

10 STEPS FOR A POWERFUL BIRTH

MAY 28, 2017 By [MARYN GREEN](#)

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Welcome to Indie Birth's series of podcast, here on I tunes. Taking Back Birth.

Hi Maryn once again, today I want to talk about ways to prepare for labor and birth. Now this might not be what you think it is, so just listen on a little bit. As always most of these podcast come from conversations, or questions, or emails, or something that's kind of come to my intention this week. And this week I had the lovely privilege of getting back to work, sort to speak, and visiting with quite a few pregnant mamas here. And a handful, are pregnant for the first time. Now I always find that to be special and unique and not that other women, with other pregnancies aren't. But it's always special to work with somebody that hasn't experienced birth yet it's always kind of refreshing that, there are open to whatever, both positive and negative really but they haven't experienced it yet. So where am I getting at here. Well a couple of these first time moms are due at the same time. Now I find as a midwife, that the same questions come up at the same gestations. Kind of no matter what, you know despite any prompting from me or anything like that, I think there are just natural places in pregnancies when women start to think about certain things. So a couple of these first timers came with the same question, again because they are due at the same time. And the question was, 'What should I be doing, like, to prepare?' And I really kind of sat with it, when I was with them and hopefully gave a coherent kind of answer and some suggestions. But the more I thought about it, the more I thought it was more appropriate for a longer podcast because it was so revealing and not necessarily about them. Although I do think that kind of being mid-pregnancy is the time to start thinking about, 'oh gee's, you know, I have to birth this baby' and that goes for everybody I think whether you've birthed or not. It starts to set in. So I think it's just fascinating that especially for first time moms, there really is this feeling of, like 'what am I missing', 'what I'm I doing wrong', 'what should I follow'; 'what protocol is there, to get ready for this experience that I've just never had before.' And so the more I thought about it, despite the suggestions that I am going to offer because, of course why not, you'll hear that there pretty harmless. Despite those suggestions it just got me thinking more about this being a cultural thing we've set up. Right, like it's a very masculine in a sense that there is a map to this puzzle we call labor and birth. And I mean that with the utmost respect, of course, to the women asking. I'm sure I was the same way, that many years ago. And I don't think there's anything wrong with it. It's just, you know, kind of goes against what labor actual is; in my opinion. Now of course for those who haven't experience labor, how would they even know that? I think I'm blessed to have come to that conclusion for myself after many births. It was really only with my last birth or two perhaps that I let go of any kind of preparation. I think it was even with my 6th baby that somebody had given me like a brand new, kind of like a beta, hypnosis course for birth. And I'm really not into any of that but I did go through the

course, I was curious. And I thought, 'oh wow, well maybe *this* is the magic pill, maybe I'll just have this like amazing birth because I did this course.' Like that, even entered my mind a couple years ago. So I don't think it's strange that we are all looking for something that will give more definition to this very amorphous experience. But of course, the deeper truth I've come to for myself and I believe this is true for everyone. Whether they, you know, put it into practice or not- is that we do have what we need to birth. And we are all so different really, even though we are all the same in a lot of ways, we are all so different. And each pregnancy is so unique, each baby is unique, each labor is unique. So I don't know that it's really mind settling to say to somebody that hasn't had a baby before, 'hey look, *You* have everything you need.' '*You* have what you need for this baby and this labor.' I'm not sure if that make sense until afterwards. But yet, how knows, it might bring kind of a peace of mind for some people that there isn't a checklist, there isn't like a list of homework assignments their behind on to be able to do this properly. Now, of course everybody is different and some people need more of intellectual knowledge, some people need more of something else. So I'll again go through my list of what I think are some good suggestions. But essentially, I'm saying that really we all have what we need. And there really isn't a method, there isn't a course, there is nothing out there that, I believe, can prepare us 100% for this journey. So maybe that releases some of the pressure for some of you. I know it did for me when I finally felt in tune with that. That I wasn't missed the boat, that I wasn't late, there was nothing to do- accept perhaps some of the suggestions that I'll offer. So we can't really know what to expect and that's the struggle. You know we can't predict what birth will be like and whether were the midwife or, you know, more importantly the women birthing; we still don't know. But even as a midwife, having seeing hundreds of births doesn't mean that I can predict anybody's birth; I can't. So it's been said that the labor meets the need of the baby. And I think that's mostly true in my experience. So by that it means, well what it sounds like it means. If the baby requires, you know, a longer or a shorter labor. For whatever either; physiological or emotional, or spiritual reasons that is the path, the labor will follow. So I also think there is a degree of surrender in that as well. So you can kind of, you know, tie those two points together, that there's no course that will make birth, you know, predictable for anybody because everybody's baby is different and we really don't know what the baby's agenda is. But I said, I think that is mostly true and I do. I think the part that, not that it's false, but the other part of that equation is that we are responsible for our own selves and that we can provide the best environment for a baby to do whatever it needs to do. Meaning, you know, like I said, short or long labor, or whatever we can put ourselves in the best position to accept that. So who knows really about anything but those are so thoughts. So like I said I don't think there is a method or anything that can ensure the path of labor. And there's many methods out there right, there's hypnobirthing and all these things. And this came up as well in the conversations I was having this week. That, those are all great, if they resonate with you, there all great to learn about. It's great to have a tool in your toolbox, sort to speak. But putting all your faith or all of your eggs in the basket of any of those any methods, I think is a false sense of security. Because, there is just this, like I said- this mystery, this unknown. And so let's talk about some things too that are great to prepare on our end, if possible. So I'm going to present a list of just 10 really simple ways I think we can prepare ourselves for a powerful birth. Taking what I've said into account already. My list of ways I hope just promotes ***self love, growth, internal***

introspection, and **nourishment**. And all of those things I believe serve us in labor and birth and mothering no matter what. So these are just things to consider, there certainly not a prescription. But you'll here by the nature of this list that it isn't that way anyway. So things to consider: are that were all different and that maybe none of these things are right for you, and maybe that all of them are right for you. Or maybe you'll just kind of make up your own list, especially if you've had babies before. Like what works for you to be in just the right space of acceptance for whatever this labor and birth will bring. What is ultimately, I think, all I've wanted the last couple of times. Is just to accept what is and to embrace it. So, 10 steps for a powerful birth by me.

