

# Supporting Your Own Birth

You are in control of every decision,  
you know the way

EMILY-CLARE HILL  
HAPPY SOUL MAMA

# Hello



It's important to know that every moment offers a choice; there is not one right way for all. Choosing the right path for you is what's important.

I will help and honour that for you.

Here are my top tips for preparing for your labour, finding comfort in late pregnancy, and getting to know yourself well.

All you do here and now with support, pregnancy, birth, and motherhood.

“

**Positive stories,  
don't just keep  
your oxytocin  
bubble they  
change your  
subconscious to  
believe.**

KNOW YOUR WAY

**LEARN YOURSELF,  
KNOW WHAT  
RELAX'S YOU,  
EMPOWERS YOU  
AND GUIDES YOU**

Learn to trust yourself.

Tune into your instincts and intuition.

Listen inward and feel confident in knowing your own way.



Visualise your baby's birth.

Regularly imagine the moment you meet your baby—feel yourself grounded, strong, and holding them in your arms.

Create your birth space.

Get clear on what helps you feel safest and calmest. Shape your space so it supports you fully.

Honour the rhythm of labour.

Labour moves between effort and ease. Rest whenever you can, and move in the ways that feel right and supportive for your body.

Practice breathing and relaxation.

These tools will support you through pregnancy, birth, and into motherhood—helping you stay centred and connected.

## KNOW HOW

# SUPPORT YOURSELF IN PREGNANCY & PREPARE FOR BIRTH

## THINGS TO DO

- Walk daily (20–30 mins)

Why: Encourages open pelvis & upright posture

- Swim if it's you

Why: Low-impact ease on pelvis

- Prenatal yoga/pilates as serves you

Why: Builds pelvic/core strength

- Sit on a birth ball daily

Why: Frees sacrum & supports baby descent

- Calf stretches daily (1 min/leg)

Why: Maintains pelvic alignment

- Leg swings daily (1 min/leg)

Why: Loosens hip connections

- Foot-rolling with small ball

Why: Stimulates pelvic fascia

- See an osteopath - to figure out any imbalances, now rather than later

- Wear right size bras

Why: Support better postural balance.

## THINGS TO AVOID

- Habitually cross legs

Why: Create imbalance on the surrounding ligaments on the pelvis.

- Sit too long move every 30minutes

Why: For ease and comfort, but to avoid hypertonic pelvic floor.

- Wearing heels

Why: Tilts the pelvis out of alignment and over works certain space of pelvis and uterine ligaments often causing tension.

- Avoid slumping or soft sofas

Why: Promotes better alignment, rounds the back shifting the space from front to back body, not supportive for baby to find their optimal position.

- Stress

Why: we need parasympathetic nervous system to be well regulated, this can improve spontaneous realignment. Essentially rest and digest.

- Avoid constipation

Why: Pushing pressure.

CARE FOR YOURSELF

## R&COMMENDATIONS

My tips for now:

Osteopathy, Chiropractic, Physio - I don't mind which one you choose, but do one. It brings balance and harmony back; it helps us to find any imbalance before it becomes uncomfortable or a bother.

Pregnancy Pillow - It's an investment, but they are great. I love the big one.

Good Sleep - Firm Mattress, this will heal and support all other things when we sleep well.

Good Nutrition - Enjoy taking care of yourself with nutrition-dense meals.

Balance rest & movement: sit on the couch, yes, but also move regularly. Find a prenatal yoga class, walk, try sitting on your birth ball often, and try some of the suggested rest positions for deeper conscious rest.

Get to know yourself, your ways to relax, and your fears and doubts.

Journal and enjoy this time. You will look back fondly, even on the challenges but mostly on the empowered mother you have already started to become.

