

## PREGNANCY AND BIRTHGIVING IN NORWAY

### Tarefa:

1. Tendo em mente *Teoria da diversidade e universalidade dos cuidados culturais* (M. Leininger, 1991), **identifique no caso os factores culturais** que contribuem para o estado de saúde e para a oferta de cuidados de saúde.
2. Compare com a realidade portuguesa: quais as semelhanças e diferenças que encontra?
3. Que outra informação seria relevante para perceber as necessidades destes clientes e os cuidados a prestar?

Stine is 28 years old. Nine months ago she gave birth to her first child, a lovely and health baby girl, INA, at seven pound.

Before Ina was borne, Stine stayed some years abroad. She studied French in Paris for two years, and the last four years she stayed in Milan, Italy, studying Italian language, and also worked in a magazine as a journalist.

Stine's husband Marco is Italian. He is 10 years older than Stine. He is running several hotels together with his two brothers.

About her husband Stine tell: "He is very friendly and helpful, but also typical Italian".

Marit is a nurse, midwife, working at an public health care centre which provides parent and child care. Marit is some years older than Stine, but they know each other from earlier schooldays in Stine's hometown.

Stine was always very close to her parents, her two older brothers and her younger sister. Marco has also learnt to know her family quite well, and he is amazed about the close and friendly relationship in her family.

Marco says: "Stine's family is quite different from mine. They are so relaxed, and there is always a good humorous tune in every discussion, even if they do not agree in different issues. I felt very welcome, even when I first met them. "

Stine wanted to go back to Norway when she was pregnant. She felt that as a pregnant woman she wanted to bee taken care of by a nurse/midwife, and she found the parent/child care unit very pleasant. She did not manage to find an equal offer in the town where they lived in Italy. Apart from that she missed more and more her family.

Stine and Marco discussed this issue, and after a while they decided to move to Norway. They bought a house not far from Stine's parents.

After settling down in Norway Stine was 19 fulfilled weeks pregnant. She phoned. Marit who welcomed her back, congratulated her, and invited them to the health care centre for a check-up

and information.

Marco was astonished about that this invitation was meant for him, as well. He meant that being pregnant was "something" considering the woman. He also claimed that in Italy it was not normal that the father came along.

Stine tells: I was surprised about his reaction and I did not quite understand it. Because we both wanted to raise a family, and at home he was so concerned about me.

He did all the shopping, worked hard with his Norwegian lessons, and managed to explain himself quite well in Norwegian. Every morning he served me breakfast in bed.

During the day he "ordered" me to relax and take care. He really spoiled me, and it was lovely with all his caring.

I tried to explain to him that it was important for us both to go together to the health care centre to have information.

On the other hand I felt it was not right to force him to do something he absolutely not wanted. I called my parents and asked for an advice. My mother suggested that I could ask Marit to come to our house, perhaps Marco would accept that.

Stine found her mothers proposal good, and Marco agreed.

When Marit came for a prenatal home visit, she brought different books and pamphlets for them to keep. Stine had many questions to ask, but Marco was very quiet.

Marit asks: "Marco, Stine has told me that you have taken very well care of her, I suppose you are looking forward to be a father?"

Marco: "Yes I am, but on the other hand I am feeling so uncertain, and I am very concerned. To be honest my feelings are mixed."

Marit: "Would you like to talk about it?"

Marco: "If you want to listen, I would be happy to do so! "

He continues: "I remember when my cousin was borne .We lived in a small village .My parents was very serious and concerned about my aunt, because she suffered from Diabetic disease. I felt they were sure that something was wrong with the child.

Since than I got into my mind that pregnancy and birth giving is dangerous. But when I look at Stine and see how she is blooming, and feel the baby's moving when taking my hands on her womb, I relax a little. But still I'm very concerned, and I do not want to be in the delivery room when the baby is borne.

Marit listened to Marcos ambivalence, and they all had a discussion abbot the new situation it is to be pregnant, being parents and raise a child. Marit suggested that they could come to a prenatal course. It was also time for Stine to come for a new check-up, and during week 18-19 an ultrasound is offered. The ultrasound was to be done at the Woman's Hospital, the Outpatient Ward.

Stine and Marco accepted this offer and went for the ultrasound, and the next day they came at the health care centre to see Marit again.

This time Marcos was more relaxed and he was very pleased with the ultrasound, and amazed how well they could see the foetus. But the most important thing; he felt they were very well informed. Stine and Marcos also accepted Marit's invitation to a prenatal class. They both found this course very informative and Marcos remarked that he never had thought of all the different issues and questions which were focused on and discussed in the group among the parents.

In their surroundings people expressed positive feelings, and they appreciated the enthusiastic reactions they received. The period of pregnancy went very well, and as a couple, Stine and Marco experienced a very good time.

The last evening at the prenatal class the group went to see the delivery wards. Stine and Marco decided to try an "alternative" maternity unit. This means low use of technology, it involves you giving birth through your own will and determination, having the complete freedom to use your body as you choose, and to find any method of supporting yourself. It is an attitude of mind as well as an attitude or position of body, and is not merely a vaginal extraction or passive delivery.

They also wanted to be given the opportunity to have the baby staying in their room during day and night, so they could look after their child themselves. This did not mean they did not want the staff to interfere.

Ina's delivery and their stay at the maternity unit went quite well. Stine and Marco felt they were well cared for and received the help and information they needed.

Stine felt the first week at home with Ina quite hard. She was uncertain and it turned out that she and Marco had different views upon how to feed her, and how to treat her. Stine wanted to breastfeed her child, but Ina was crying very often and Marco thought it was better for the child to have bottle milk, and he could not stand the baby's crying.

When Marit comes for postnatal home visit, she finds Stine quite exhausted.

Marco is at work. Stine tells that he sleeps in another room and has to get up early for his job, and he is working the most of the day. The support Stine expected to have from her husband, she instead has from her mother and sister.

#### **STUDY GUIDE:**

What is in your opinion a "normal birth"?

Who should decide how a woman gives birth?

What is the attitude in your country?

How would you support Stine in her decision to breast-feed?