

Bhanté with Anna and Sky

Bhanté was initially quite non-attached when he learned that Rebecca and I had become pregnant. Initially, Rebecca was reticent to give up her career as a sculptor to raise ('sculpt') children, as her mother had done, raising Rebecca and her four siblings. Once the pregnancy was in the second trimester, Bhanté began to comment on the privilege of being a parent to a soul that has chosen a life of meaning.

Anna was born seven weeks before due date. While another episode has more details, it was my privilege and delight to deliver our daughter. The midwife may only deliver children within a narrow time window near the expected date of delivery. Having delivered over a hundred babies during my medical training, a 3.5 pound baby (Anna's approximate weight at delivery) is easier on mother and physician than a full term, double weight infant.

Bhanté was not present for Anna's birth at the Vienna house. He quickly informed us that Anna was a 'star child'. Our mission was to protect and guide her. From his point of view, Anna's destiny was set out prior to her birth in this lifetime. She has certainly been largely self-directed since childhood.

Bhanté was not present for Sky's birth at the Vienna house. Bhanté took an active interest in Sky from the time he was a toddler, often calling him Sky-Rocket because of his energetic, joyful exuberance. Sky would often curl up in Bhanté lap and be content, quiet and peaceful for extended periods of time.

Bhanté mentioned that Sky had been an advanced meditator and revered monk in past lifetimes. In Sky's lifetime his challenge is to retain his gratitude and inner focus on a life of service and meaningful work while being in the external world where being civil and honorable are rare qualities.

Bhanté encouraged Sky to be in the woods, to be enthralled with nature, to have a secret spot where S

ky would sit and be, and to be helpful to those around him. Sky is a gracious host and can handle a kitchen as chef or as clean-up crew. Bhanté saw early what has become clear over time... that Anna and Sky and gifts beyond measure while also being whole, independent beings.