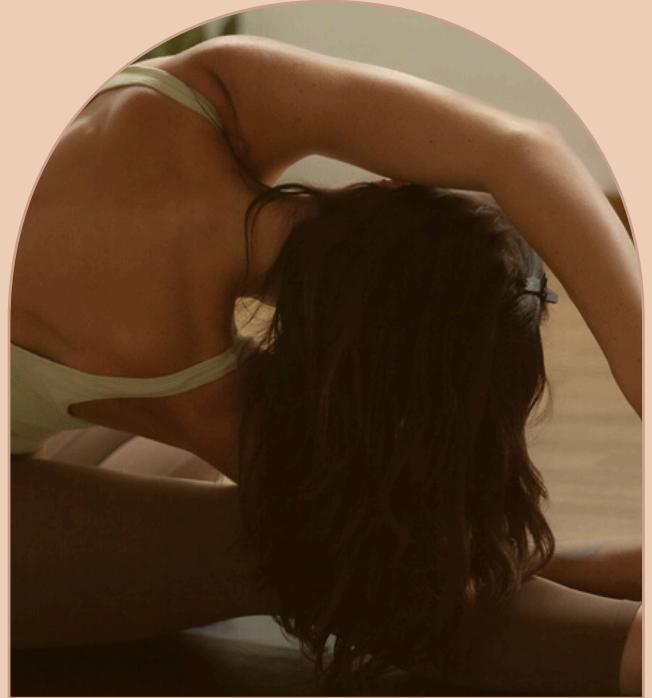
# Birth as journey inwards

TRUST YOU

- Understanding what birth is, what's occurring within your body, physically and hormonally will grant you the power to trust.
- Knowing certain things that may arise will allow you to find more peace in decision making and know that it's always your choice.
- Learning ways to support yourself like how to find a little more comfort and find your calm is your power.
- You will birth your baby no-one else, but knowing the support that surrounds you will create the best environment for you to do this.

GIVE YOURSELF TIME

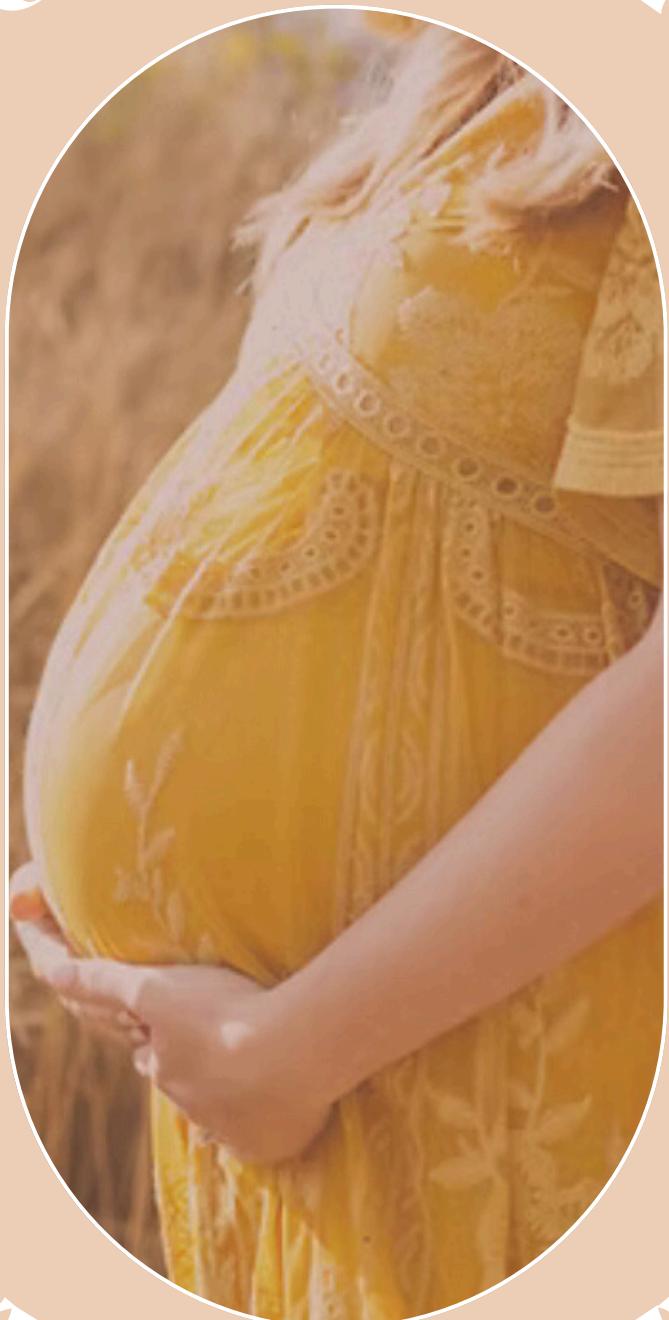
## CARVING OUT TIME FOR YOURSELF DAILY



Set aside \*\*10 to 15 minutes\*\* each day to prioritise your well-being.

