

Three Types of Births: Which is Yours?

Every birth is unique: it's a one-off, can't be duplicated, and can never be redone. We can talk about the experience in a short-form Birth Story. We can also imagine redoing it, because our human mind can imagine doing past things again, and even imagine the future. However, what actually happened is what happened, just that one time, and will never happen again to ourselves or others.

Exercise: Thinking

As you read these three Birth Stories below:

- How does each make you feel?
- Which one do you want?
- What are you willing to do to get what you want?

The Positive Birth Story (Mother's Viewpoint)

"I started to have contractions about 3pm while out shopping. I just kept doing what I was doing because the contractions were just a little painful. I called my husband at work but told him he didn't need to rush back; I was fine. The contractions picked up about 9pm. My husband rubbed my back because I was having such bad back pains. It really helped. I called the hospital, but they told me to wait until my contractions were one minute long and five minutes apart.

"We went to hospital about 2am. The midwife wanted to do an internal. I hadn't wanted that in our Birth Plan, but she said she had to check. It was quite uncomfortable, but she tried to be gentle. Shortly afterwards, my water broke. It was really hard to stay on top of the contractions, and I thought about whether I wanted some pain relief. The midwife said I was too far along to have an epidural, and I decided not to use any gas either. With the help of my husband, I think I

really managed the contractions well, and the midwife on duty was terrific. I really tried to stay very focused. I got really tired, so I used the minute or two between contractions to rest. My husband would help me breathe as soon as the contractions started.

“I began to push about 9am, but I just couldn’t get comfortable. But the midwife and my husband helped me to change into a better position. That burning ring of fire women talk about feeling when pushing is really accurate, and it was so tempting to just try to suck the baby back up, but the urge to bear down was unstoppable. I pushed SO hard. Our baby was born an hour and a half later. I tore a little bit but only needed a few stitches. I was sore for a few days but healed well. What a wonderful experience. I’m really proud of how I handled it.”

The Negative Birth Story (Mother’s Viewpoint)

“My contractions started at 3pm when I was shopping. I rushed home to get ready, call my husband, and get to the hospital. The contractions were already beginning to hurt, and I just tensed up. My husband came home from work right away, but he was useless. I wanted him to rub my back, because the back labor was really intense, but I hated how he touched me.

“I wanted to go to the hospital right away, but they told me to wait until my contractions were one minute long and five minutes apart. They just kept getting worse and worse. I couldn’t cope, and my husband didn’t have a clue. I just wanted something for the pain. By 9pm, the contractions were terrible, and I was losing it. We called the hospital again, but they didn’t want us to come until labor was established. It was established, as far as I could tell. It was really getting very painful.

“I couldn’t rest. My husband didn’t have a clue how to help, so he went to bed and told me to wake him. I tried walking, but the contractions came faster, and when I sat down to rest the pain was worse. I felt nauseous and had loose bowels.

“Finally, we went to hospital at 2am. By then I was frantic from the incredible pain. I begged for something. The midwife told me she had to do an internal to

check how far along I was. It was really rough and hurt. I hated it and freaked out. She told me it was too late to have an epidural, but she gave me some gas. Shortly after, my water bag broke, and the contractions got even worse and closer together. She kept telling me to calm down, but the back pains were so intense how could I calm down? It was a nightmare. I thought I was going to die. I felt so out of control.

“The gas didn’t do much, really. I was so tired. I’d fall asleep between contractions and wake up with one in full swing and frightened. I sucked every bottle of gas dry. The midwife told my husband to rub my back, but I hated it and kept flicking his hand away.

“I began to push about 7am but couldn’t get comfortable. Everyone kept telling me what to do and I hated that. That burning ring of fire was horrible. I kept tensing up, and the doctor and midwives kept telling me not to. After two hours, our baby hadn’t been born, so they told me they had to do an episiotomy [cut] and use vacuum extraction. I didn’t give a damn at that point; I just wanted it over with.

“After the birth, they wanted me to hold him, but I wasn’t really interested but too ashamed to say anything. I was so relieved it was over. What a horrible experience. I had lots of stitches. I was sore for weeks. I was such a wimp. My husband was useless and there won’t be a next time.”

Pink Kit birth (Mother's Viewpoint)

“During the last few months of pregnancy, my husband and I worked through The Pink Kit Package. We learned so many skills and how to prepare my body for birth. In other books and our childbirth class, we learned what was going to happen, about our choices and what to expect. We were taught a little bit about breathing and relaxation, but nothing like our Pink Kit skills.

