

VERITY GOODFELLOW

Hypnobirthing
2020



Contents

What is Hypnobirthing ?	4
Who is the practitioner?	4
Where do sessions take place?	5
What is learned?.....	5
The Research	6
The Fear Tension Pain Cycle	10
Relaxation Techniques	12
Emotion Diary	14
Unhelpful Thinking Styles	15
Best Sleep Positions During Pregnancy?	16
Stages of Labor	17
Cervical Dilation.....	18
Symptoms of effacement	19
Affirmations.....	20
Breathing Exercises	21
Calm Breathing	21
Pressure Breathing.....	21
Birthing Breathing.....	22
Visualisations.....	23
Waves of Pressure.....	23
Opening flower.....	23
Optimal birthing position.....	24
Special Place (deepens relaxation).....	24
Meeting baby.....	25
Breast Feeding Visualisations	25
Comfort Control	26
Switchboard-control of comfort.....	26
Positions for efficient labour and birth	28
Light Touch Massage	29
Quick Guide to Self-Hypnosis	30

Tips for Birthing Partner	31
During pregnancy	31
During birth	31
Time contractions.	33
Guided Relaxation	34
Rainbow Relaxation	34
Natural birth videos.....	38

What is Hypnobirthing ?

Birth has the potential to be one of the most wonderful experiences of a mother's life. Childbirth is a natural physiological process that a woman's body is fully equipped for. Each birth is unique, and hypnobirthing is about empowering mothers to feel calm and confident, during and after the birth and not to fear it.



There has been lots of very good clinical research carried out which finds that the use of hypnosis during childbirth reduces:

- >> first stage of labour
- >> and even eliminates pain
- >> interventions and surgical births.
- >> risk of post-natal depression.

Hypnobirthing is about women learning to reach a state of deep relaxation, maintaining perception of control over the process of birth and developing a really positive attitude. It is about changing expectation of birth so that you help rather than hinder the natural process.



Who is the practitioner?

Verity Goodfellow has been a qualified Hypnobirthing practitioner for the past 5 years and a Hypnotherapist with a post graduate qualification in this field for the past 7 years. As a clinic hypnotherapist she is particularly skilled at helping women overcome specific phobias of birth, such as Tokophobia, death or any medical related fears. The easibirthing® method, Verity uses, seeks to enable you to have the active birth you want. So whether you are planning a home birth, birthing in hospital, or indeed having an elective caesarean, this training is designed to suit you.

Verity teaches mother's to be, to use self-hypnosis, relaxation, visualisation and breathing methods to create mental and physical relaxation. These techniques enable them to prepare their mind and body for a natural, calm, confident birth, whatever type of birth they may have.



Where do sessions take place?

Although sessions are bespoke to each mother, there is a course structure followed which consists of 3 hours to learn all the skills necessary. Sessions can be held virtually or in person.

What is learned?

An understanding of the pain/fear cycle

Self-Hypnosis

Relaxation techniques

Thought stopping techniques to deal with negative, worrying, intrusive thoughts.

Techniques to invoke calm relaxation

What is included?

Hypnotherapy sessions designed for each client's needs.

4 hours of one to one sessions

relaxing music

hypnobirthing sound files

positive affirmation sound files

course notes in paper and/or electronic form.

Additional Benefits



- Reduce morning sickness
- Manage symptoms of specific Tokophobia
- Help set new behaviours for pregnancy e.g. laying on a specific side, remembering to take vitamins.
- Alleviate sleep problems

- Help body to induce labour naturally
- Reduce stress and discomfort occasionally experienced in breast feeding
- Encourage bonding with baby.
- Learning the skill of mental relaxation for use throughout your life.

The Research



Reducing incidence of premature labour

A study examined the role hypnosis can play in reducing preterm labour for patients who have higher levels of psychosocial stress. In the hypnosis group there were three preterm deliveries (4.7%) (before 37 + 0 weeks' gestation) whereas in the control group there were 220 preterm deliveries (10.3%). (Reinhard, Hatzmann & Schiermeier, 2009). Hypnotic relaxation was used as an adjunct to pharmacologic treatment with 39 women hospitalized for premature contractions in pregnancy. The control group received medication alone and consisted of 70 women. Treatment was started at the time of hospitalization and lasted for 3 hr on the average. Patients were also given recordings with a hypnotic-relaxation exercise for daily practice. The rate of pregnancy prolongation was significantly higher for the hypnotic-relaxation than for the medication-alone group. Infant weight also showed the advantage of the hypnotic-relaxation treatment. (Omer & Friedlander, 1986)

Reduction of anxiety using hypnosis in pregnancy

Mothers who used hypnosis for anxiety and stress management had foetuses who moved in a much more active manner than a control group. (Zimmer, Peretz, Eyal & Fuchs, 1988)

Downe (2015) 680 women were randomized. Women in the hypnosis intervention group had lower actual than anticipated levels of fear and anxiety between baseline and 2 weeks postnatal (Anxiety: OR -0.72, 95% CI -1.16 to -0.28); (Fear OR -0.62, 95% CI -1.08 to -0.16).

Hypnosis effects on turning foetuses from breech position

One hundred pregnant women whose foetuses were in breech position at 37-40 weeks' gestation and a matched control group. 81% of breech babies were successful conversions to a vertex position compared with 48% in the control group. The success was thought to be down to psychophysiological factors which may influence the breech position. (*Mehl, 1994*)

Reduction in length of labour using hypnosis

Jenkins and Pritchard (1993) found a reduction of 3 hours for prim gravid women (from 9.3 hours to 6.4 hours) and 1 hour for multi gravid women (from 6.2 hours to 5.3 hours) for active labour (262 subjects and 600 controls). Pushing was statistically shorter for first time mothers (from 50 min to 37 min). These women were more satisfied with labour and reported other benefits of hypnosis such as reduced anxiety and help with getting to sleep. *Abramson and Heron (1950) & Gallagher (2001)* found a shorter first stage of labour for 100 women trained with hypnosis (by 3.23 hours) compared to a control group of 88 women.

Forty-five Hypnosis for Childbirth clients (first time mothers) had an average of 4.5 hours for the active labour, a significant reduction compared to the usual 9 hours. (*Harmon, Hynan and Tyre, 1990*)

Adams et al (2012) found an average difference of 1 hour 32 minutes in the length of labour for women with fear of childbirth than those without significant fear. The study comprised 2206 women with intended vaginal delivery.