- Create Your Birth Plan - Identify your desires, understand what you wish to avoid, and explore your options. Once you have this clarity, set it aside to concentrate on yourself and your birthing experience. Reflect on how you want to labour and what practices empower you.
- Breathe in the Shower - Take a moment to relax and inhale deeply.
- Stretch Your Calves on the Stairs - Incorporate gentle stretches into your routine.
- Massage Your Feet and Calves - Treat yourself to a soothing self-massage.
- Display Affirmations - Surround yourself with positive reminders.
- Engage in Birth Prep Movements - Prepare your body through specific exercises.
- Rest Well - Ensure you are ready and confident for the journey ahead.
- Hypnosis tracks to send you to deep sleep and rest.

LEARN TO RELAX & RELAXING



HYPNOBIRTHING

“  
**Birth Preparation  
supports ease in  
late pregnancy,  
recalibrates the  
pelvis &  
brings space and  
comfort for baby  
to easily move  
down**

**movement space for mini  
movement practices**

# Rebozo Support

PREGNANCY &  
LABOUR

Your muscles and ligaments are deeply interconnected.

An imbalance in one area may affect your pelvis.

The rebozo wrap helps release tension around the hips, gently releasing tension throughout the body., ready for birth

The uterus is a strong muscular organ supported by ligaments.

These accommodate your baby and assist in birth.

Using a rebozo (or long scarf) is a simple, relaxing way to help prepare the body for birth.

Using a rebozo during pregnancy can support, balance, and baby positioning.

## Hip Wrap

- Wrap snugly around hips.
- Tie in front or back for comfort and support.
- As above but with a squeeze (during a contractions)

## Head Massage

- Lie on the floor, your head supported by a small cushion.
- Partner wraps rebozo behind your neck.
- Partner gently holds both ends and lifts to create traction.
- Partner rotates head slowly one side to the other, then returns to center.

### Hip Sifting

- Lie on your back
- Place wrap under hips.
- Partner gently moves hips back and forth to loosen tension.

### Belly Sifting

(Caution: Avoid with anterior placenta or bleeding history)

- Lie back, sit, or kneel.
- Partner lifts belly in the wrap like a hammock.
- Rock side to side or gently back and forth.

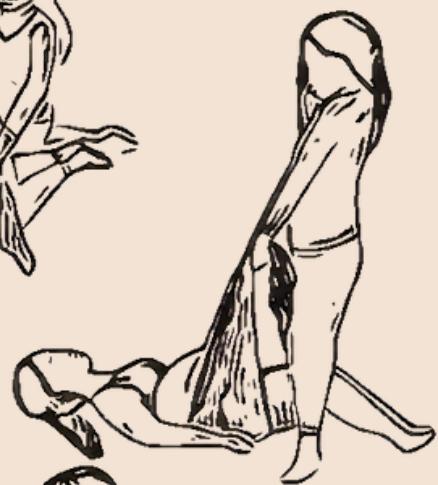
### Buttock Shaking

- Start with the wrap around hips.
- Partner holds ends and gently jiggles your buttocks.
- Partner can move from side to side or up and down.
- Helps release tension.



FEEL THE RELEASE

# Practice all these



All of these serve any time in labour;

- Belly sifting
- Buttock Shaking
- Hip wrap and squeeze

## Squatting Tips

- In labor, squatting increases space at the outlet.
- Knees together increases space at inlet.
- Knees apart increases space at outlet.

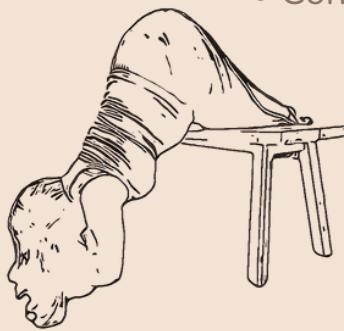
## Squat Support,

- Partner stands behind
- Partner holds ends of wrap around your upper back to support squat.
- Hook rebozo over door handle or somewhere secure
- Wrap around partner's back. You pull gently for support and focus during pushing.

