AIMS For a better birth...

Manifesto for the performance of vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC) at home (HBAC)

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Sarah Le Quang Sang's performance piece on her experience of planning a VBAC

To the medicalised institutions, their medical staff and the
health governmental bodies

ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?
NO I am not high risk
NO I will not go to the labour ward
NO I will not be immobilised by continuous monitoring
NO I will not labour under time pressure
NO I will not be bullied by you
NO I will not be given a trial of labour
I WILL LABOUR!

Giving birth is an ancestral ritual which has been performed at home by women for centuries. An act which has ensured the survival of the human species.

Women and daughters have witnessed the act of giving birth for millennia. Women can perform the art of giving birth and every performance will be unique.

Giving birth is a creative act.
The ultimate act of transformation.

A VBAC at Home is a political act which shifts the power from an obstetrically-led medical institution to a woman-centred care approach.

Labour is a durational performance: starting spontaneously with an unexpected duration.

A VBAC at Home gives time for the performance of labour. There is no failure to progress, only failure to wait! Patience and respect for the process is practiced.

A VBAC at Home requires participants to support the performer throughout the act of birth. Midwives, partner, family members, friends will be chosen in advance by the performer to participate in the event.

A VBAC at Home enables the performer to control her birth. She is informed and capable of making the right decisions for herself and her baby. She rejects the politics of fear and failure institutionalised by hospital birth.

A VBAC at Home should be available to all women without resistance. All women are eligible for care and should be in control of their choices without judgement.

I AM STRONG

I AM CAPABLE

I TRUST MY BODY

I TRUST MY BABY

The performance of VBAC at Home is not a medicalised event. It is a holistic act celebrating life itself.

VBAC at Home is performed without the traditional medical props.

NO Forceps
NO Ventouse
NO CTG
NO Cannulas
NO Augmentation Drugs
NO

Amniotomy
NO Epidural

The performance of VBAC at Home challenges the current medical hierarchy of birth. Verticality is replaced by horizontality.

The performance of VBAC at Home reframes birth as an event in a woman's life in her domestic environment. There is no drama.

Giving birth is a woman's right of passage into motherhood. A physical and mental journey leading to an act of transformation. Such a journey requires preparation and planning, knowing that unforeseen circumstances can change the course of actions.

A birth plan is a manifesto of personal preferences.

In the performance of VBAC at Home, hospitals and obstetrics interventions are for emergencies only.

Giving birth is an innate performance. A primal aptitude buried deep inside every woman.

The performance of VBAC at Home redefines risk. Risk is not measured as a possible scar rupture but as avoiding another assisted birth and future mental trauma associated to this experience.

The performance of VBAC at Home promotes independence.

INDEPENDENCE in the choices the performer makes about her birth.

INDEPENDENCE from hospital's policies

INDEPENDENCE from unnecessary medical intervention.

The performance of VBAC at Home respects the culture of birth and the art of midwifery.

The performance of VBAC at Home is an **act of activism**.

Sarah Le Quang Sang discusses her Manifesto on her website, *www.areyoulisteningtome.com*

Photo of Sarah Le Quang Sang courtesy of Tom Elkins[1]

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1. www.threepractices.com