Medication use

Bobart and Brown's (2002) study using 72 mothers 36 of whom had received hypnotic training compared to a control group of 36 who delivered on the same day without such training:

Control Group Hypnosis Group

Regional anaesthesia 35 (97%) 14 (38%)

Analgesia 27 (75%) 2 (5.5%)

No anaesthetic or premedication 1 (2.7%) 22 (61%) At birth Baby Apgar scores are significantly higher.

In a British study, 55% of 45 patients (first and second time mothers) required no medication for pain relief. In the other non-hypnosis groups, only 22% of 90 women required no medication. Two research pieces reported on 1,000 consecutive births: 850 women used hypnotic analgesia resulting in 58 percent rate of no medication. Five other research pieces reported an incidence of 60

to 79 percent non-medicated births. (*Harmon, Hynan and Tyre, 1990*)
A meta-analysis compiling data from 14 studies that included more than 1,400 women showed that hypnosis reduces the need for drug pain relief in labour, lessens the need for medications that augment labour and increases the number of spontaneous vaginal births. Women taught self-hypnosis had decreased requirements for pharmacological analgesia (RR 0.53, 95% CI 0.36 to 0.79, five trials 749 women) including epidural analgesia (RR 0.30, 95% CI 0.22 to 0.40) and were more satisfied with their pain management in labour compared with controls (RR 2.33, 95% CI 1.15 to 4.71, one trial). (*Smith, Collins, Cyna & Crowther, 2006*)

Harmon, Hynan and Tyre (1990) reported more spontaneous deliveries, higher Apgar scores and reduced medication use in a study of 60 women. "A woman's 'self-efficacy for labor' or confidence in her ability to cope has a powerful relationship to decreased pain perception and decreased medication/analgesia during labour. Anxiety is commonly associated with increased pain during labor, and may modify labor pain through psychological and physiologic mechanisms. "Fear of pain may be one component of labour related anxiety, and has a huge correlation with pain levels reported during first stage labor." (*Lowe, N. 2002*)

Rates of Intervention

Thirty-eight out of forty-five Hypnosis for Childbirth mums, delivered spontaneously without the use of caesarean, forceps or ventouse. This rate of 84% is higher than the average rate of normal birth for the general population of first time mothers. (*Harmon, Hynan and Tyre, 1990*)

The study included 42 teenaged patients receiving prenatal treatment at a county public health department before their 24th week of pregnancy. They were randomly assigned to either a treatment group receiving a childbirth preparation protocol under hypnosis or a control group receiving supportive counseling. When labor and delivery outcome measures were compared in the 2 groups, significant differences favoring the hypnosis intervention group were found in the number of complicated deliveries, surgical procedures, and length of hospital stay. (*Martin, Schauble, Surekha & Curry, 2001*)

520 pregnant women in their first or second trimester of pregnancy were randomized to receiving prenatal hypnosis or attention-only groups. The goal was to reduce fear of birth and parenthood; to reduce anxiety; to reduce stress; to identify specific fears that might complicate the labor process (addressing them whenever possible); and to prepare women for the experience of labor. The attention-only group was matched to a no-contact comparison group. Women receiving prenatal hypnosis had significantly better outcomes than women who did not. Further assessment suggested that hypnosis worked by preventing negative emotional factors from leading to an complicated birth outcome. (*Mehl-Madrona, 2004*).

Postpartum depression

McCarthy (1998) provided five 30-minute sessions to 600 women and found a virtual absence of postpartum depression, compared to the typical rates of 10 to 15 percent. Women with a history of postpartum depression did not develop this condition, even though an estimated 50 percent eventually do. Harmon et al also reported lower depression scores in the hypnotically treated group.

Harmon et al (1990) reported a reduced incidence of postnatal depression in women who had been taught hypnotic analgesia for childbirth.

Effect of suggestions during labour

Hao et al (1997) in China measured the effect of nursing suggestions to labouring women and recommends that the conversation of the nurses be “controlled carefully for the purpose of advancing the birth process”. This randomized control trial examined 60 first time mothers with a matched control group of 60 first time mothers and found a statistically significant reduction in the lengths of the first and second stages of labour.

Postnatal reflection on childbirth experience

In a randomized, controlled, single-blinded trial, 1,222 healthy nulliparous women were allocated to one of three groups during pregnancy: A hypnosis group participating in three 1-hour sessions teaching self-hypnosis to ease childbirth, a relaxation group receiving three 1-hour lessons in various relaxation methods and Mindfulness, and a usual care group receiving ordinary antenatal care only. The postnatal analysis indicated that women in the hypnosis group experienced their childbirth as better compared with the other two groups. The tendency toward a better childbirth experience in the hypnosis group was also seen in subgroup analyses for mode of delivery and for levels of fear. *(Werner, Uldbjerg, Zachariae & Nohr, 2013)*

Mairs (1995) studied the efficacy of hypnosis as an adjunct to pain control in childbirth in 28 primigravida women. Their experiences were compared with those of 27 primigravida women who did not receive any hypnosis training. Postbirth those trained in the use of hypnosis reported significant lower ratings of both pain and anxiety. There were no significant differences in drug usage during labor.

Promoting lactation

Hypnosis can be used to promote and to suppress lactation.

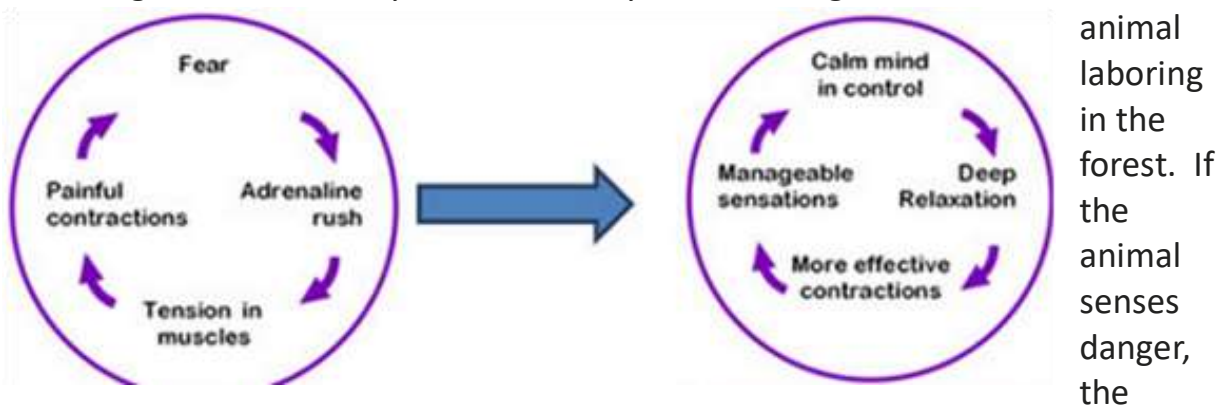
(August, 1961; Cheek & LeCron, 1968; Kroger, 1977)