# Ways to move...

## Forward-Leaning Inversion (FLI)

- 30 secs x 1-2 reps
- Straightens ligaments; gives baby more room
- Contraindications: High BP, glaucoma, polyhydramnios,



## Relaxed Squat and Sway

- 10 Breaths each side
- For learning release and creating space



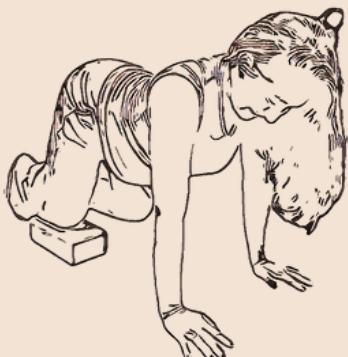
## Asymmetrical Lunge

- 10 /20 breaths
- Opens pelvis unevenly; supports rotation and descent



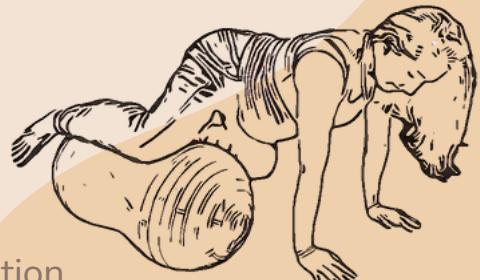
## Cat/Cow One knee raised on a block for asymmetry

- 10 each knee
- Encourages pelvic ligament balance



## Low Lunge, Side Reach

- 10 Breaths each side
- For ease and release



## Fire hydrant

- Roll the knee out 5-10each side
- For opening and recalibration

RECAST WHEN YOU CAN  
WE DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THIS JOURNEY WILL BE



# P&ELVIC FLOOR R&ELEAS&E



BREATHING HERE AND LEARN TO SOFTEN & OPEN

# best ways to rest...



# peanut ball...

Side-lying between knees



Lying half reclined



Side-lying hug



Fire Hydrant



Side-lying between ankles



## WHY A PEANUT BALL?

A peanut ball can support laboring legs, widening the pelvis and potentially helping the baby down the birth canal.

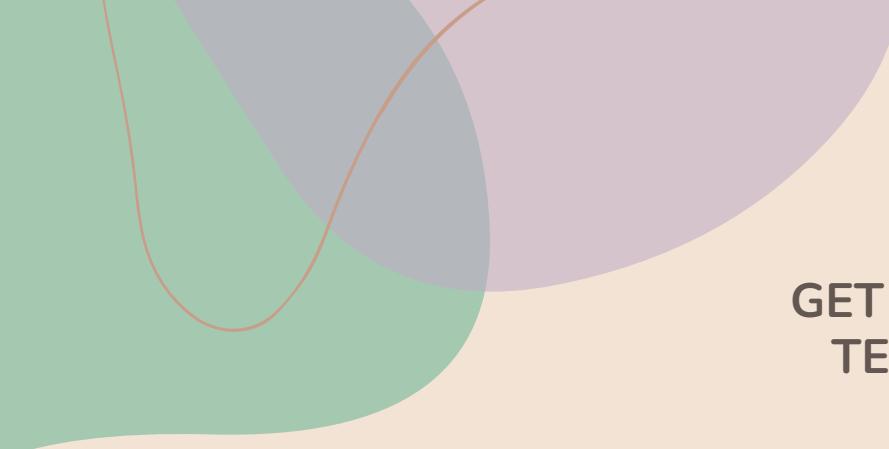
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**Birth is a rite of  
passage; you  
should feel  
empowered and  
supported.**

ONE BREATH AT A TIME



IF IN DOUBT BREATH IN & OUT



## GET OUT OF THE FEAR-TENSION-PAIN CYCLE

# Up Breathing

### How to practice:

- As a contraction begins, breathe in through your nose, gently expanding your ribs and chest.
- Exhale slowly and softly through your mouth, feeling the release move through your body.
- Allow your breath to open and rise, then soften and surrender as it passes.

# Down Breathing

As your body transitions, your breath changes too. During the pushing phase, your breath begins to move downward with each exhale — helping your body and baby work together.

### How to practice:

- Take a deep, calm inhale through your nose.
- As you exhale, imagine your breath moving down through your body — soft, steady, and powerful.
- Keep your jaw, shoulders, and hands relaxed.
- Avoid holding your breath — muscles need oxygen to release and open.
- Feel free to sigh, hmm, groan, ahhhhh
- Each exhale supports your baby's journey earthside. Stay connected, stay soft, and trust your breath to guide you.



KNOW HOW TO RESET IN  
BETWEEN

# Rescue Breath

Between contractions:

- Focus on long, slow exhales. These help calm your nervous system (the parasympathetic response), supporting oxytocin flow and encouraging your natural birthing hormones to work smoothly.
- This breath reminds your body that it is safe, supported, and designed for this process.

