

My name is Trivia Afraid of Lightning-Craddock.

My Lakota name is Mahka T'a Tuwanpi Win.

I'm an enrolled member of the Miniconjou Lakota Tribe of Cheyenne Rivers, South Dakota.

In our culture, being a mother is a great, great honor.

When I first became a mother, I was actually a teen mother.

I had excellent support because of my culture. My aunts, my mom, they were all supportive, excited.

Culturally, there are practices that our grandmothers, mothers and aunts teach young women when they're getting ready to have a baby.

I started having issues in my pregnancy in my beginning of my second trimester.

I had morning sickness every single day. They shouldn't even call it morning sickness. I could not keep food down. And I kept telling the doctor that something was wrong.

This is how I know that he dismissed me from the beginning of prenatal care all the way up to birth.

I kept telling him something's not right. I don't feel okay.

My OB knew that I wanted my placenta so that I was able to, you know, bury it. Culturally for our for us as women.

It is a part of our body that was connected. It is a life source that was connected to our baby.

And they let me know that there was nothing.

I was angry and I cried that night I cried alone, holding my daughter, holding her. I was just crying.

And I felt like nobody understood or cared.

Throwing it away is very disrespectful. It's like sacred.

So I go home with baby.

I had an infection and I had to go back. They put me on an antibiotic and told me I couldn't nurse my baby. I felt like I had no connection to her.

My mom's youngest sister comes back into the room and she's asking me if I'm okay.

It would it would be really good for you to talk to a counselor because you're displaying signs of postpartum depression.

It lasted until my daughter was about nine or ten months old.

Some of the postpartum depression that I can remember were blaming myself.

I couldn't even be a mother. Couldn't even be a Lakota mother.

I started to have suicidal ideation of, you know, why even be here if you can do it right. It was just. Dark days.

My second child I had about a year later. I went into the second pregnancy with a mission. I was like a mama bear.

I was in protective mode.

The new doctor that I was working with not only heard me, he validated me. He let me know that he understood Lakota women's cultural practices when it came to packaging up the placenta.

I felt relaxed and safe.

I was really mindful and need to advocate myself choosing a safe primary care provider has been like at the top of my list.

If you're uncomfortable that first visit change, you do not have to keep that person as your primary.

If you feel that there is something wrong.

Talk to your aunt, your mom, your best friend, your nurse.

Your nurse should tell you that it's okay to call whenever they feel that they need to call.

Go in, have it checked.

Never discount your gut feeling.

Always talk to somebody about how you're feeling if you're feeling depressed.

If you're feeling that you're not good enough.

If you're feeling that you can't go through with the birth.

If you're having anxiety. If you're having fear.

Reach out to someone. Don't do it alone.

Voice how you feel.