

EMPOWERING WOMEN TO HAVE A POSITIVE BIRTH EXPERIENCE



MY 5 SECRETS TO A POSITIVE BIRTH

WRITTEN BY KATY RAINEY HEMUS

WWW.EVERYBIRTHMATTERS.CO.UK

WRITTEN FROM HANDS ON EXPERIENCE OF SUPPORTING WOMEN WITH HYPNOBIRTHING
AND AS THEIR BIRTH DOULA. ENJOY

“Whenever and however you give birth, your experience will impact your emotions, your mind, your body and your spirit for the rest of your life.”

Ina May Gaskin ~ Mother of Modern Midwifery.

After experiencing a positive birth with my fourth child and feeling all the things that we have gone through in the emails I feel confident in sharing with you some special top tips to having a positive birth.

There are stories I hear all the time about women experiencing trauma and lack of respect in their maternity care. So if you can take time to digest these few points I will enhance your birth experience. Each day I inspire and support women and their partners to strive for more than the average birth. The experience that you have when birthing your baby is so important to how you will feel for the rest of your life and so this really does matter.

You might read something and not believe me so please bare with me to the end. So from one mother to another...here we go.



Why is this important?

Each day I support women and their partners, and inspire them to strive more than just the average birth. They learn techniques and information that stack the odds in their favour to have the birth they desire, whatever that may be for them.

Women I have supported have had amazing positive vaginal births and amazing positive Caesarean births – it is all about your calm non stressful approach.

Do I know it all or have all the answers? No. But I teach a program that has nearly 30 years of statistics behind it along with many women who do HypnoBirthing, including me raving about this birth and life changing technique.

Our bodies were made to birth. We are not faulty. We are not defective. We have simply lost our ability to access our own innate birthing power. It's already inside you. You may just need some help discovering it.

That's where I can help.

By reading My 5 Secrets, you are starting your journey to a positive and empowered birth. You will learn what it takes to trust your body, navigate the maternity system and work towards a birth that will be one of joy for you and your partner.

The following secrets all need your attention and will require you to take action. In our current system, a rewarding, satisfying birth is unlikely without preparation and commitment.

I wish you love and light and all the best for a wonderful, transformational birth.

Secret 1 - Your support Team

So this is where I can get a bit overly passionate. When I first started in this career I didn't believe that the maternity system could be that flawed. Now, each and every day, I am left more and more gobsmacked by stories shared by women, midwives, doulas and other childbirth educators across the UK and the world.

Our maternity system is based in routine, rather than evidence based care. These routine policies and procedures do not support a spontaneous, physiological labour. If that's what you are wanting, you better get ready to make some well-considered choices.

All the research from around the world points to the fact that continuity of care with the same midwife, gives the best birth outcomes. But we still do not have this there is simply not enough staff to manage this, so many women are now deciding to have a doula.



The benefits for a woman;

A woman who receives continual care from a known midwife/doula is more likely to:

- have a normal birth
- have a more positive experience of labour and birth
- be satisfied with her maternity care
- successfully breastfeed her baby
- cost the health system less

The Benefits for Babies

A baby whose mother received care from a known midwife/doula is more likely to:

- be born at term
- be born healthy

Here in the UK we are able to choose where we would like to birth our babies although women are not always given this choice. Usually women are asked to decide at their booking appointment “where do you want to have your baby?” which is way too soon as most women may not have had a look around. Having a look at the local providers is essential as you will be able to discuss with them if they can meet your needs.



Imagine if instead of asking that question, your midwife said **‘What kind of birth do you want?’**

Imagine if they told you, you could choose an independent midwife, or NHS, Birth centre or a home birth and even actively encourage a doula?

That they gave you information on things like private midwives who can come to your home and hospital with you, that doulas are becoming more and more popular and worth their weight in gold. How different things would be.

So the decisions you need to make:

- What kind of birth do I want and where will I achieve that?
- What kind of prenatal care do I want and who can give that to me?
- What kind of labour support do I want and who is best skilled to do that?

I urge you to consider all your options, not just the ones you think you should.

Then there is the issue of trust. I was shocked to learn about something called ‘Bait & Switch’. It’s where a care provider talks the natural birth talk, but when push comes to shove, they don’t walk the walk. Often mum’s find this out at the 11th hour, either around the 39-40 week mark or during labour. If your care provider doesn’t respect you, listen to you, support you and dare I say it, love you, your personality and your determination, you are in the wrong place mama. I have to say as a doula my heart does extend whilst I am nurturing a woman and her partner.

Ideally when there is time spent with someone like a independent midwife or a doula they will get to know you and your partner over a duration of time.

She will know all your birth preferences back to front.

She will probably even know if you hate peppermint essential oil but love peppermint tea, are addicted to Game of Thrones and want to listen to party tunes during your labour – she might like to party with you in labour. The message is, she will know you – the special, unique, one of a kind, you.

That level of connection and understanding is imperative for you to totally let go and trust in yourself and the process of birth.

