



Lliven MacRae

LIFE COACHING & HYPNOBIRTHING

HOW TO HAVE AN EMPOWERED BIRTH

A book to support you to achieve an empowered birth experience

B I R T H W I T H O U T F E A R



INTRODUCTION

#EMPOWEREDBIRTH

I've written this short e-book to start sharing with you some of the steps you can take in order to have an empowered birth that every woman deserves. Before I start, I want to say - I'm not here to tell you what to do during your pregnancy and birth - this is the whole point of the book. The choice is **YOURS**. The purpose of this book is to plant the seed for you to start thinking, to **really consider** what kind of birth experience you want to have.

How to have an empowered birth?

I'm sharing in this e-book some of the steps you can take now to prepare for your birth. Disclaimer alert! Unfortunately, reading this book is not going to guarantee that you will have the perfect birth you have dreamed of. Unfortunately, life can throw us a 'curve ball' and your birth can take a different path than what you were hoping for. The purpose of this book is to help you, no matter what happens in your birth journey, to have an empowered experience. You will be informed and be in control of your choices. We have rights and choices and we can give or refuse consent during pregnancy and labour in any circumstance.

Our birth experience is SO important. It can affect the emotional and physical health of you and your baby for the rest of your life. A little dramatic, I hear you say, but it's true. We should not underestimate the fact that childbirth affects our emotional as well as physical health. Being a mother is hard enough without having a shit start and feeling like you didn't have a positive birth experience.



SO, WHAT CAN WE DO TO ENABLE AN EMPOWERED BIRTH?

I want to focus on only 3 things in this e-book. There is so much more to discuss (more information on the hypnobirthing course) but this is a good start.

1
CHOICE

2
CONFIDENCE

3
MINDSET



CHOICE

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When we step into a hospital, sometimes we completely forget that we are intelligent, strong women who can make decisions. We look to the midwives, nurses and doctors to make decisions for us. To make choices. We tend to give all our control over to the maternity staff to do what they think is best. We also forget about our rights.

I'm not saying for a SECOND that the hospital staff aren't there to help and support you. Of course, they are incredible people who save lives every day! What I'm saying is that every woman is an individual and something that works 'generally' for 'most' may not necessarily be the right thing for you. So it is very important to weigh up your options to see what choices are best for you.



SO - WHAT KIND OF CHOICES DO WE HAVE?

“I'm not allowed... / I have to...”

No one has the right to tell you that you are not allowed to do something or that you have to do something during pregnancy or childbirth. Recommendations are what is offered to you, and it is important that this is communicated to you.

Some of you have possibly been led to think that you have no choice because you are 'high risk' or over your due date or the baby is big/small and so on. You have a right to choose and make decisions. EVERY TIME. It is sometimes difficult to make choices/ informed decisions. So, how do we make these decisions?

1) you need to know what your options are 2) do your research.

A 'due date' does not mean that this WILL be the day you give birth to your baby. It is called an 'estimated due date' for good reason. It is an educated good guess. No one can say EXACTLY the day you will give birth to your child (unless you are having an elective c-section). This can cause a high number of unnecessary inductions (in some cases).

So let's use induction as an example of a situation where YOU can make an informed decision.



How to make an informed decision?

Ask questions!



YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO HAVE
TIME TO THINK AND ASK
QUESTIONS:

- Is there an emergency?
- Am I and the baby safe?
- What is the reason for offering induction?
- Are there any alternatives to the induction process?
- What are the risks of going over my due date?
- Do I have to make this decision now?

CHOICE = EMPOWERED BIRTH

In a case where there is an emergency, we still have the right to make decisions. This is where making a birth preferences document helps. Since you have already thought about what your wishes would be in an emergency and written this on your document, this gives you an element of control. I have a free document on my website where you can see an example of a birth preferences document and a template so you can fill in your own. We have so many options and choices to make during pregnancy and birth. It is very important that we ask the questions in order to make an informed choice. Although having a c-section may not be your 'Plan A', but by discussing this eventuality beforehand and making notes of your wishes in this case, you can still have an empowered birth, where you have made the decisions on YOUR journey.

