

Dylan's Birth

To tell Dylan's birth Story I have to tell you a brief background of his brother, Ian's birth. With Ian I took Lamaze, used a Doctor, and birthed at a hospital. The outcome was a horrible drugged experience and a very sick baby.

The second time around I decided there must be a better way to do this, and started reading. My research lead me to the following conclusion: the drugs I received (pushed on me) and the speed at which they cut the cord may very well have caused my eldest sons health problems; I wanted a midwife; and I wanted to take Bradley classes instead of Lamaze this time.

I found a great midwife in our area by the name of Pat Deibel, CNM, and grappled with the decision of Home vs. Hospital birth. Fear won. I choose the hospital (although next time I would birth at home).

I remember sitting in childbirth classes hearing descriptions of drugged births and how the women did not find the drugs helped and saying to myself "that was me!".

I couldn't believe that if people knew this information, along with the fact that the drugs could indeed hurt the baby (as they did mine) then why wasn't this common knowledge? We did a lot of research, created a birth plan and decided that we wanted a totally natural birth: no intervention, no electronic Fetal Monitor, no vaginal exams, and no drugs.

About 12:30 A.M. August 4th I woke up with some mild contractions. I tried to sleep through them, but around 2:30 A.M. I finally realized I couldn't. I let my husband sleep, as I knew I would need him later. I got up, was hungry, had a peanut butter and honey sandwich, and took a shower. This took me until about 5:00 A.M., when the contractions were strong enough that I needed to lie down and try to relax. At 5:30 I woke my husband because I needed his help relaxing. After about 30 min. I decided it was time to call the midwife. I was doing fine, but it was clear to me that this was moving along quickly, and I might need to get to the hospital soon. After I spoke to the midwife she agreed that we should get to the hospital.

We left at 6 AM, picked up our secondary Labor Assistant (my Bradley teacher, Mary Joan) on the way. She handed me a water bottle (thank goodness! I forgot mine), and I relaxed through the contractions. we arrived at the hospital at 6:45 AM.

When I got to the LDR room I went into the bathroom to use the toilet, but couldn't. Meanwhile the head nurse kept asking questions, and I ignored her. Then she wanted to hook me up for a 2 min. test strip, but I said "NO!". This angered her.

I could have cared less though, as I was in transition (which I didn't realize, but everyone else did). She's lucky that's all I said! At this point I wanted to make my nest, which I did, lying on my side and doing the relaxation exercises I had been taught, while my husband and doula massaged me, fed me water, and verbally encouraged me.

I remember thinking I have to get out of the way of my uterus and let it do its job. I did this by mentally separating top and bottom parts of my body from the middle, and imagining my abdomen floating out in front of me. This worked well, until the camel-back contractions. I was burping too, and Mary Joan said "Oh Good, a burp". I thought to myself "oh, burps. Burps may mean transition. Oh! Transition! Good, that means it's the beginning of the end" I handled the contractions just fine with the relaxation techniques until just before I felt the urge to push. I started to make these moaning/vocalizing/singing kind of noises, and Mary Joan said " Oh, she's singing". I wasn't really singing, but it felt so good to make those noises. Having Mary Joan make that statement seemed to say it was OK for me to make those noises. Since it helped a lot to vocalize on the exhale of my breaths I made lots of noise.

Right about this time I mentally decided that I couldn't take any more of this, and I hoped it would be over soon. Two contractions later I felt the urge to push, just like a huge bowel movement. I told the midwife I wanted to push, and she did a vaginal exam for the first time. I was completely dilated, and the baby was at a plus 4 station. She said go ahead and push.

I had wanted to squat to push the baby out, but the sensations were so overwhelming I couldn't move. I was on my side, and just pulled my knees back and pushed instinctively like my body was telling me to. It worked well, because in 15 min. the head was out. While we waited for the next contraction Fred said "He's as blue as a smurf and he's making funny faces!". I wish I could have seen it but there wasn't a mirror, and no one took pictures. With the next contraction I pushed out the rest of his body, and they immediately put him on my stomach. I pulled him up to my breast, they covered him with a blanket, and we proceeded to get acquainted. He was perfect! His eyes were open, his color was good (he pinked up so quickly! His brother was blue for a long time!), and he was looking right at his parents. I tried to nurse him, but he really wasn't interested in doing more than nuzzling. At this point I remember the midwife and Fred discussing the cord. She insisted it had stopped pulsing, and he said it hadn't. He said " here, feel" and she did, and said "oh, You're right". They waited until the cord had stopped pulsing before Fred cut it.

Then I felt the midwife pulling on the cord to see if the placenta was detaching. I said "You're pulling on the cord. Why are you pulling on the cord? don't do that!". She said she had to, and the placenta came out soon after that. Unfortunately, I started to bleed heavily, and required a shot of Pitocin. I hated having them massage and push clots out of my uterus, as it really hurt. Fred was holding Dylan all this time, and he was doing great. I wasn't doing so great, as I was hemorrhaging. Eventually they got it under control, and I was ok.

Although I had planned to leave after 6 - 8 hrs. I had to stay one night until my hemocrit was back to normal. All in all it was a wonderful healing birth experience, and Dylan is a healthy 19 year old now.

The moral of the story is that I was so impressed with how well that the relaxation techniques worked, and how valuable the education I received from the classes was, that I decided to teach the stuff. I've been teaching the Bradley Method(r) of natural Childbirth for the last 17 years, with some amazing results.

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