They wont make judgements of you decisions - they will also help your partner to feel confident in the role they play within the birth - which in my opinion we don't prepare partners enough for this. The expectation is usually for them to turn up and see how it goes - but when they see their loved one going through a trying time it effects them in ways we do not know. If there is trauma also - then this is a completely different perspective all together.

How do I know this? Because I have had these conversations with partners about first time births where they felt they had lost their voice, or followed the lead of the health professionals because we are made to believe they know what is best, right?

Well no not always. Take time don't rush to any major decisions - open up the discussion with your partner and explore your options - a good doula is worth every penny. Please know there are no right or wrong answers here. We are all different and amazing and we will all have our own ideas about what makes us feel safe.

Secret 2 - Your Preparation

For me birth preparation means you and your birth partner learning as much as possible about many different things.

These include the following;

- Your incredible uterus and how it works intricately
- Your phenomenal birthing hormones
- The physical environment required for birth
- The mental and emotional headspace required for birth
- Know as many natural pain relief options as you can find
- Best positions for labour and birth
- Why the breath is so important in labour and birth
- How to produce your own endorphins
- Why birth preferences/plans should be done early and discussed often
- What policies and procedures are routine based vs what is evidence based (get ready to be shocked)
- What the Cascade of Interventions is and how to avoid it
- How to restart a stalled labour
- The effect of stress and fear during labour

Plus so much more!

So to learn all this you can read books, listen to podcasts, consult Google, read magazines, watch documentaries, talk to friends, family (this could be unhelpful also) or your care provider or you can do a HypnoBirthing® course and learn it all plus tons more – especially when it comes to relaxing and empowerment.

I also highly recommend reading and watching positive birth stories/videos and DON'T listen to negative birth stories – this will do your subconscious no favours! Your birth partner needs to be 100% across all these things too because they are your protector and advocate. They need to be able to step in and step up when required. They need to do this in a confident yet non-confrontational way. So birth preparation is as much for them as it is for you.

The thing to think about is; would you plan a big event such as your wedding, or a special birthday? The answer is yes - because it is special occasion it is something that you want to be special and memorable. You are marking the occasion - the same rule applies with birthing your baby. You will only ever do this once, it is in my opinion bigger than the wedding and the special birthday - which we spend time and money preparing for. I think I'll always ponder on this as I try to understand it but am always unsuccessful at coming up with the reason why we do this. If you know perhaps you can email me and let me know.

Having a baby creates parents from a place where there was only two individuals before. For the birth partner to be involved, aware and engaged in the process is such a special thing that will only happen maybe a few times in our lifetimes.

Our family is growing.

*We are having
a baby girl!*

Secret 3 - Your Mindset

Ok so this is a biggie. You can have the best care provider and have a list of techniques that you've practiced and are ready to put into action but if you don't trust yourself, your body, your baby and your partner, your birth is unlikely to unfold as you've hoped.

So how do you ensure that trust is there? You need to do the other 4 secrets! This is a deep-seated trust that you need. Not just a fly by the seat of your pants "My body was made to do this, the hospital is there to look after me and I reckon my partner will be fine". That is the beginning to almost every traumatic birth story I hear.

This level of trust comes with 6-9 months of education, research and immersion in the positive birth world.

It doesn't come with reading one natural birth book and I might disappoint you here but it doesn't come with watching One Born Every Minute either. It doesn't come with simply completing an independent birth education course.

This learning is ongoing and deep.

By doing this learning, you will have the ability and capacity to totally and fully surrender to your birthing experience. You will meet every emotion and every contraction/surge with the mindset that everything is unfolding at it should and that birth is a natural, normal process – and you are managing it like a goddess.

Humans, like all other mammals have a mammalian brain. This part of your brain is where you need to 'be' when you are in labour. You also have your neocortex, the thinking, conscious part of your brain. This part of your brain inhibits the release of your birthing hormones and when you are thinking, talking or feeling scared in labour, that's the part of your brain you are accessing.

Will you hit a wall? Maybe. Will you have a crisis of confidence? Possibly. Will you have the ability to scale that wall, find that confidence and push on through? Only time (and preparation and commitment) will tell.

Through pregnancy your mindset matters. You have to be strong and be able to not submerge yourself in the negative birth stories of others as this impacts on your ability to do. Continual efforts and daily practice have become paramount in ensuring you are setting your mind right for birthing your baby. I'm telling you this because I did this. I know how effective this is – its real hardcore empowerment like beyond I have ever known.

Every day is preparation – it has to become part of your daily practice – if you can commit to this, then a program like HypnoBirthing will work really well for your birth and beyond.



Secret 4 - Hypnosis

We often joke about clucking like a chicken and seemingly losing control when we talk about hypnosis.

Stage hypnosis could not be further from the type of hypnosis used during childbirth however it can be equally as powerful.

Instead of believing you're a chicken, can you imagine believing that all sensations in your body are those of pressure, not pain?!

Hypnosis, when learnt correctly and practiced with dedication can allow you to change sensations in your body, make parts of your body go numb and allow you to enter the special birthing mindset quickly and easily, allowing your body to birth as it needs to.