The Fear Tension Pain Cycle

By observing laboring women in the 1930's, Dr. Grantley Dick-Read, a British obstetrician and a leading advocate of natural childbirth, theorized that the more fear a woman had, the more tense her body was and the more pain she felt during labor. Today, this theory is widely accepted by midwives. However, muscular tension is not the only side effect of the fear that hinders labor.

When you experience fear, your body produces chemicals that change the way your body works. This response is generally termed the "fight or flight" response. It works by diverting blood away from non-vital internal organs and pushed to the limbs to give you extra strength and speed. So right away, your uterus is trying to work with less oxygen.

The chemicals that are released also work to delay labor from happening by reducing the levels of Oxytocin. This may sound strange, but think about a wild



animal laboring in the forest. If the animal senses danger, the

"fight or flight" response can stop labor to allow the animal to retreat to a safe place. Once the danger is gone, labor resumes, the baby is born and both mother and baby are safe.

How does the fear tension pain cycle stop labor?

Basically, your uterus is not just one large muscle. It is made from two layers of muscles that run two different directions, one layer runs from the top to the bottom, the other around the sides. During labor the "top to bottom" muscles contract to push the baby down and pull the cervix back. After your baby is born the "around the sides" muscles contract to pull the cervix and uterus back into place.

The addition of the fear chemicals causes the "around the sides" muscles to contract during labor. In effect you have one muscle layer trying to open the cervix while one muscle layer tries to close the cervix. This makes for an extremely long, painful and unproductive labor.

What causes the fear tension pain cycle?

The bad news is that unlike a wild animal, humans do not need a threat to our existence to start the "fight or flight" response. Our highly developed brains allow us to be fearful of what COULD happen, not only what is happening. Many women begin their labors at a high stress level anyway, because they live their every-day lives at such a heightened level of stress. Stress, anxiety, worry, fear; it doesn't matter what you call it, it can start the fear tension pain cycle in your labor.

Why makes fear tension pain a cycle?

The pain a woman experiences as a result of the stress, anxiety and fear only serves to confirm her deepest fears, that labor is horribly painful and she becomes more fearful of what lies ahead which leads to more pain - then more fear - then more pain. It is a vicious cycle that can be difficult to get out of.

How can Hypnosis help?

Hypnosis can help to change those conditioned responses of fear and anxiety to feeling calm and relaxed. Being calm and relaxed will support the birth process

What else can you do ?

Knowledge conquers fears:

Attend antenatal classes in order to understand the process and your choices.

- <https://www.nct.org.uk/>
- Chosen hospital/birth centre website

Visit chosen hospital/birthing center, if possible.

Plan activities for going into labor e.g. bag packed, route planned, change for car parking machine.

Relaxation Techniques

Calm Breathing

1. Close your eyes
2. Close your mouth and breathe in slowly through your nose (if possible)
3. Imagine breathing in calm
4. Breathe out slowly through your nose
5. Imagine breathing out any tension
6. Repeat x10



Relax all your muscles

1. Imagine a dot of relaxation on the top of your head. What does it feel like?
2. Taking your time, allow the dot to grow and relaxation spread all the way down the back of your head and down through every muscle of your body and out through your toes.













Emotion Diary

Date and Time	Stress/ Irritation/ Worry Level 1-10	Current Mood (sad, lonely, angry)	How this level makes me feel (for example, "butterflies", pain, headache, raised pulse rate, sweaty palms)	Cause of this (be as honest as possible)	How did you handle this ?	Current thinking about this situation.	What could I feel do differently

Unhelpful Thinking Styles

Unhelpful Thinking Habits

Over the years, we tend to get into unhelpful thinking habits such as those described below. We might favour some over others, and there might be some that seem far too familiar. Once you can identify your unhelpful thinking styles, you can start to notice them – they very often occur just before and during distressing situations. Once you can notice them, then that can help you to challenge or distance yourself from those thoughts, and see the situation in a different and more helpful way. *Blue text (italics) helps us find alternative, more realistic thoughts.*

 <p>Mental Filter - When we notice only what the filter allows or wants us to notice, and we dismiss anything that doesn't 'fit'. Like looking through dark blinkers or 'gloomy specs', or only catching the negative stuff in our 'kitchen strainers' whilst anything more positive or realistic is dismissed. <i>Am I only noticing the bad stuff? Am I filtering out the positives? Am I wearing those 'gloomy specs'? What would be more realistic?</i></p>	 <p>Judgements - Making evaluations or judgements about events, ourselves, others, or the world, rather than describing what we actually see and have evidence for. <i>I'm making an evaluation about the situation or person. It's how I make sense of the world, but that doesn't mean my judgements are always right or helpful. Is there another perspective?</i></p>
<p>Prediction - Believing we know what's going to happen in the future. <i>Am I thinking that I can predict the future? How likely is it that that might really happen?</i></p> 	<p>Emotional Reasoning - I feel bad so it must be bad! I feel anxious, so I must be in danger. <i>Just because it feels bad, doesn't necessary mean it is bad. My feelings are just a reaction to my thoughts - and thoughts are just automatic brain reflexes</i></p> 
<p>Mind-Reading - Assuming we know what others are thinking (usually about us). <i>Am I assuming I know what others are thinking? What's the evidence? Those are my own thoughts, not theirs. Is there another, more balanced way of looking at it?</i></p> 	<p>Mountains and Molehills Exaggerating the risk of danger, or the negatives. Minimising the odds of how things are most likely to turn out, or minimising positives. <i>Am I exaggerating the bad stuff? How would someone else see it? What's the bigger picture?</i></p> 
<p>Compare and despair Seeing only the good and positive aspects in others, and getting upset when comparing ourselves negatively against them. <i>Am I doing that 'compare and despair' thing? What would be a more balanced and helpful way of looking at it?</i></p> 	<p>Catastrophising - Imagining and believing that the worst possible thing will happen. <i>OK, thinking that the worst possible thing will definitely happen isn't really helpful right now. What's most likely to happen?</i></p> 
<p>Critical self Putting ourselves down, self-criticism, blaming ourselves for events or situations that are not (totally) our responsibility. <i>There I go, that internal bully's at it again. Would most people who really know me say that about me? Is this something that I am totally responsible for?</i></p> 	<p>Black and white thinking - Believing that something or someone can be only good or bad, right or wrong, rather than anything in-between or 'shades of grey'. <i>Things aren't either totally white or totally black - there are shades of grey. Where is this on the spectrum?</i></p> 
<p>Shoulds and musts - Thinking or saying 'I should' (or shouldn't) and 'I must' puts pressure on ourselves, and sets up unrealistic expectations. <i>Am I putting more pressure on myself, setting up expectations of myself that are almost impossible? What would be more realistic?</i></p> 	<p>Memories - Current situations and events can trigger upsetting memories, leading us to believe that the danger is here and now, rather than in the past, causing us distress right now. <i>This is just a reminder of the past. That was then, and this is now. Even though this memory makes me <u>feel</u> upset, it's not <u>actually</u> happening again right now.</i></p> 

