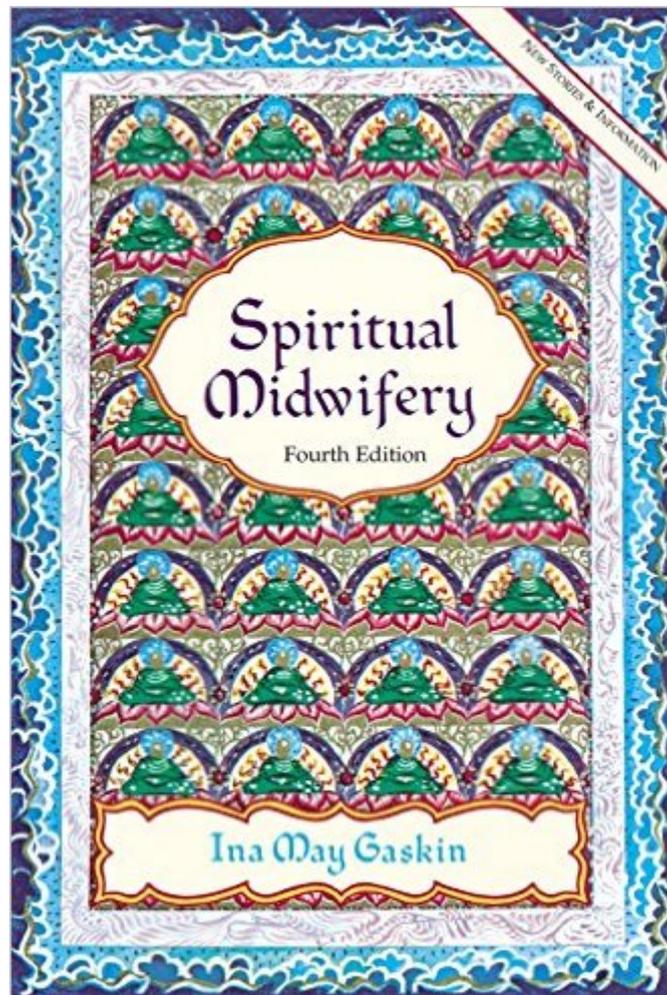


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# Spiritual Midwifery



## Synopsis

The original *Spiritual Midwifery*, published in 1976, introduced an entire generation of young women to the possibility of home birth and breast feeding. It also breathed new life into the all-but-vanished field of midwifery. This classic book on home birth is now in its fourth edition, with updated information on the safety of natural childbirth, new birthing stories, and the most recent statistics on births managed by The Farm Midwives. Ina May also provides new information about potentially dangerous techniques routinely used in hospitals during and after birth, as well as the latest findings about VBAC (Vaginal Birth After Cesarean). Improved instructions for handling breech births are also given. Included are stories of working with Amish women, showing a different culture with a similar appreciation for natural childbirth. Photos, illustrations Over 540,000 copies sold!

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (204 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I think I'm the first man to review this book. In a way that's kind of sad, but hey, I don't mind going first, fellas. Besides, I've reviewed just about everything of Stephen Gaskin's I could find, and it's about time I reviewed Ina May's book. And here in Ohio we've got a Mennonite midwife named Freida Miller who's doing time in prison. Why? Because she saved the life of a birthing mother by giving her prescription medication without a license. Worse, she's not even in prison for dispensing the meds; she's in prison because she refuses to reveal the name of the doctor who gave her the meds in the first place. This displeases me and causes me to question the legal and pharmaceutical establishments even more than I already did, which is a lot. So consider this review my little blow for

the revolution. Ina May Gaskin wrote the book on midwifery -- four times, in fact, as the fourth edition of the book was published in 2002 and it gets longer every time. The new edition is updated with the usual stuff, including yet more stories from the parents and midwives at the Farm (including some stories from the babies, now all grown up, who were the subjects of the \_original\_ stories) and a new preface by Ina May. And if you're reading this page, you don't need me to tell you that it's the bible of practical midwifery. What you may \_not\_ already know is what a spiritual book it is. Of course the title is \_Spiritual Midwifery\_, but some readers may be inclined to write that off as hippie jargon. As other reviewers have noted, there is some hippie jargon in the book, but I don't think you should read "around" it or "past" it. You should read \_through\_ it; it's part of the point.

I'm a student midwife and Ina May is revered in the 'birth world' I exist in. This book is- as the many reviews can attest to- almost a Bible of natural child birth and the regeneration of midwifery practice in the US. My understanding is that I am reading the most current version of this book...The good: Getting to hear and see pictures of many families who went through their births on the Farm was great. I am very interested in birth stories and the internal mechanisms that women/families use to cope with birth. Also, I very much enjoyed finding several stories about loss and unexpected outcomes. It's wonderful to see these kinds of stories and occurrences shared for others to use as a map through a similar circumstance. Sometimes, you've never met anyone who's had a loss. Knowing you're not the only one who's felt the way you do is an amazing comfort. Another positive of this book were the stories about the Amnish women who had Farm midwives attend their births. The cultural differences were really interesting- I wish Ina May would write a whole book about these births!The bad: Ok, first and foremost, there were several times that INACCURATE information was put forth in this book. At one point, Ina May suggests that a woman 'toughen up' her nipples during pregnancy if they are sensitive to get them ready for nursing. That's just wrong. She also says parents should use alcohol on a baby's umbilical cord and around the base on the stomach- again, a care method that has been proven to actually increase healing time. Perhaps these things are minor, but honestly, for someone who is so respected- and who many people will look to for definitive information, this kind of thing should be corrected.

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