“We learned how to work together as a team. Some of the areas of skills we learned were how I could manage the pain, create space in my pelvis for our baby to come through, how to work through each phase of every contraction, how to relax inside my pelvis and develop good breathing patterns. We even learned how to prepare my birth canal properly. That felt weird at first, but we understood the importance, and afterwards, boy was we glad we had done it. My husband could feel and do almost all the skills, so I knew he was prepared. That gave me heaps of confidence.

“My contractions started at 3pm when I was shopping. For weeks, I had been practicing my breathing, relaxation, and staying-open skills while going about my life. I practiced the Pelvic Clock while driving to work; in fact, just about all the time! The Directed Breathing was a great skill to use to reduce all stresses that came up. My husband even used it when he took a long bike ride and got tired, and then when he got his rather painful tattoo.

“We went through everything in the Pink Kit Package until we felt confident. Our birth was like preparing for the Olympics, and we had a great time doing it. The most amazing thing we discovered is how similar our bodies really are. And we wrote down the skills in short form that we took to hospital.

“Anyway, I knew I had to use these early contractions to coordinate my skills and learn how to use them now that labor was really happening. My husband was at work. and I talked to him on the phone. He reminded me to really begin to put the skills in place. It was terrific that he knew exactly what I was doing and needed to do. We were so excited. All our practice would reveal itself.

“When he came home from work, we began to come together as a team. I had back labor right away, but Kate’s Cat really helped. I also worked in between every contraction with The Pelvic Clock and, of course, my Directed Breathing, bringing those two together and expanding inside my pelvis. It was so simple to work together. He could also use the Deep Relaxing Touch to remind me where to relax inside my pelvis. It was terrific. Although the back pain was annoying, I could cope. When I forgot to use the Pelvic Clock, then the pain increased.

“We called the hospital; they told me to wait until my contractions were one minute long and five minutes apart. We loved the time we had at home. We were so relaxed, excited, and everything felt so comfortable.

“We went to hospital about 2am when my contractions were five minutes apart and one minute long. They were getting pretty intense. But this just brought us closer together, working minute by minute with one or more of our skills. We totally understood the 5 Phases and I could even tell whether a contraction was effective or not. We tried a number of positions, and some would lessen the contractions so I became aware of how to keep my labor progressive. That was so neat.

“The midwife did an internal that I hadn’t wanted on our Birth Plan, but she said she had to check me— hospital rules. We were prepared for changes like this. During the vaginal exam, we didn’t miss a beat; we just used the Directed Breathing, Staying Open, and this was the first experience to the effectiveness of the Internal Work. She told me I was too advanced to have an epidural (which I didn’t feel I needed at all), asked if I wanted any pain relief like gas, but we felt we were coping really well.

“My water broke shortly afterwards. My husband and I just worked more closely through every phase of each contraction and the rest period using one or more of our skills. He was sensational. He used my body language, facial expressions and how my breath sounded to know when I was coping myself or getting a bit carried

away by the pain. And yes, it was painful. I'm not certain the skills took the pain away, but I certainly could manage it with the skills. It wasn't easy.

"The midwives on duty and our doctor kept complimenting us on how well we were working together.

"The back labor was really intense, and, sure, it was tempting to get into positions that made the pain less, but I knew if I did that the labor would slow down, probably be longer, AND that I'd no longer be working with my baby's efforts to come out. We did a few Hip Lifts that really helped. My husband periodically reminded me to do Kate's Cat. That really helped momentarily to ease the intense back pain, and I could feel the back pain shifting as my baby moved down, so we both knew our baby was moving down more. That was encouraging to all the work we were doing.

"Then we chose to try the Sacral Maneuver, and that was great.

"I commented to myself that I had to use all my willpower and determination to continue with my skills and really work with the labor. It was tempting to just lose it, but my husband wouldn't let me. With his Pink Kit skills he immediately helped me stay focused and on top of everything.

"I even felt comfortable to check myself to feel for change when the pains intensified and my husband also checked me. It was so thrilling for him to feel the changes inside and feel our baby coming down more.

"I began to push around 7am. It took me a few contractions to find the position that worked best for our baby. I could feel him moving down. I loved this part of labor. My back pain was gone and pushing was so satisfying. My husband could hear the effectiveness of each pushing contraction and gave me feedback.

"Because of the internal work, I opened easily without much of that burning ring of fire I had been warned about. Our baby was born half an hour later, so easily it was amazing! The birth was great. My husband was terrific. We're so proud of ourselves. All the midwives and our doctor told us we'd be the talk of the ward for weeks, and they wish more families would come prepared. I recovered so quickly.