Best Sleep Positions During Pregnancy?



The best sleep position during pregnancy is “SOS” (sleep on side). Historically medics have always advised to sleep on the left to allow for optimal blood flow, however, some recent research (Cronin et al, 2019, An Individual Participant Data Meta-analysis of Maternal Going-to-Sleep Position, Interactions with Fetal Vulnerability, and the Risk of Late Stillbirth 2019) has found that lying on either side are equally safe. Obviously back and front are not.

If you can spend most of the time on your left side, aim for that position. But if your body keeps wanting to roll right, relax and get some sleep.

When on your side, keep your legs and knees bent and put a pillow between your legs.

This will also encourage baby to be positioned in the correct position known as the vortex fetal presentation.



Stages of Labor



stages of labor

pre-labor Known as Braxton-hicks, these late pregnancy contractions thin your cervix and get it ready for labor.

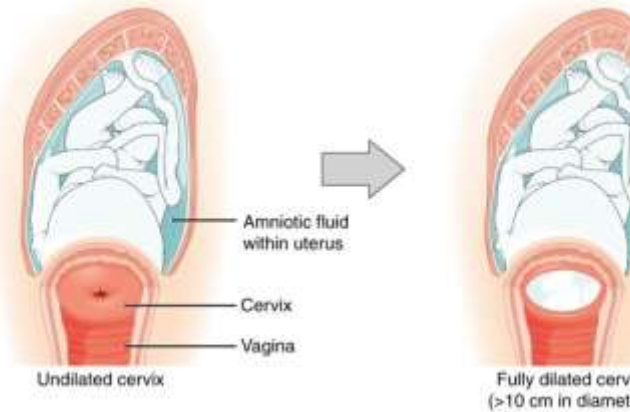
first stage The cervix thins and dilates until it reaches 10 cm.
 0-4 cm early labor
 5-8 cm active labor
 8-10 cm transition

second stage This stage is known as the pushing phase. You push during contractions until baby is born.

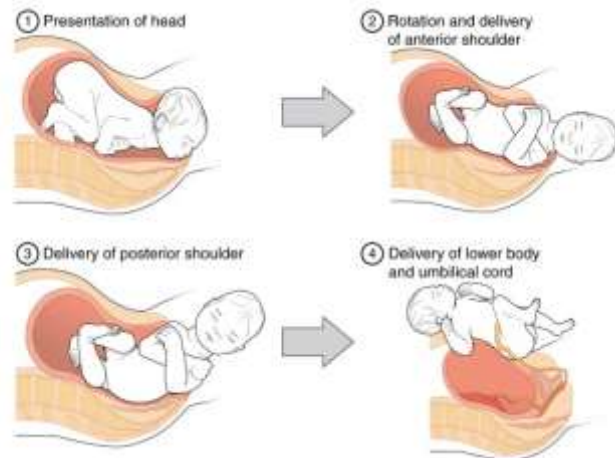
third stage After the baby is born, you continue to have contractions so that the placenta may be born.

fourth stage The two hours after birth when breastfeeding can be established. Contractions continue so the uterus will shrink.