We have so many options and choices to make during pregnancy and birth. It is very important that we ask the questions in order to make an informed choice. No one can choose exactly which way their baby will be born BUT we can make decisions. We can CHOOSE. Choose our place of birth, who is with us, wishes, atmosphere, music, having or not having a 'sweep', having or not having vaginal examinations etc. The list is endless. By making decisions in advance and pausing to think and ask questions during birth, you will feel like you have more control. Even if your birth goes off the track you were hoping for, please remember, YOU are the mother and YOU have the right to choose. Choice = empowered birth.





“For some reason, 21st century woman who are happy to stand up for their rights in the boardroom and in the bedroom, are still taking childbirth lying down”

Milli Hill, 'The Positive Birth Book'

**O W N E R S H I P O F Y O U R
B I R T H**



CONFIDENCE

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How do we get confidence in ourselves when we may not have any experience of birth or feel like a person with no confidence at all?



What is confidence? It comes from the Latin word 'Fidere' which means 'to trust', so having self-confidence means trusting yourself.

"OK, I want to be confident so I need to **trust myself**. How do I do that?"

In small ways, a small way every day like NOT breaking a promise you make to yourself. Small promises like:

"**Promise**, I'm going to look after myself better. **Promise**, I won't worry about that issue any more."



But what we tend to do is keep our promises to everyone else and break promises we make to ourselves. How can you have faith in yourself if you keep letting yourself down? If your best friend PROMISES a cup of coffee with you every Tuesday night and they NEVER turn up, you won't have a lot of confidence in your friend, will you? As you keep these little promises to yourself, you build trust and confidence in yourself. You become more confident in your ability because you take positive steps to keep these promises, promises that make you feel better and make you feel GREAT that you are winning, and moving forward in the right direction. You can see and feel the progress in yourself and therefore feel more confident.



SELF-CONFIDENCE

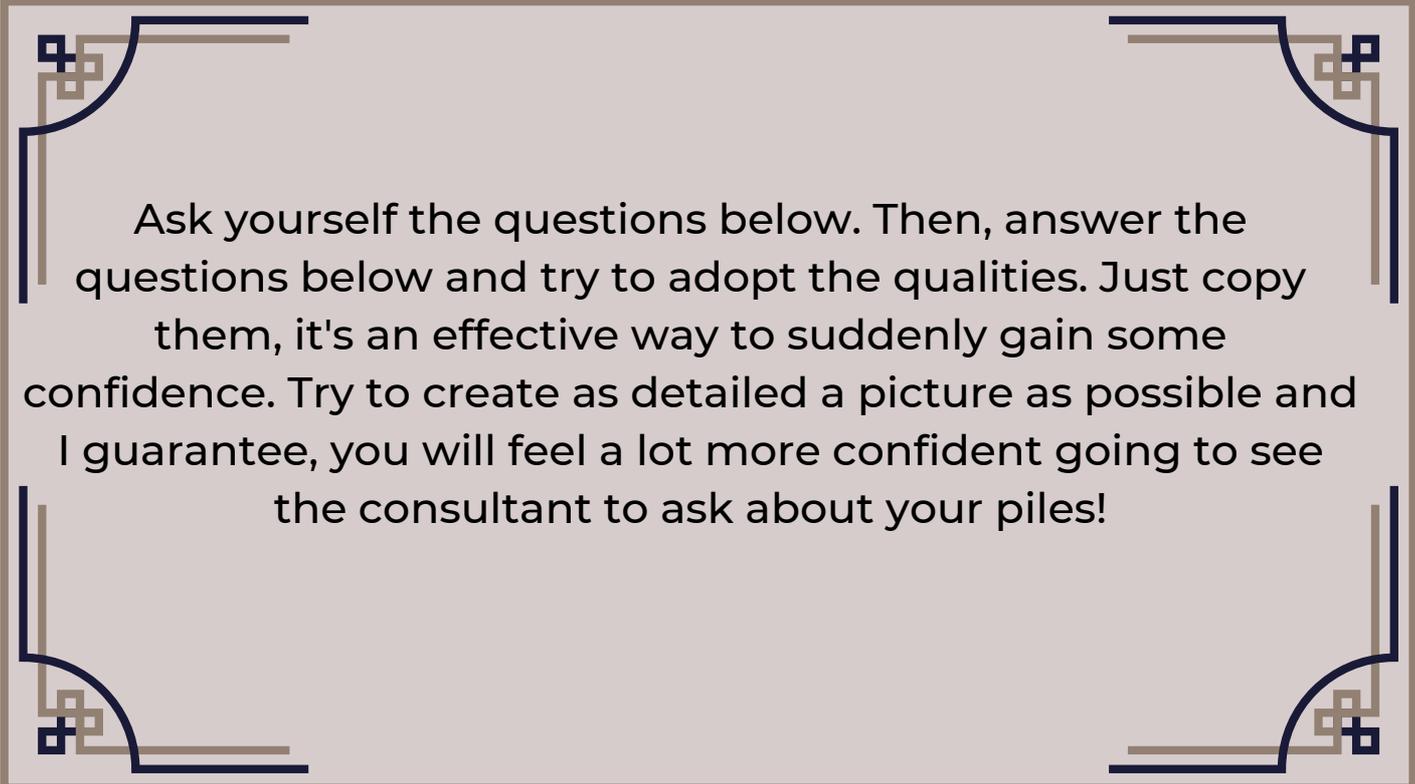
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Sometimes you need a little boost of self-confidence - quickly. Maybe you're sitting outside a consultant's office at the hospital and you know you have questions to ask but feel shy and lack confidence. If you don't have the confidence to ask questions it's very difficult to make decisions without all the information so it's important to build self-confidence.

