust my care provider, I still want to gather info and make my own decisions.

## How quickly do you make decisions? (Decisive or Ponderer)

I don't like to delay a decision. The sooner things are resolved, the faster we can act.



I need time to mull things over and process a decision. I can't decide under pressure.

During pregnancy, we often have time to think about decisions. During labor, sometimes decisions need to be made quickly. And often a laboring mother is focused on contractions, and needs her partner to be the one to ask questions and help make decisions. It helps if the partner knows what her goals and priorities are, but also know how she makes decisions so they can help her be comfortable with the process. For example:

- If the partner is a Decisive Cliff Notes person and the laboring mother is a Encyclopedia Self-Guider, then the partner may need to ask more questions and gather more data that he or she normally would to help her feel like she has all the information she needs to make a decision.
- If the person in labor is a Ponderer, then after they've gotten answers from a care provider, the partner may need to ask caregivers to give them a few minutes alone to think before responding.
- If one of you always follows your doctor's advice, As Recommended, you should take extra care to choose a care provider you both trust.

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