# Breathing Together

Partner Support: The Role of a Doula

Breathe together as you lean into one another, finding a slow and steady rhythm. This shared breath will not only create a calming atmosphere but will also support both of you during labor.

**Make some noise, sigh, growl  
ahhhh your way through the  
exhale**

# Fears...what are you afraid of?

This could be what stops, blocks or allows your labour to unfold;

## Exploring Fears and Creating Personal Affirmations

Take a moment to gently acknowledge any fears that may be present for you right now—whether they relate to birth, mothering, your partner, or your family life.

Write them down clearly and honestly. Then, create an affirmation that lovingly counteracts each fear.

This can become a daily ritual. Whenever a new fear or worry shows up, pause, write it out, and craft a supportive affirmation to balance it.

If you feel inspired, place your affirmations around your space—on mirrors, doors, journals, or anywhere you will see them often. You can make this as creative or ceremonial as you like: paint them, draw them, decorate them, or write them in a way that feels meaningful to you.

Put them where you cannot avoid seeing them each day, allowing them to gently shift your mindset and support your journey.

# Affirmations

Relaxation & Mindset in Labour

I learn into the power of all the other women who have been here before me and I feel their strength & guidance.

Each contraction brings me closer to meeting my baby.

I am strong, capable, and powerful.

I trust the wisdom of my body.

My baby and I are working together.

I am surrounded by support, love, and strength.

I breathe in peace, I breathe out tension.

With every breath, I feel more calm and centered.

I surrender to the flow of birth.

I let go and allow my body to open.

My body knows exactly what to do.

My instincts are wise and trustworthy.

I release fear and embrace faith.

EAT, DRINK, PEE



SIMPLY, BUT WE SOMETIMES FORGET

“

**Hypnosis tracks,  
visualisations or  
meditation..  
things that guide  
your mind and  
body to relax, to  
be okay, to soften  
and find ease.**



# COMFORT MEASURES

## Water / Bath / Shower

Warm water to relax muscles and ease pain, bath shower, hot water bottle in early stages.

## TENS (Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulation)

Lower back, boost with the contraction.

## Acupressure / Massage Balls

Squeeze with the contraction.

## Counter Pressure

Sacrum press, hips squeeze, perineum compress.

## Massage and Touch

Hands, Foot, Calf, Shoulders massage very helpful and nurturing, as well as helping endorphins to flow. Stroking the skin can be really supportive too.

## Reassurance and Affirmations

Words that feel empowering to you, reassuring and reaffirming your path.

## Rest

Side lying release, just resting, forward lying lateral and constructive rest position.

## Movement / Positioning / Birthing Ball

Upright or active positions, rocking, squatting, swaying, lunging to reduce pain and encourage labour.

Walking, swaying, sitting on birthing ball, kneeling.

## Breathing / Sound / Hypnobirthing / Relaxation Techniques

## Release Fears

Even if they come up during, let's talk them out, don't let them block.

## Nutrition & Energy

Staying hydrated (small sips if things are intense)

Eating energising snacks (as works for you)

Honey (If eating is hard and energy is getting low, a spoonful of honey can be perfect)

## 5 Flower Remedy (like a deep breath)

Scent - don't forget the power of scent how it can relax and transport you.

IN YOUR OWN TIME

## DATES



In the later stages of pregnancy, feelings of impatience can surface, and it's completely understandable—this journey can feel lengthy, and our excitement grows.

My Best Advice:

Engage in Activities Together, Spend quality time with your friends and family. Go out to eat or simply enjoy each other's company.

Create Moments of Joy. Plan small bursts of liveliness. While this is a special time, it can also help distract your mind from solely focusing on the impending arrival of your baby.

Let Go of Fears:

Sometimes, the challenge lies not in how to induce labor, but in what may be hindering it.

The only suggestions with some evidence supporting their effectiveness in initiating labor are:

**Eat Dates:** Consuming six dates a day in the final days and weeks can be beneficial, even if it seems like a lot!

**Plan a Relaxing Evening:**

Arrange an enjoyable night filled with all your favorite activities—then, who knows what might happen?

## LAUGHTER

watch things, listen to things be light, perhaps your birth partner is funny let them make your laugh in early labour. Releases endorphins, reduces adrenaline, softens the whole body. Helps shift emotional tension during early.

## JAW RELEASE

Relaxing the jaw encourages pelvic relaxation (“soft jaw, soft pelvic floor”). Techniques: slow exhale with loose cheeks, horse-lips, humming, gentle jaw shaking.

