Hello. Do You Read Me?

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Abstract

Perinatal nurse makes an effort to blend in with the high-tech world of business travel.

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DEB GAULDIN is a childbirth educator who performs songs and humorous tales ("Hormone Affirming Music and Humor for Women") about pregnancy, childbirth, and the adjustments to parenthood. She lives outside Chicago, Illinois.

When I made the transition from bedside nursing to speaking and entertaining nationally, I wondered if I would ever blend in with the seasoned travelers traversing the concourses of O'Hare International Airport.

I watched in awe as women and men—power dressed for success, not a hair out of place—effortlessly maneuvered laptops and leather-bound briefcases through the second busiest airport in the world.

In contrast, and usually racing the clock, you'd find me approaching the gate in a wide-eyed frenzy . . . something I can only compare to Kramer's startled entrance into Seinfeld's apartment,

Like a Weebol that wobbles but won't fall down, I am usually in full tilt, with a perspiration-soaked shoulder pad exposed from the strain of hauling carry-on luggage and a guitar. I am typically mumbling new breastfeeding lyrics or a keynote speech I am memorizing under my breath. This being the case, I am quite familiar with people staring at me as if I am a street person in need of better psychotropic management.

About a month ago, boarding pass in hand, I noticed I wasn't the only one pacing about the gate and moving my lips. Then I spied several travelers speaking into tiny cell phone microphones attached to well-concealed earpieces. I had finally found a way to fit in. No, I didn't

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purchase a hands-free headset, but I have improved my image by wrapping my son's broken Walkman cord around my neck. Now I will only worry if I pick up a call or a command from the air traffic control tower!

Note: Deb travels nationally, presenting keynote speeches for perinatal practitioners. For booking infor-

mation, call 800-682-2347 or visit www.debgauldin.com. Deb's CDs and tapes contain songs about pregnancy, childbirth, and the adjustment to parenthood. They are available through Lamaze International (800-368-4404).

(See "Kay's Perinatal Krossword Puzzle" on page 48.)