The other amazing thing hypnosis can do is to clear stresses, anxieties and fears extremely quickly and effectively.

During the HypnoBirthing® course I do a profound hypnotic fear release process, which can be like flipping a switch from scared to empowered.

Because the birth partners also experience hypnosis during the course, they understand first hand the state of total body and mind relaxation that you need to be in. They are also equipped with scripts and special triggers to get you deeply relaxed instantaneously.

When you are deeply relaxed, your body will produce the perfect quantity of oxytocin (your birthing hormone) and endorphins (your natural pain killers).

This will ensure that labour progresses as it should and is as comfortable as it can be.

Secret 5 - Commitment

I look back to my first birth when I think of this. I chose A hospital because I didn't know I had choice, I went to a standard NHS parent craft class that just reinforced how much I wasn't going to do anything and they would do it for me. Then I went on my merry way and waited. That was it. It kind of sounds enough though doesn't it? I thought it was plenty but it definitely wasn't. Although I committed to going – it taught me nothing about preparing for birth, my outlook was turn up on the day and what will be will be, other than what to consider packing in my hospital bag. I don't think my partner got anymore than that either.

I now know that preparing for a positive birth takes time. A lot of time! I would recommend immersing yourself in the positive birth world from the moment you know you are pregnant.

I would spend some time each day reading, learning and absorbing – being present in this wonderful head space. Commitment to a positive birth will most likely take some sort of financial investment too. Does it have to? No, not if you spend your precious time looking for all the free stuff.

I am a firm believer in that you get what you pay for and if you want a premium childbirth education, then HypnoBirthing is for you. I don't profess to be the cheapest but I do stand by this tried and tested program, knowing that we get the results our parents want – knowing that you have my continual support also.

Look at labour like a marathon. How would you prepare for that? You would hire a personal trainer, you would exercise and train everyday, you would make sure you had the best running shoes, maybe buy a fitbit or some running shorts. You would be loud and proud telling family and friends what you were doing and I am guessing they would be loud and proud back in their encouragement and support. They would cheer you on from the sidelines, wanting you to succeed.

Why do we not celebrate women in their journey to achieve a positive birth in the same way?

Being committed because you want to be – not because everyone else is doing it.

If you are worried about money and wondering if it's all worth it, unfortunately "sometimes you will never know the value of a moment, until it becomes a memory".

What I mean by that is, this is a momentous occasion.

Why would you not give it the same amount of time? As we have discussed dedication and financial investment for your engagement party, your wedding, your last overseas holiday?

Why would you place more value on the latest pram or cot, than the calm and positive experience that will shape the parents you will become?

Research shows that babies remember birth, that they are an active participant in the process. Without commitment to your preparation, you can very easily be led down a path of intervention which can affect both your baby and yourself in a myriad of ways.

With many practitioners offering payment plans, the course can be achievable for almost everyone.

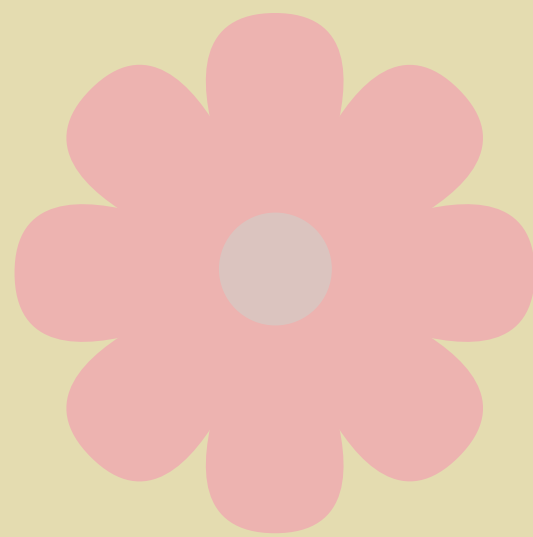
Sending you Love & Light

These secrets are of course nothing new but are what you hear time and time again in the positive birthing world. I hope they have helped in some small way so that you too can have a happy, satisfying and rewarding birth.

Birth is our Rite of Passage and is transformational. I hope you take this opportunity to do all you can to have the birth of your dreams.

For more information about my HypnoBirthing courses please contact me on katy@everybirthmatters.co.uk
07751077755

www.everybirthmatters.co.uk



"I don't care what kind of birth you have...
a homebirth, scheduled cesarean, an
epidural hospital birth or if you give birth
alone in the woods next to a baby deer. I
care that you had options, that you were
supported in your choices and that you
were respected."

January Harshe - birth without fear

To Continue The Journey

I have some other great resources and events that you may be interested in.

You can click on any of the links below to find out more.

POSITIVE BIRTH TOOLKIT

Email Series

&


HOW TO HAVE AN AMAZING BIRTH

Free HypnoBirthing Information Session

Written with so much love, from my own birth experiences and from the women and partners I have had the privileged to support through their pregnancies and birth.

You will all always hold a special place in my heart.

XXXXXXX



Every Birth Matters
Doula • HypnoBirthing • Education