## PELVIC FLOOR RELAXATION

Intentional releasing rather than tightening. Learn this space of your concentrate of the relaxation of this space with the breath.

## PERINEAL MASSAGE

Encourages elasticity and awareness of the pelvic floor before birth. Can be practiced in pregnancy or used with warm compresses in labour.

## MASSAGE / STROKING (LIGHT & FLURRY)

Calms the nervous system and lowers pain perception. Releases endorphins. Light rhythmic strokes on the back, arms, or belly to provide grounding.

## DANCING

Helps with pain management, promotes mobility of the pelvis, and encourages baby's descent. Can be gentle swaying or more rhythmic movements depending on comfort.

## NIPPLE STIMULATION

Can encourage oxytocin release, strengthen contractions, and support labour progression. Best used with intention and awareness of contraction patterns.

## PLAN YOUR ROUTE

Let's ensure everyone is aligned with the plan, leveraging intelligence and intention:

- How will you get to the hospital?
- Are there any tasks you need to complete before departing?

Consider what you want for the journey and what essential items from home you'd like to pack in your hospital bag.

Let's also strategise for the return home:

- Many people prefer to leave the hospital as soon as possible since the wards can be noisy and disruptive, interfering with those precious early family moments due to constant noise and interruptions.
- Home offers comfort, with your own shower, bathroom, and food that actually tastes good.
- 

A note about car seats: hospitals typically don't allow them in the labor ward due to space constraints. However, it's ultimately your decision.

There's usually plenty to manage along the way, so a friend or partner can bring the car seat when you're ready to leave. Although hospitals traditionally require a car seat for discharge, if you don't drive or use taxis, a stroller is also acceptable. Be prepared for a bit of resistance, but you might end up strolling home!

# WHAT TO DO WHEN

The general guideline is to call your midwives and your doula once there are around 3 surges (contractions) within 10 minutes, lasting 60+ seconds, This pattern for over 1 hour.

Every labour unfolds differently. Some people need support sooner, and that's absolutely okay.

Stay connected via messages as soon as you notice any changes—early twinges, a shift in your energy, or any instinctive knowing. That way, we can be prepared and support you appropriately.

You can always call in the early stages if you feel like talking, need reassurance, or want help interpreting what's happening

It's your labour you can do this how you like.

## **Excited stage - Stay at home as long as possible!**

What to do: Stay home. Rest. Eat. Shower. Sleep. Walk. Keep normal activities going. Prepare your space ("nesting"). Distractions (projects, activities) help.

## **The Serious Stage**

What to do: This is the time to call your midwife/doula or go to the hospital. Support with massage, reassurance, affirmations, visualisations, music. Stay in your zone. During transfer, think headphones, sunglasses, like no-one can disturb your space.

## **The Self Doubt Stage**

What to do: Breathe. Be held. Get quiet. Try a labour visualisation, use your breath, find your affirmations of trust.

# WHAT TO DO WHEN

## Pushing/Birth Stage

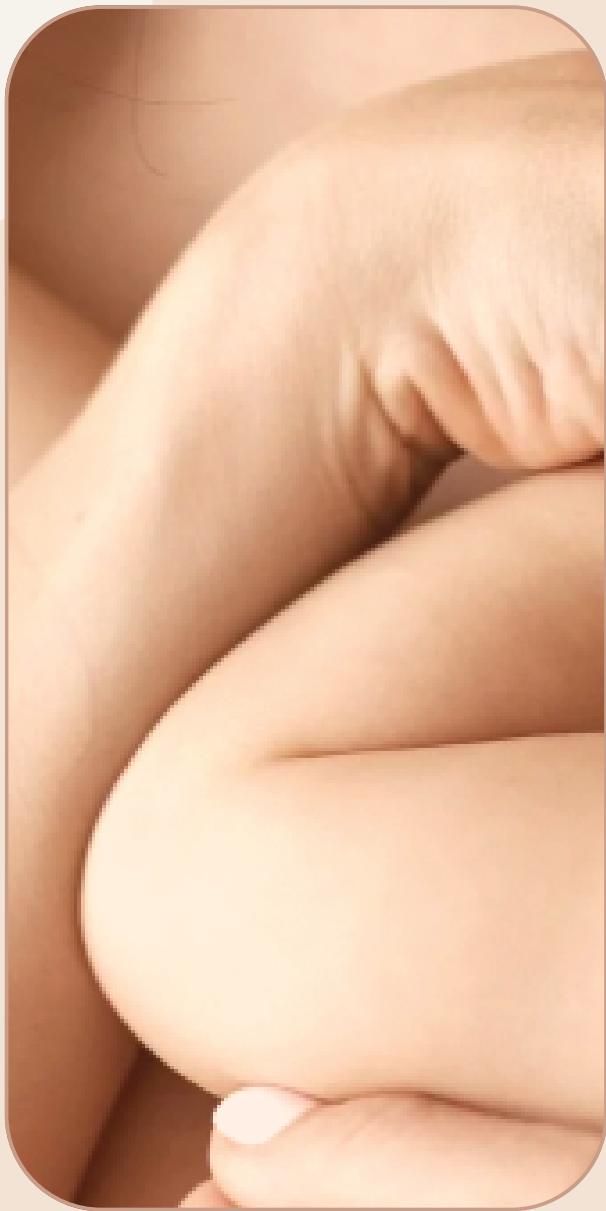
Trust your instincts!

