A Young Father Takes Part in the Miracle of Birth

As Yuri and Lena prepared for the birth of their first child, the young couple began contemplating the idea of being together for this happiest of moments. “We made this baby together and we both wanted to be there when he came into the world,” Yuri says, looking proudly down at 11-month-old Daniel playing contentedly nearby. Agreeing with her husband, Lena notes, “We both decided early on that we wanted to do this together . . . We thought it would help us build a strong foundation for our family.”

Doctors were not the only ones who questioned the couple’s decision; friends and family also tried to discourage them. “As we were trying to make our decision, we spoke to a number of people—parents, friends, and other family members—and obtained as much information as we could. I even wrote to a friend in the United States who told me that it was common practice there for fathers not only to be present during the birth, but also to play an active role in the delivery,” Yuri explains. But that was one of the few positive and encouraging responses they received, Lena says. “While we found some maternity houses that do allow husbands to be present, none of them would allow the fathers to take part in the process. Everyone was against it at first, even our parents, but I believed that there was no good reason why Yuri should not be able to participate in the greatest and finest moment of our lives—the birth of our child.”

So Yuri and Lena continued their search until someone suggested they try the Kiev WWC. It was there that they learned about the School for Young Parents, a series of classes that helps prepare couples for family births. “This was our first child so, really, the courses proved to be our introduction to the entire process,” Lena admits, saying both she and Yuri were eager to learn as much as they could. Yuri agrees, noting, “After seeing videos of live births, I have to say that it was not at all what I expected, but that didn’t cause either of us to change our minds about being together for the birth. In fact, the classes were a key factor in our final decision—they provided important psychological preparation and practical instruction.”

That preparation and instruction proved useful during the delivery, according to Lena. “Having Yuri with me made me feel very comfortable. It was easier for me to deal with the pain because I was able to draw on his physical and emotional support.” Explaining that the birth felt like a team effort, Yuri laughingly concurs. “I kept remembering that some of the other doctors said I might faint during the birth, but I didn’t have time to faint because I was completely involved in the process,” he states. He was even the first person to hold Daniel after the delivery, according to Lena.

“During the course of our lives, we experience so many feelings and emotions, but nothing can compare to this,” Yuri concludes. “I believe that it was very important for me to be present during Daniel’s delivery to support my wife and to be there when he entered this world. For me, these moments were unforgettable and only serve to strengthen our love and our family.”