

Hypnobirthing®

Peter Jackson - Midwife

HypnoBirthing® is as much as philosophy as it is a technique. It is a rewarding, relaxing, stress-free method of birthing that is based on the belief that when a mother is properly prepared for birthing physically, mentally, and spiritually, she can experience the joy of birthing her baby in an easier, more comfortable manner. The method is based on the belief that severe discomfort does not need to be a natural accompaniment of labour.

The aim of the programme is to build confidence in the mother and for her to have confidence in her own ability to birth her baby. The philosophy of the Hypnobirthing® programme is to educate the mother about the wonders of her body, to eliminate fear, as well as teach her the skills to work with the birthing process rather than fight against it. In many cases it is fear that undermines the mothers confidence in herself. One of the tasks of the Hypnobirthing® practitioner is to help the mother change her belief that the experience of childbirth is fearful and to help her tap into her own deep resources to develop confidence in herself, to dismantle the Fear - Tension - Pain Syndrome. The work is about “changing old beliefs, learning new meanings.” In my experience, many mothers need to be freed of the negative images of birth, which they receive through the media, stories from mothers, grandmothers and friends, to understand and experience the belief that birth can be natural and beautiful.

In the HypnoBirthing® classes, the couples are helped to understand that previous negative knowledge and experiences have a detrimental influence on the present birthing experience. This birth can be different!

The mother is introduced to techniques of controlled breathing and relaxation as keys to her success. The scene is also set for deepening techniques through visualizations and imagery. The important issue of pre and postnatal bonding and welcoming their baby is also covered.

The HypnoBirthing® Programme was developed by Marie Mongan in 1989, a teacher and counsellor, who through her own experience of childbirth knew there was a better way than that proposed by the hospitals of the USA in the 1950's.

The HypnoBirthing® programme is built on the work of Grantly Dick Read (1890 - 1959) a physician who, through his work in obstetrics and his book "Childbirth without Fear", returned to women the gift of their right to truly natural childbirth.

After thirty-five years of research and clinical practice, Read reflected. “So wonderful do the revelations of science appear that the idea of introducing simplicity as a means of unearthing the even greater revelation of nature is not well received.” We can say that since Read wrote this child birth in the western world has become even more a medical procedure.

The course of Read's life was changed by a comment made to him by a birthing mother while attending her birth in Whitechapel in 1913. During the second stage of labour, Read tried to offer the mother chloroform to ease her pain She resented the suggestion and pushed the mask away. Read had the presence of mind to step back

and just watch. He writes of the incident “As I was about to leave sometime later, I asked her why it was that she would not use the mask She did not answer at once but looked out the window through which was bursting the first light of dawn and then shyly she turned to me and said “It didn’t hurt. It wasn’t meant to was it doctor?”

I have been a registered nurse for the past 31 years and a midwife at a small county hospital for 14 of those years. I have always been interested in unravelling the question of why so many births seem to be negative and painful. I had been using hypnotherapy for a number of years in the area of childbirth when seven years ago I had the opportunity to visit the United States. While there on holiday, I decided I might as well expand my knowledge in this area. I more or less fell upon a programme called HypnoBirthing® for pregnant women and their partners. I successfully completed the course and came home a qualified HypnoBirthing® practitioner. I now have a flourishing practice as well as being employed as a midwife at the hospital. I have been so impressed by the results of the HypnoBirthing® programme that I wish to see this programme used throughout Australia. As a result I have undertaken the HypnoBirthing® Practitioner Training course and am now the sole practitioner trainer in Australia, qualified to teach new practitioners.

A recent story of a mother who attended HypnoBirthing® classes comes to mind. Her first birth was 30 hours of traumatic endurance. She was so discouraged when she first consulted me that in her opening remarks she said “ I am going to book myself in for a Caesarean. I cannot go through an experience like that again.”

By the time she had completed the HypnoBirthing® classes there was a definite change in her belief. She learnt that there was a better way. The birth of her baby recently (in her words) is as follows. ‘The birth of my precious baby Daniel was one of the most beautiful and empowering experiences I have yet known.’

Peter Jackson - Midwife
Hypnobirthing® Practitioner & Trainer
Email: pjackson@acenet.com.au
Website: www.naturalbirthisaustralia.com