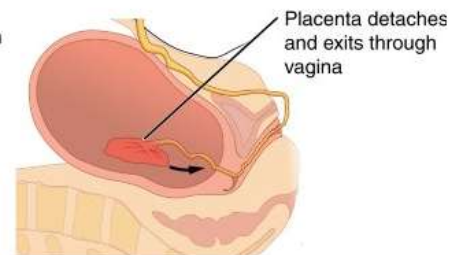
Stage 1:
Dilation



Stage 2:
Birth



Stage 3:
Afterbirth
delivery



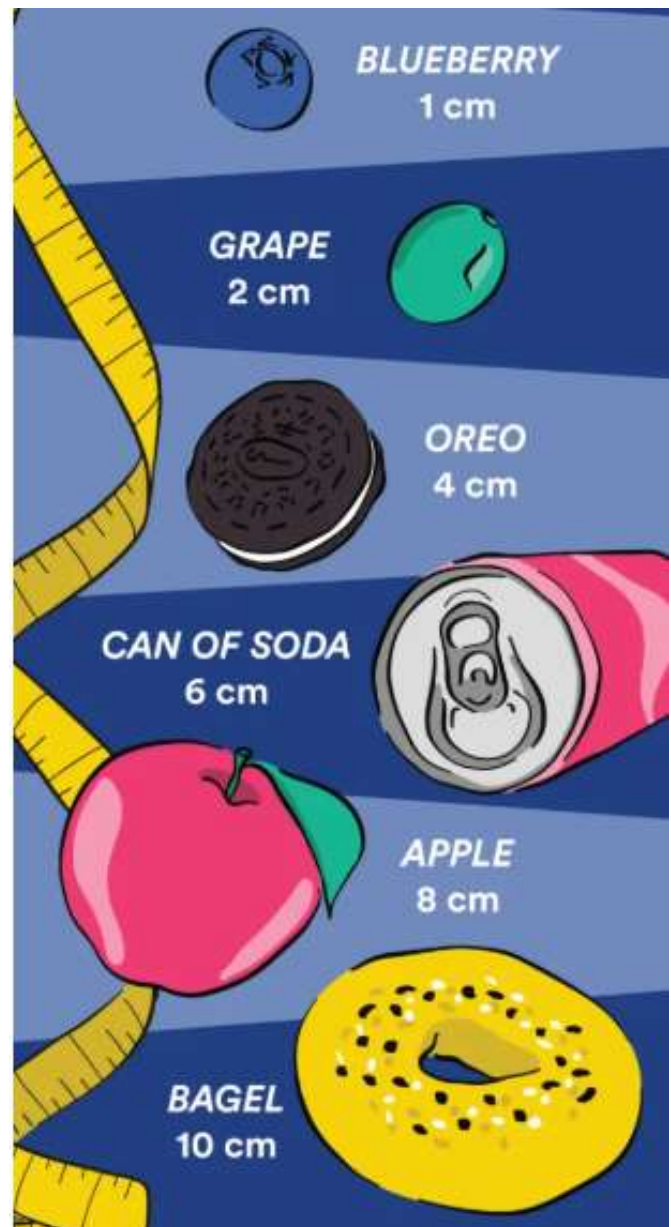
Cervical Dilation

The cervix will dilate as a natural part of the labour process. Contractions are the body's way of helping the cervix to stretch. When the cervix is fully dilated, it will be about **10 centimeters in diameter**. This is wide enough for a baby to pass through. From 4cm onwards is usually considered active labour.

Effacement vs. dilation

Effacement refers to the thinning of the cervix during labor. It's also described as a softening, shortening, or even "ripening." (Yeah, we don't love that term, either.)

In pregnancy, the cervix is usually between 3.5 and 4 centimeters long. As you near your due date, your body produces prostaglandins and starts contracting. These things help the cervix *efface* (thin, soften, shorten, etc.) and prepare for delivery. Eventually, the cervix thins and shortens to the point that it's as thin as a piece of paper.



Try thinking of your uterus as a turtleneck sweater. The cervix is the neck part. For most of your pregnancy, it stays in place to protect your baby. As contractions begin, they help stretch and shorten the neck. Your baby descends lower into the birth canal, too — and eventually, the neck of the sweater is so stretched and thin that it allows baby's head to rest at the opening.

Effacement is different from dilation, which refers to how much the cervix has opened (from 1 centimeter to 10 centimeters). However, the two are closely related. Researchers [Trusted Source](#) have examined the relationship and

determined that the more effaced or thinned out the cervix is before and during labor, the faster the process of dilation might be.

Symptoms of effacement

You may or may not have symptoms as your cervix effaces. Some people feel nothing at all. Others may experience irregular contractions that are uncomfortable, but not necessarily as painful as labour contractions.

Other possible symptoms:

- loss of mucus plug
- increase in vaginal discharge
- feeling like your baby has dropped lower into your pelvis

Keep in mind that there are a lot of sensations you'll experience at the end of your pregnancy. It may be difficult to pinpoint whether what you're feeling is due to dilation, effacement, early labor, or just general aches and pains

Affirmations

Affirmations are positive statements that help guide your mind to where you want to be. These affirmations can be said to yourself at any time, but it is most beneficial, for you or your partner to repeat them whilst using self-hypnosis. You may even like to record them and play them to yourself whilst in hypnosis.



Here are some examples, but add or amend as you feel is right for you, just ensure they are positive.

- I put all fear aside as I prepare for the birth of my baby.
- I am relaxed and happy that my baby is coming.
- I am a strong and capable woman.
- I am focused on a smooth, easy birth.
- I will breathe deeply and slowly to relax my muscles making it easier for my baby to come out.
- My mind is relaxed; my body is relaxed.
- I feel confident. I feel safe. I feel secure.
- My muscles are relaxed making birthing easier.
- I relax as I move easily through each stage of birth.
- My cervix opens and allows my baby to ease down.
- I see my baby coming smoothly from my womb.
- My baby's birth will be easy because I am relaxed.
- I breathe correctly and eliminate tension.
- Each wave of pressure brings my baby nearer to me.
- I am totally relaxed and at ease.
- My body remains relaxed and calm.

Breathing Exercises

Calm Breathing



USE THROUGHOUT BIRTH IN BETWEEN CONTRACTIONS

Take a slow calm breath in through the nose (mouth shut)

Breath out slowly through the nose

On each out breath count from 1 to 10

Repeat counting from 1-10 on each out breath

- Become aware of physical sensations as you breath in and out (nose, chest rising)
- Imagine breathing in calm and relaxation, perhaps visualize a calm colour
- Imagine breathing out anxiety and stress, perhaps it is a colour
- During birth - On each count visualise your cervix opening wider and wider you or see a rose opening wider and wider.

Pressure Breathing

**USE WITH CONTRACTIONS – NEVER HOLD YOUR BREATH.
Practice daily during pregnancy.**

The objective of this exercise is to make breathing in and out last as long as possible – to coincide with the wave of pressure.



Breath in to the count of 20

Breath out to the count of 20

- Focus attention on rising abdomen – visualize in breath filling a coloured balloon.
- Breathe downward and outward
- Visualise gentle soft coloured ribbons pulling together from the bottom of your tummy to the top.

Birthing Breathing

Practice **ONLY** very gently at home on the toilet when passing a stool.

USE ONLY WHEN MIDWIFE DIRECTS YOU SO THAT YOU CAN PUSH WITH EACH CONTRACTION

Short in breath and long exhalation

(preferably through the nose)

- Direct all your energy down and forward in a “J” pattern
- Visualise your baby gently coming out

Visualisations

Waves of Pressure

This is ideal to accompany your Pressure Breathing during contractions. You can practice it during your daily self-hypnosis exercises.

1. Use appropriate breathing techniques
2. Close eyes
3. Imagine soft beautiful ribbons all laced together across your tummy (notice their colour and soft texture)
4. As the wave of pressure begins, feel the ribbons begin to tighten at the bottom of your tummy
5. And as that pressure rises - you begin your slow breathing in - as if you were filling up a balloon inside your tummy deeper and deeper
DO NOT HOLD BREATH
6. Continue to Visualise the ribbons gently tighten and the pressure rise higher toward the top of your tummy
7. Breath out (when you need to) a long out breath
8. Followed by a long in breath (as if filling a balloon)
9. All the time visualizing the ribbons tighten all the way to the top
10. And as the wave fades away and the ribbons all relax, return breathing to normal
11. And smile with the knowledge that baby is moving into the right position and you are nearer and nearer to holding your beautiful baby.