So, how to do this quickly? You have to think back and remember a time when you felt extremely confident.

It could be ANYTHING. When you ace'd that test, when you gave that great presentation at work, when you scored a try in a rugby game... any time where you have felt confident. Don't fall into the trap of saying you've never felt confident. Think hard. It could even be a time when you were a child



Ask yourself the questions below. Then, answer the questions below and try to adopt the qualities. Just copy them, it's an effective way to suddenly gain some confidence. Try to create as detailed a picture as possible and I guarantee, you will feel a lot more confident going to see the consultant to ask about your piles!

1
AS THIS CONFIDENT
VERSION OF MYSELF
*How does my voice
sound*



2
AS THIS CONFIDENT
VERSION OF MYSELF
*What am I telling
myself?*

3
AS THIS CONFIDENT
VERSION OF MYSELF
*How is my posture?
How am I
sitting/standing?*



4
AS THIS CONFIDENT
VERSION OF MYSELF
*What am I thinking
about*

NATURAL CONFIDENCE

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There is also another type of confidence which is natural confidence.

Natural confidence isn't something that happens overnight, it's something you have to work on. Natural confidence comes with being competent - practicing and becoming good at something.

Simply put, what this means is that the more you practice something, the better you become, the more confidence you gain and the cycle continues.

“HOOOOOLD ON, I CAN'T EXACTLY PRACTICE GIVING BIRTH?!!”

No, exactly, but what you CAN do is learn about birth, your body and mind, and what happens during birth. Maybe you know the basics (It went in so it must come out was what we all I knew with my first baby!) But as the saying goes, 'knowledge is power'. The more you learn and understand about your body the more confidence you will have. You will have natural confidence and self-confidence because you would promise yourself to learn more about your body, your mind and your birth and keep this promise to yourself. How can you learn more about birth? Do the hypnobirthing course with me and read! There are so many incredible books about birth available (list on the free resources tab on my website)