What to do: Upright positions, Birth stool, Breathing. No rush. You will move instinctively you may want to be guided and still supported in positions and with some pressure point. Go with what your body's telling you—instinct often leads the way better than any textbook or powerpoint :-)

## Placenta/Afterbirth Stage

What to do: Skin-to-skin, mama and baby regulate. Go slow don't feel rushed, keep the room dark and calm. When you're ready try feeding.

# Uninterrupted skin to skin



Skin-to-skin contact isn't just a nice-to-have

It's a biological need—laying the foundation for bonding, brain development, breastfeeding success, and emotional regulation.

Dr. Bergman's research calls this critical time the:

First 1000 minutes (around 24 hours)

Uninterrupted, continuous closeness helps a baby's brain and body thrive, and mothers too.

Skin-to-skin lowers stress hormones, boosts oxytocin, and helps milk production find its natural rhythm.

# The Golden Hours

You'll hear a lot about the importance of skin-to-skin contact in the first "Golden Hour."

And yes, that first hour after birth is magical.

But let's cut through the noise for a moment—and get to what the science is really telling us today. The latest research, led by experts like Dr. Nils Bergman, shows something even more powerful:

It's not just the first or even three hours that matter.

It's having immediate skin to skin contact and prolonged during the first days.

Studies now reveal that a newborn's brain and a mother's brain are actively connecting and wiring together over the first 24 hours.

It's about creating a soft, connected beginning that carries you both through the days and weeks ahead.

So if your first hour after birth isn't perfect—it's okay.

What matters most is staying close, as much as you can, for as long as you can.

Every minute of connection matters.

Every moment helps.

You and your baby are wired to be together.

## ASK QUESTIONS

**IF YOU DON'T  
KNOW YOUR  
OPTIONS YOUR  
DON'T HAVE ANY...**

B - BENEFITS

R - RISKS

A - ALTERNATIVES

I - INSTINCT

N - NOTHING



What are the benefits?

(What might this help with? Why are you recommending this?)

What are the risks?

(What could this lead to, both immediately and longer-term?)

What are the alternatives?

(Are there other options, including doing nothing right now?)

I feel okay? ~Instinct

(Can we give my body more time?)

What happens if we wait? Nothing

(What if we do nothing? Do we have time to talk and think about it?)

How will this affect the flow of my labour and my baby?

(Will it limit my movement, change how I feel, or create new risks?)

GET THE RIGHT TEAM

# ALL YOU NEED IS THE RIGHT SUPPORT

SUPPORT

URINATE

POSITION

PRAISE

OXYGEN

REST & RELAX

TOUCH



Supportive environment: Help create a calm and clean space.

Urinate: Ensure the birthing person's bladder is empty.

Position changes: Encourage and help the birthing person change positions frequently.

Praise: Provide constant verbal encouragement.

Oxygen: Remind them to breathe deeply and not hold their breath.

Rest and relaxation: Help them find comfortable positions to stay loose and relieve tension.

Touch and massage: Offer touch or massage if the birthing person finds it helpful.

# Birth Partner

Your role is essential; it's crucial to be present for your loved one in the ways they require. Be confident in the support you provide.

## Early Labour (Excited Stage)

Gently monitor contractions.

Encourage hydration, light snacks, and restroom breaks.

Suggest movement, various positions, or rest.