Opening flower

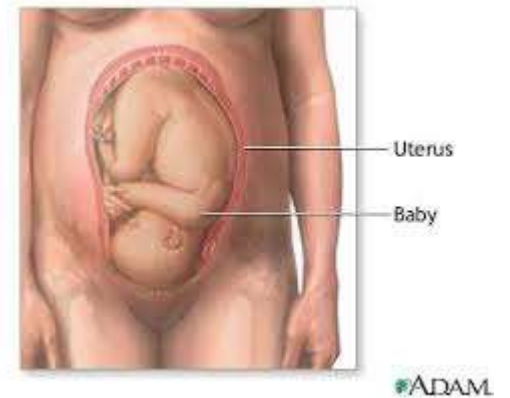
This is good to accompany your Calm breathing in the final days of pregnancy to encourage labour.

1. Practice Calm Breathing
2. Close your eyes
3. Imagine baby moving gently down ready to be born
4. Imagine the perineum unfolding like the petals on a rose.

Optimal birthing position

Visualise baby positioned in the optimal position (the best position for birth).

This is great to use every time you practice self-hypnosis before the birth and to visualise during the birth.



BODY AS A CANDLE



Picture a candle the colour of calm. Focus on the flame of the candle, and all the colours within it. Seeing the first trickle of melting wax begin to move down the side of this candle is your cue to relax more and more deeply. Eventually the wax becomes part of the candleholder, and you become the candle, each muscle melting away its' tension. Feel yourself melting into the experience of childbirth...your body simply melting into the task of doing what it knows how to do....

Special Place (deepens relaxation)

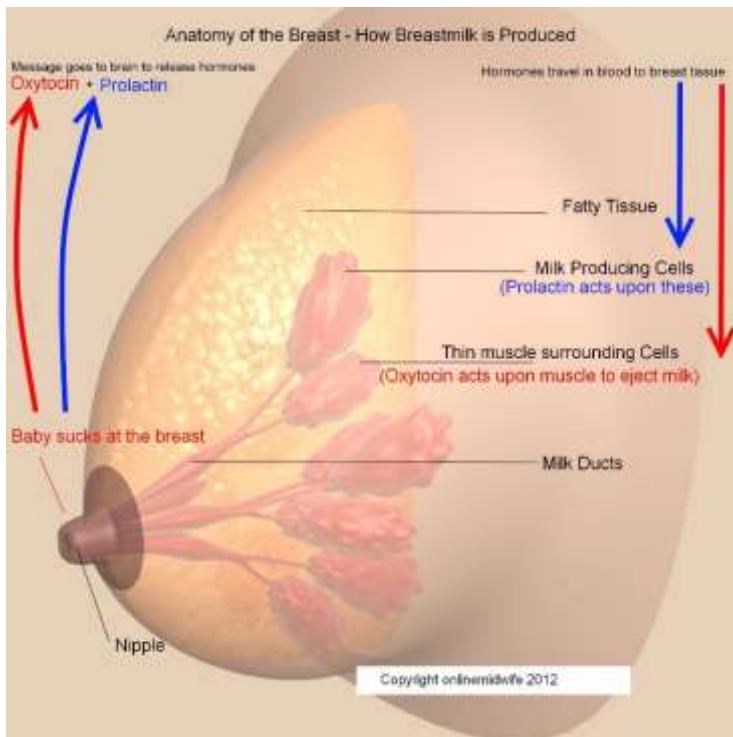
Use your wonderful imagination to create your own special place. You are in complete control in this place. Have everything you need here to be completely relaxed. Imagine this place with colours, sights, sounds, feelings, smells.



Meeting baby

Visualise the first moment you hold your baby. Notice baby's tiny hands and how you feel when you look into your baby's face.

Breast Feeding Visualisations



TIP : Keep track of your feeds using an app such as Baby Breastfeeding Tracker for iPhone or Glow for android. Alternatively, go old school and keep a notebook handy to write things down. This will help you know how long each feed is taking and to remember which breast you last fed with. If you don't track but what a quick easy way to remember which breast you last fed try switching a bracelet or ring or twisting a bra strap.

Comfort Control



Visualise sensations of contractions in your body.....

Your subconscious mind can relax all the nerve and muscle fibres in the area of your body where there is any tension or discomfort. It can also interrupt the pathways which travel from the site of the discomfort, to the spinal cord, up the back of the spinal cord, through the brain stem and into the sensation reception area. Choose an area in which you may be experiencing sensation or even discomfort right now.... I want you to visualise now the journey of the electrical impulse messages from that particular area of your body... from the site of discomfort, up the back of the spinal cord, through the brain stem and into the sensation reception area.

There are many, many gates which these discomfort impulses must pass through, and your subconscious mind can close many of these gates which the electrical impulses must pass through. Practise closing some or all of these gates now....This will reduce the number of nerve impulses that will finally reach the sensation reception area and so you will simply be aware of less sensation.

Switchboard-control of comfort

Your subconscious mind can also help you visualise this sensation reception area, perhaps as a control room-however you might see that control room...see it now. Imagine a switchboard of lights corresponding to each area

of your body. When there is a lot of discomfort being reported there from a particular area of your body, the corresponding light can be very, very bright. Each light has a dimmer switch below it, which you can turn down. If you feel discomfort in any part of your body, you can control its intensity by simply imagining yourself turning the appropriate dimmer switch. As you turn the light down, dimmer and dimmer, you will experience less and less discomfort. Perhaps the dimmer switch is calibrated on a scale from 1-10, with 10 being the most discomfort you can ever feel. And the number you feel will be the number you can see in your mind and on the dimmer switch. If you feel an 8, you will see an 8. So the number you feel is the number you see, and the number you see is the number you feel. So you see the number 7, and the number 6. As you lower the numbers, you will lower the discomfort. You will also see the light for that area of the body dimming and the discomfort itself greatly reduced or removed altogether. Remember, “the number you see is the number you feel. The number you feel is the number you see.”