NATURAL CONFIDENCE

Helen MacKinnon

LIFE COACHING & HYPNOBIRTHING

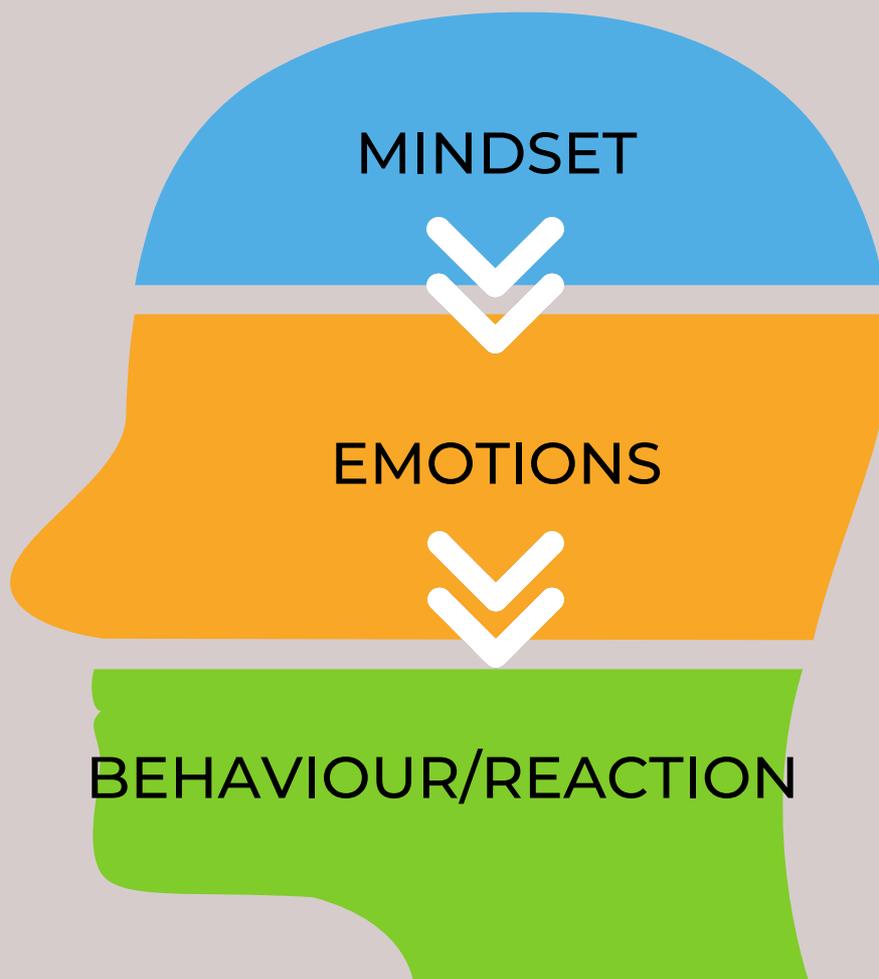


MINDSET

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Mindset influences our thoughts, feelings and behavior in every situation. So when preparing for your birth it is important to work on having a positive mindset. This is going to be key for having an empowered birth and will be beneficial in the journey into Motherhood. It is important to remember that our thoughts influence the way we feel and the way we feel influences our behavior and how our body reacts.



MINDSET > EMOTION > REACTION

During the hypnobirthing course I discuss fear during childbirth and how feeling scared can affect your body. The link between the mind and body is integral and this must be remembered.

So how do we change or work on our mindset? Changing our mindset is not easy, especially if all the information we have seen/heard about birth is negative. Firstly, you must start filling your mind with positive birth stories (some are available on the free resources tab on the website) and try not to listen to the horror stories.

There are loads of videos on you tube that show positive births, whether it's at a hospital, home or an elective c section. It is worth noting that it does NOT matter how you choose to birth your baby, a positive mindset is beneficial and even more helpful if your delivery takes a different path than expected.

Something else that helps improve mindset is positive birth affirmations. Talking to ourselves. Stay with me, I know it sounds a bit strange but we ALL do this ALL of the time. Quietly in our minds we say things to ourselves eg "I can't do it", "I'm not good enough" "I need to do more" all the time.

We need to change the way we talk to ourselves by using positive birth affirmations Feed your brain with positivity.



If you enroll in my hypnobirthing course we will work on positive birth affirmations together. It is always best when you create your own unique ones as they are more powerful. Here are a few examples:

Positive Birth Affirmations

- I TRUST MY BODY
 - I'M CONFIDENT IN MAKING DECISIONS
 - MY BODY CAN BIRTH MY BABY
 - I'M EXCITED ABOUT BIRTH
-

Are you ready to take these
positive steps towards an
empowered birth?

Do you feel a little lost and
scared about the birth of your
baby?

I'm here to help YOU!



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THE HYPNOBIRTHING COURSE

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The hypnobirthing course IS going to help you have a positive experience and give you and your birth partner that special time to connect with your baby and prepare for the incredible event that is about to happen.

I am very passionate that every woman has the right to have an empowered and positive birth. Supporting women on this journey is very close to my heart. If this e-book has inspired you to take active steps to have an empowered birth, you can contact me directly by emailing Iliwen@hypnobirthingcoach.com or book through my website www.hypnobirthingcoach.com. I am more than happy to discuss and answer any questions you may have. I also offer a free 'discovery session' if you would like to know more about my life coaching work.

“

‘Choose the positive. You have choice, you are the master of your attitude, choose the positive, the constructive. Optimism is faith that leads to success’.

Bruce Lee

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E M P O W E R E D B I R T H