

35TH ANNUAL HOMEBIRTH AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE



DAY 1

Saturday 18th November 2023



JESSIE JOHNSON-CASH

'The midwife- mother relationship: Mapping the ecotone.'

The benefits of relationship-based midwifery care are well understood by both women and midwives (Perriman et al. 2018, Sandall et al. 2016). Walking with women through the childbearing year nurtures the development of deep and intimate relationships, allowing for trust and safety to flourish. This relationship grows at the convergence of the personal and the professional, located within the domestic sphere yet with a midwife, boundaried by professional and regulatory responsibilities.

Midwives are taught that within therapeutic relationships they are to remain detached and emotionally uninvolved from the woman. Institutionalised culture and customs reinforce this clear professional boundary. This raises several questions when we explore the midwife-mother relationship outside the confines of institutional and organisations structures. How do we as midwives be emotionally responsive and present, create an intimate and personable relationship without blurring the lines of friendship, potentially, inadvertently, meeting our own relational needs at the expense the woman. 'Radical' refers to the fundamental nature of something whilst 'responsibility' speaks to obligations and accountabilities for that which is in our personal control. How do we understand and navigate this terrain within the context of radical responsibility?

Ecototone refers to the place where ecologies are in tension, representing that place within a landscape where differing ecosystems meet. This presentation will explore the concept of the midwife-mother relationship using ecotones as a framework.

Jessie's presentation will take place at 4:10pm on Saturday the 18th of November