“What your mind conceives, your body can achieve.”

Positions for efficient labour and birth



If you can, try to keep moving, stay upright and change position during labour. When women give birth on TV or in films, they tend to spend their labour lying back on a hospital bed. But most women will move around a lot during labour and will change position as their labour progresses and the baby changes position.



Light Touch Massage

Light touch massage is really useful tool for a birthing partner. It helps mum to feel relaxed (ensuring muscles are relaxe and releases endorphins counteracting discomfort. Furthermore, touch stimulates the release of the hormone Oxytocin ensuring labour remains strong and efficient.

The infographic features a grey background with a white geometric pattern. At the top left, the text 'RELEASE NATURAL PAINKILLERS THROUGH' is in a small, white, sans-serif font, followed by 'Light Touch Massage' in a large, blue, cursive font. To the right, a white text box contains a paragraph about endorphins. Below this, there are two overlapping circles: a light blue one on the left and a teal one on the right. The left circle contains the title 'ENDORPHINS AND PAIN' and two paragraphs of text. The right circle contains the title 'LIGHT TOUCHES' and a paragraph of text. At the bottom, a dark blue horizontal bar contains the title 'Light Touch Massage technique' and a numbered list of three steps.

RELEASE NATURAL PAINKILLERS THROUGH
Light Touch Massage

We all would like to get a massage every once in a while, because a massage releases endorphins into our bloodstream. These endorphins are natural hormones that are more potent than morphine when it comes to reducing sensations and our perception of pain.

ENDORPHINS AND PAIN

The release of endorphins by the nerves inhibits some or all of the pain messages going up to the brain. For many women, endorphins will also positively alter the memory of their birth experience and in some cases induce an amnesic, dreamy effect.

Without the risky side-effects of epidurals and medical intervention during birthing, endorphins is one of the key factors in having a fearless and painless birth that's calm, easy, and quick.

LIGHT TOUCHES

Light touches or sensational touches can send a rush of endorphins through your body. Women in birth are, at times, too sensitive for deep massages, so a light touch massage is the best way to induce these pain-numbing hormones.

Light Touch Massage technique

- 1 Kneel over a birthing ball or sitting sideways on a chair with your back facing your partner.
- 2 (V shapes) Then ever so lightly with the very tips of your fingers gently form a series of V shapes from the base of her spine up her neck, ears and down her arms. Repeat three times.
- 3 (S Shapes) Then form a series of S shapes from the base of her spine up again to her neck, ears and down her arms. Repeat three times.

Quick Guide to Self-Hypnosis

This should be used daily x4; in bed when you first wake up; sitting on a chair, standing up, just before you go to sleep.

This will teach your mind and body to become deeply relaxed. You may use this during birth, but you will want to change your breathing to either Pressure Wave, or Birthing Breathing at the appropriate times. Throughout the birthing process always return to Calm breathing to keep your body and mind calm and relaxed.



Self-Hypnosis

1. Close eyes

Creating relaxation - Calm Breathing

2. Take a slow calm breath in through the nose (mouth shut)
3. Breath out slowly through the nose
4. On each out breath count from 1 to 10

Additions:

5. Notice the sensations of air in yours nose as you breathe in and out
6. On each in breath imagine breathing in calm, imagine is has a colour and warmth
7. On each out breath imagine breathing out any tension or worries, perhaps they have a colour.

Deepening Relaxation - Top to Toe Relaxation

8. Notice a dot of relaxation starting at the top of your head
9. Let it spread, slowly, from the top of your head to the tips of your toes and fingers, paying special attention to mouth, jaw, and all tummy and pelvic areas.
10. Imagine yourself wrapped in a warm blanket of relaxation, its colour, its comfort, its smell
11. Practice a **Visualisation** and/or **Affirmation**
Either drift off to sleep or Count from 10 – 1 to awaken.

Tips for Birthing Partner



During pregnancy

- Practice the self-hypnosis during pregnancy so you understand the process and it will help you to stay calm and relaxed also.
- Notice if Mum is talking negatively and try and suggest positive alternative ways of thinking.

During birth

- Light touch massage or rhythmic pressing on arms.
- Deepen hypnosis using anchors (“Mum’s name”, “Relax” and hand on shoulder)

- Help guide her self-hypnosis
- Dealing with hospital staff. Be calm, polite, but above all ASSERTIVE with Midwives (being too passive may not get you the results you want and increase your anxiety – the complete opposite of what we are trying to achieve. You too must stay Calm and in Control to support and enable Mum to do so)
- Encourage Mum with breathing techniques and visualisations, affirmations. Perhaps you could recite them or remind her to do them mentally (if appropriate for her).
- Remind her that each contraction is only 1 or 2 deep breaths long.
- Remind her to focus on one breath at a time.
- Notice if she is speaking negatively and diplomatically suggest positive alternative ways of thinking
- Encourage her to focus on this breath, this moment.
- Observe her and make sure she is not holding her breath
- Place your hand on Mum's shoulder with medium pressure from time to time, to increase relaxation (this movement has been anchored to induce relaxation).

- Ensure you offer water, perhaps with a straw, every few minutes or as appropriate.

Time contractions.

When timing contractions, start counting from the beginning of one contraction to the beginning of the next. The easiest way to time contractions is to write down on paper the time each contraction starts and its duration, or count the seconds the actual contraction last or to download an app, such as BabyBump Pregnancy Pro with Baby Names or Pregnancy & Baby Tracker

Guided Relaxation

Rainbow Relaxation

And now it's time to relax. Just make yourself comfortable. Allow your eyelids to gently close. Take in a deep breath and now, slowly, allow that breath to drift down through your entire body, bringing you comfort and relaxation. Once more, take in a deep breath and let that breath flow down through your chest, your stomach and abdomen, your legs and all the way down to the soles of your feet.

Now as you begin to feel the soft tingling of relaxation on the soles of your feet, you release in both mind and body. Each time that we practice, you will find that you will immediately go more rapidly and more soundly into that wonderful place where you will be aware only of how deeply relaxed and comfortable you are. Each time you will be able to achieve this wonderful state in a shorter amount of time. Each time you will be able to go deeper and deeper into ultimate relaxation - the kind that you will use when you give birth to your baby.

