



Nurturing Your Journey

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A BONUS GUIDE FROM MY DOULA DAWN

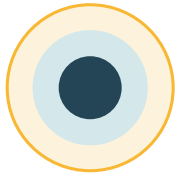
Three Circles of *Support*

Build Your Postpartum Support Team

The modern "village" doesn't show up on its own — you have to build it. This guide shows you exactly how to map out the people in your life into three circles of support, and how to ask for help without feeling awkward about it.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- ✦ The three circles model, explained
- ✦ Who belongs in each circle
- ✦ Exact scripts for making the ask
- ✦ How to turn it into a real support plan



BUILD YOUR VILLAGE

Think of Your Support as Three Nested Circles

Picture a target: your innermost circle sits at the center, closest to you, and each ring around it holds people who are a little less close — but no less valuable. Mapping your people out this way makes it obvious who to call for what, and takes the guesswork out of asking.

Circle 1 — Your Inner Team *The innermost circle*

- ✦ The people who can be with you in your most vulnerable space — physically and emotionally.

Circle 2 — Your Hands-On Helpers *The middle circle*

- ✦ The people who can help with practical tasks but don't need to see you topless and bleeding.

Circle 3 — Your Community Helpers *The outer circle*

- ✦ The people who love you and want to help but don't need to be in your home for long.

✦ **Dawn's Tip:** Start by listing names of people in your life who fit into each category. Then ask them — before the baby arrives — if they'd like to be part of your team.

"Instead of asking 'Can you help me?' try: 'I'd love for you to be on my Postpartum Support Team! Would you be comfortable helping in one of these ways?'"

WHO GOES WHERE

Circle 1: Your Inner Team

This is the smallest circle and the closest one — the people who can be with you in your most vulnerable moments, physically and emotionally. There's no performing for this circle. They see you as you actually are, postpartum body and all.

♦ THEY MIGHT

- ♦ Sit with you skin-to-skin while you cry for no reason
- ♦ Help you shower, change a pad, or get dressed
- ♦ Hold the baby while you sleep, without being asked twice
- ♦ Tell you the truth gently when you need to hear it
- ♦ Simply be present, no task required

Who belongs here:

- ♦ Your partner
- ♦ Your mom
- ♦ A grandmother
- ♦ Your best friend

Ask them:

- ♦ "Postpartum, I want you close. Can you be someone I call at 2am, no explanation needed?"

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** This circle should be small on purpose — one to three people, not a crowd. The intimacy is what makes it work. Choose based on who makes you feel safe, not who you feel obligated to include.

WHO GOES WHERE

Circle 2: Your Hands-On Helpers

These are people you trust in your home, but they're not necessarily the ones you'd want holding your crying baby while you vent.

♦ THEY MIGHT

- ♦ Wash dishes & clean up the kitchen
- ♦ Fold laundry & change sheets
- ♦ Prepare meals — or reheat food for you
- ♦ Take care of older children (playdates, school drop-offs)
- ♦ Run errands (groceries, pharmacy trips)

Who belongs here:

- ♦ Close friends
- ♦ Supportive in-laws
- ♦ Cousins or extended family
- ♦ Close neighbors, church/community members

Ask them:

- ♦ "I'd love your help during postpartum — are you comfortable doing things like dishes or running small errands?"

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** This circle is bigger than Circle 1 and a little less intimate by design. These are people you don't have to entertain, but you also don't have to bare everything to. Practical help, low emotional overhead.

WHO GOES WHERE

Circle 3: Your Community Helpers

These are people who love and support you but don't need to be in your home for long — or see you in a vulnerable state.

♦ THEY MIGHT

- ♦ Drop off a meal — without expecting a visit
- ♦ Deliver groceries or household supplies
- ♦ Drive older kids to activities
- ♦ Send supportive texts or check-ins
- ♦ Walk your dog or take pets for a short visit

Who belongs here:

- ♦ Acquaintances who offered help
- ♦ Parents of your kids' friends
- ♦ Work colleagues
- ♦ More distant relatives, faith or community group members

Ask them:

- ♦ "Would you be open to dropping off a meal or helping with small errands during my first few weeks postpartum?"

♦ **Dawn's Tip:** This is your widest circle, and that's the point — a meal train or a supply drop-off doesn't need a close relationship, just a willing one. Don't be shy about letting this circle be big.

TAKE ACTION

Making the Ask (Without Feeling Awkward)

It might feel strange to ask for help, but most people love being part of something meaningful — especially when they know exactly how to contribute.

1

Let People Choose Their Role

"I'm putting together a support team for after baby arrives. Would you like to be part of it? If so, what would you enjoy helping with?" This lets people choose something they genuinely want to do — you might be surprised by the offers you get.

2

Assign Based on Circles

Once someone agrees, say: "That's amazing — I put together a list of things I'll need help with. Here's what I was thinking for you!" This removes the pressure on them to guess, and keeps no one overburdened.

♦ FINAL STEP: PUT IT ALL IN ONE PLACE

Now that you've built your team, make it official.

- ♦ List your three circles and who's in each
- ♦ Note what each person is helping with
- ♦ Share it with your partner or doula so they can help coordinate

♦ **Remember:** When you plan ahead, you'll actually get the support you need. A village doesn't build itself — but it will show up, if you let it know how.

Work with Dawn: Visit mydouladawn.com to book a free 15-minute call or get the Newborn Sleep Blueprint.