My husband couldn't shut up about the birth and it's just brought us so much closer."

Yes, Pink Kit stories can go on and on. But women are so keen to tell them!

What Do We Hear In These Stories?

Think about these stories. What other stories have you heard? Or have you given birth and have your own story? Think about the story now so it's in your mind. You'll hear these three elements or remember them from your own experience.

The Timeframe

"I went into labor at 6pm; my water broke at 11pm."

"I pushed for two hours and gave birth at 3am."

"My labor lasted nine hours."

What "they" did or didn't do to me

"I wanted a natural birth but my doctor [they] pressured me to have a Caesarean because my baby was breech. I'm so angry."

"I couldn't have done it without my midwife/doctor/husband/doula."

"I had a rough internal done by [someone]."

The Physical Aspects

"I had terrible back labor."

"I pushed for two hours without any progress."

"I vomited all throughout labor."

"I only had cramps throughout the birth. Childbirth was nothing like I was led to believe."

"My tailbone is still sore years later."

Of course, these three elements come together to create a fuller Birth Story. You heard them in the three stories above. Go back and read them again now, thinking about these elements of each story. Curiously, the fourth Element, **"What I did for myself and how my husband/partner helped me,"** is usually absent in Birth Stories:

Skills sometimes heard

“I learned from my first birth that I had to relax more.”

“When a contraction came, I envisioned a wave.”

“I really focused on my breathing.”

The fourth element is **your** skills coming into play (and your partner’s skills at helping you do the work of birth). *This* is the element that lets you be the author of your story – not just a character in a story written by somebody else.

The Key to Going Into Labor with Calm Confidence

The key you need to go into labor feeling relaxed and confident is developing birth skills before your labor ever begins.

Here’s a checklist of what you should do to develop skills and feel informed:

- **Study what happens physically to the body during labor.**
- **Discover your own unique structure (hint: your body may not be just like your best friend’s body – women are built differently and what speeds your labor up may be different than hers)**
- **Learn how labor usually progresses**
- **Find out how to deal with a stalled labor**
- **Prepare techniques for dealing with pain or being overwhelmed**
- **Review these techniques regularly – with your partner and on your own as you feel the need**

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- **Do relaxation practice and Internal Work to get your body ready to open easily**
- **Dedicate a few minutes a day to the above. It will be well worth it!**

Think back to the three stories you read. So many women find that they're the woman in the second story – and they can't figure out exactly how the nightmare began. Women remember their birth stories for decades, and researchers have found they impact them for decades. An empowering birth gives you and your baby the right start.

As you read in the third story, a birth can be empowering even with interventions (like the internal exam given), and even when there is pain. We don't have babies to get comfortable! But even if it's hard, even if it hurts, giving birth to your baby can be one of the most triumphant experiences of your life.

You have to give birth – there's no other way out of this pregnancy thing! You get to choose a lot of things: how to care for yourself during pregnancy, where to give birth, how to give birth (vaginally, with pain relief, planned cesarean, no medications, etc.) , even what to name your baby.

Go ahead and consciously choose to prepare yourself for a great birth experience. You can choose to be prepared to deal with whatever your unique birth brings. You may have a lightning fast, almost overwhelming labor (like I had). You may have a slow labor that takes work to pick up and get moving. You may have a simple, uncomplicated labor that you deal with just fine. Or you may have a labor where you need to use your skills and have your partner using skills the entire time.

The point is, you just don't know exactly what your baby's birthday will bring. But you **can** go into labor informed, relaxed, and confident that you have the skills to help your little one out and into your arms.

Start today – build skills to go into labor relaxed, informed, and as ready as you possibly can be!

Do you need more help getting ready? Healthy pregnancy and enjoyable childbirth can take work, but you'll discover more about how you can help yourself and your baby throughout this email series.

There are also resources that can help you. I offer convenient online classes for moms-to-be, with live, weekly calls with me. You get 8 weeks packed full of info on having a great pregnancy and a safe, satisfying birth. [Click here to get more info on this personalized program.](#)

The Pink Kit is a great childbirth prep resource that teaches real skills and compliments any class:

[Click here to read more about the Pink Kit](#), the childbirth skills mentioned in this report. You can use it in the comfort of your own home – discover the skills at your own pace and review them anytime. Go ahead, make labor and delivery so much easier than you were expecting – the Pink Kit will give you the skills to do it!