Once again now, return your awareness to your eyes and feel how comfortable it is to just rest and allow your eyes to remain gently closed. You become aware that it seems now, that all the little muscles in and around your eyes are becoming more and more relaxed. And your eyelids seem to close so thoroughly. As your eyes close even more tightly, all the little worry lines around your eyes and across your forehead begin to fade and disappear. As this same quality of relaxation drifts down and around your cheeks, and your mouth, and all the rest of your facial muscles, now, release and become loose and limp. And you go deeper and deeper.

As you bring yourself deeper into total comfort, allow all tension in your jaw to just melt down and away. Softly rest your tongue behind your front upper teeth, now, and your lower jaw becomes comfortably relaxed. A wonderful sense of well-being settles into every muscle, every nerve, and every cell within your face, your jaw and your neck. Your mind releases and your body releases and you go twice as deeply into relaxation.

The relaxation, now, drifts in and around your shoulders and you give yourself permission to allow your shoulders to sink into the frame of your body. As your shoulders go limp and loose, your arms, your elbows, your wrists and your hands also become loose and limp. Your entire upper body, now, becomes perfectly relaxed. And you continue to go deeper. Release all tension from your chest now, from your heart and from your stomach. And your breathing

becomes rhythmic. slowing to the perfect resting level. Feel your body respond to this beautiful slow, comfortable breathing. and you double your relaxation and go deeper. Now, your entire body is free of tension. And your heartbeat slows to - the perfect resting rate. Your blood flows smoothly and freely throughout your body miraculously bringing just the right amount of oxygen to every muscle, every nerve, every cell, and every vital organ in your body. These thoughts are reassuring as you give yourself permission, now, to double your relaxation once more. And your body, now, is totally loose and limp as though you were a violin with all the strings released. Totally loose. totally limp. And you go deeper and deeper still. Now, allow your abdomen and your lower pelvic area to totally relax. It's so essential that this part of your body remain free of tension. And so, you relax all the tension in your pelvis and let it all melt down past your legs and your feet. Down into the ground. Just the way the soft spring rain melts into the earth.

In this perfectly relaxed state, to assist you as you move even deeper into relaxation, picture a magnificent rainbow with each of the colours vibrating in harmony with the life energy within your body. Allow your body now to absorb, as though it were a magnet, all of the wonderful energy of the rainbow. Let the soft mist of each of the colours of the rainbow permeate your entire body. bringing you confidence and assurance. Drawing away all tension. leaving you calm and at peace. And you go deeper. and deeper still.

Picture yourself now on a bed of mist - a soft, strawberry-red mist that gently envelops your entire lower torso. Taking away all tension. Bathing you in a soft, gentle relaxation. Let the red mist of perfect relaxation drift throughout all of your body. bringing your mind and your body deeper and deeper. Leaving you in soft, comfortable relaxation. Now your body begins to feel more and more relaxed. So comfortable that it hardly seems to be there at all. You are in tune with nature. All of nature is in tune with red. Breathe the red mist that gently wraps your body in a soft blanket of natural relaxation. And go deeper. and deeper.

Now, in your mind's eye, see yourself on a mist of soft, almost peach like orange. You and your body are in harmony with orange, and your abdomen totally relaxes. because your abdomen vibrates to the color of orange. Draw the orange mist in and through your abdomen and feel it, like a sponge, absorbing and releasing all tension - bathing you in a soft mist of peace, relaxation and comfort. And so every muscle, every nerve, and every cell within your abdomen relaxes while the soft orange mist flows throughout your entire

abdomen and pelvis. and you go, still, deeper.

Now see yourself in your mind's eye on a yellow mist of natural relaxation. You are in harmony with the color yellow, and the middle portion of your body becomes calm and peaceful. because the middle portion of your body vibrates to the color yellow. Breathe in the soft yellow mist of calm with each slow breath that you take. Let it flow and drift throughout your being. Your body and your mind are in harmony as they prepare to work together for your well-being. Your body is at peace as the yellow mist of natural relaxant envelops and soothes you. Breathe in the yellow mist as it bathes you in that sea of calm. and go deeper.

Picture yourself, now, on a mist of green - a soft green color of lime. As you breathe in the soft green mist, the entire area of your chest and particularly your heart relax more deeply than you've ever relaxed before. With the green mist you open your heart and your life to even greater love. Because your chest and your heart vibrate to the color green, you feel even more filled with peace and love. Feel the soothing sensation drifting all around you. Green is the color of Spring and birth and the earth gives forth life in the Spring. and so, your body gives forth new beginnings. Filled with the energy of a calm and loving heart. free your body to blend in with perfect harmony with green. and find yourself in harmony with nature. Feel your body become even more limp. so safe and so comfortable. Feel the green mist surrounding your body like a soft shawl.

Now picture yourself on a mist of grayish blue - the color of blueberry. And feel your throat and neck relax. The throat and neck vibrate to the color of blue. so breathe in the blue mist and feel all the tension in the area of the neck and the throat melting away. Your body is at peace as the blue mist calms and soothes it. Your mind and your muscles continue to align in perfect harmony with nature. Feel a wonderful sense of peace envelop every cell, every muscle. and feel it quiet and calm your thoughts.

Now see beneath you a beautiful mist of soft violet and pink. A soft combination that puts your mind at ease. because the mind vibrates to the color of violet. Sense the gentle confident thoughts that begin to fill your mind as the mist of violet helps you to trust and totally release all doubts. Your mind is filled with confidence and calm. All of nature is in tune with violet and you are in tune with nature as you fill your mind with a sense of joy and anticipation. Go deeper now into ultimate relaxation as you turn your mind and

body over to your inner essence. Trusting your mind and body. Trusting that they will play out the design of nature.

And now, working from a perfect level of relaxation, see yourself on a marvelous mist of white. combining all the colors of the rainbow. surrounding you with peace. Sense the feelings of confidence that are developing day by day as you embrace the knowledge that birthing is a natural process of your mind and body. working together with your spirit. Become filled with the white light. And now, your mind, your body and your baby will all be working in complete natural harmony. Let that glow of white permeate every part of you while you continue to grow in confidence that this will indeed be a comfortable, easy birth. Your natural birthing instinct tells you that you will bring your baby into the world in a peaceful, relaxed manner that mirrors nature.

Natural birth videos

<http://www.hypnobirthing-online.com/videos.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehHMkLO_XAE

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UnpKBIJuPHM>