A warm shower or bath can be beneficial.

Maintain a calm environment with dim lights, soft voices, and soothing music if desired.

Avoid using triggering phrases such as “relax.”

Steer clear of discussing time; instead, flow softly with each moment.

## Active Labour (The Serious Stage)

Continue to softly track contractions.

Keep encouraging hydration, light snacks, and restroom breaks. Remember to eat and drink before any transfer!

Suggest movement, positions, or rest as needed.

If she's coping well, allow her to focus without interruption.

Check if she would like to use the shower or bath, as it suits her.

Maintain a calm environment with dim lights, soft voices, and comforting music if she prefers.

Remind her about breathing: slow, steady, and deep exhales.

If in doubt, just breathe out!

Offer massages to her shoulders, hands, or feet if she desires.

Apply counter-pressure with hip squeezes or sacrum presses.

Use affirmations, sounds, or music to create a supportive atmosphere.

A cold cloth on her forehead or the back of her neck can be refreshing.

Advocate for her preferences by repeating them to the staff.

Avoid triggering phrases like “relax.”

Refrain from discussing time; instead, gently flow with her moment-to-moment.

Avoid asking questions during contractions.

# Birth Partner Check Sheet

## Transition (Self-Doubt Stage – Before Pushing)

All of the above still serve.

Stay calm and steady — encourage her.

Offer grounding touch (hand holding, cool cloth).

Use affirmations: “You’re safe,” “You’re doing it.”

Protect her space — reduce noise, limit people.

She’s okay. She can do this.

Don’t take frustration personally.

## Pushing

Encourage strong, focused effort when contractions peak.

Follow her lead completely — she may need rest between pushes. Don’t rush her.

Offer sips of water between contractions.

Cool cloths still help.

Stay close and connected.

Assist with position changes if needed (squatting, side-lying, hands & knees).

## After Baby Arrives

Celebrate quietly — follow her lead and let her be instinctive.

Protect the space.

Offer skin-to-skin or help her get comfortable holding baby.

Stay close, reassure, and ask what she needs.

Watch her comfort — offer warmth, water, food when allowed.

## Quick Reminders

Stay calm, even if things change.

Be her voice if she can’t speak up.

Keep checking in: “Do you want touch, space, water, or silence?”

Capture memories (photos/videos) only if she wants.

# Hospital Labour Bag Check List

## For Labour

Birth plan

Speaker

Headphones

Playlist, Tracks etc

Ear Plugs

Comfy Loose Fitting Clothes

Slip on sandals/slippers

Maybe flip flops for showering

Dressing gown if it's your vibe

Socks (snuggly)

Sun Glasses

Lights

Blanket (something familiar that feels like home)

Your own Pillow

Hairbands (to tie up long hair)

Snacks you think you might fancy during and for afterwards

Water Bottle - with straw v. important

Phone Charger & Phone

Essential oils/Massage Oil (I'll have mine too)

Lip balm (lips can get really dry, I will have some too)

Extras;

Placenta box?

Sick Bag for the car

Towel for the car



# Hospital Labour Bag Check List

## For After Birth

Big Comfy underwear

Maternity pads

Breast pads - maybe

Nipple cream - maybe - Calendula oil (I will bring you some)

Lotion (skin can be very dry post labour)

Easy opening night shirt, t-shirt or pyjamas (for feeding)

Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, deo, cleanser, moisturiser)

Arnica pills (any other remedies,)

Towel

Hairbrush

Slip on Sandals/Slippers

Clothes for going home - loose, comfy & warm

Snacks, comfort food

Things that make you feel nice

## For Baby

A couple of soft sleep suits (varied sizes) - zip up ones

Nappies

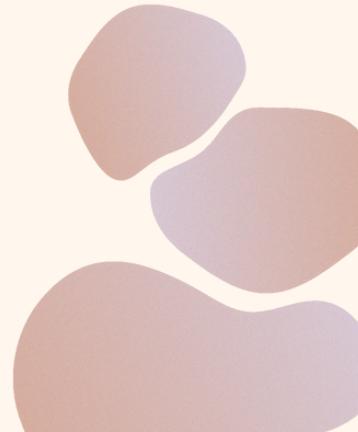
Cotton Wool or water wipes

Coconut Oil

Muslins

One or two Baby Blankets

Up to you on a Hat





# Made with love

Your way is the right way!

EMILY-CLARE HILL  
HAPPY SOUL MAMA