First, **{#1 Feed Your Body}**. So many podcast, so many resources, we have our pregnancy nutrition facebook group and Indie Birth group. So I could go on but consult those other resources and podcast and people and things; too feed your body. I really think there isn't anything half as important as that, when we're talking about the power we do have in our birth experience.

{#2 Be In Nature}. So obviously I'm talking about pregnancy here, where and how you birth, of course, is your business. But get out in the world of nature when you're pregnant. And if you live in a city then do your best. Get your feet in the dirt, take your shoes off, you know, get your feet on the earth, on the grass, in the water, and just be with the quiet and (hopefully quite). Just be with, what is and what has been much longer than us. I personally find so much solace in nature and, you know, we all could say why we do for probably for different reasons. But I do think there is something essential about it in pregnancy. There's so many hormones and vibrations going on, especially with having a baby inside of us. That I do think vibrationally we can kind of get grounded and reset in nature. And that's kind of been proven even scientifically, it's not you know some crazy like new age thought. So that's my second suggestion.

{#3 Learn about Birth As Much As YOU Need to}

My 3rd step or suggestion for a powerful birth is, learn about birth as much as *you* need to. Now of course we have a course, we have many resources, through Indie Birth for learning. And I think there all great, of course, but some are more suited to some people and some people will love and benefit from all of them. And some people really don't need that much information. So do what serves you, if learning about birth serves you, and makes you feel confident, then it's something you should do as much of as you can.

{#4 15-20 Minutes of Solitude}

Step 4 to having a powerful birth is 15–20 minutes every day of solitude. And this may or may not be separate from a more napping time, if possible, like where you actually sleep. But these 15-20 minutes is meant to be spent in solitude, in quiet. Maybe it's even combined with your nature time. But I think there's nothing more powerful then quieting our minds. And in pregnancy most women would agree that your mind can run wild. And there just doesn't seem to be enough time in the day for many of us to connect with the baby or, you know, again to have this quite time. But I think if it's something that is intentional we can make it happen. 15 minutes

really isn't all that much. And I know for me, I've locked myself in the bathroom for the 15 minutes if I need to. I do think it's an amazing thing to do for yourself and really, I think, will bring up things for you to reflect on. If you feel like you don't have any, then sit for 15 minutes and see what comes. And it will get easier and the way that you work through whatever comes up is, of course, individual and up to you. But without going on and on about this one, there is work to be done before labor and I think, I will talk about that in a few minutes more. Because, it's so important because that we all have: traumas, and issues and blockages and things that need to be balanced. And while we'll never be, you know, perfect in the sense of we never have those things, we certainly can balance them. And I think that's essential before labor, especially if one is having their first baby. I think it's essential to reflect on your own birth, whether it was great or traumatic or whatever. I think it's essential to know about your mother's births if possible. I think all of these things bring up issues that our conscious minds haven't necessarily thought of. So when we sit for 15–20 minutes every day, it not only gives us that space, that ability to recharge and rest. But it also helps bring up the things that we need to look at.

{#5 Dream, Journal and Pray} {#6 Oxytocin Releases}

#5 on my steps for a powerful birth is to Dream, Journal and Pray. So any combination of those things or all of them; *Just be*, write in your journal, write your dreams down, communicate with your baby, write your fears down, write what you're thinking about. Pray and sing and dance and do all these things that connect us to whatever we believe is bigger, connect us to ourselves, again so essential in pregnancy. And really in life but, you know this is a pregnancy focused thing, I supposed. You know, we all know, of course and this leads us into number 6 -- release oxytocin every day, multiple times a day. So, kind of combining those two, you know, anything we do to connect us with something bigger than us, ourselves, other people in a positive way, releases oxytocin and we feel good. And the more stress we have in pregnancy, of course, the harder it is, the harder life is. And the harder labor *may be*, now again that not meant to make anyone feel bad. Life is stressful sometimes and that's just part of the package. And pregnancy can make it seem extra stressful just because we're so emotional. But again the intention to release oxytocin, I think, kind of, will cancel out some of that stress. So instead of trying to de-stress, I think that's kind of stressful. Release oxytocin, do things you love and do things that feel good. And the list is long: so eating chocolate, or watching birth movies, or petting your dog. Or the things we've already mentioned: you know, be in nature, put your feet in a stream, pray outside, sing a song; whatever it is. As many feel good things and connective things that you can do. I think is a wonderful gift to yourselves and your baby throughout pregnancy.

{#7 Spend Time with your Partner-Alone}

#7 on the 10 steps is to spend time with your partner- alone. Now partner, you know, is probably most people but of course not everyone is in that boat. And so in that case I would suggest spending time with your best friend. Or again doing another, you know, oxytocic release so, you know, it could be anybody. Maybe it's talking on the phone to your mom. But if you do have partner, assuming that partner created this baby with you. I think that's where it's really essential. I see a lot of the time that there's conflict in pregnancy between partners. And of

course, this conflict maybe there before pregnancy but it does seem that pregnancy can make it more tense; in some situations. And really all that's needed, in the simplest sense is for these people to spend time together- alone. Now that's hard, I know, I have 8 children and it's very hard to get time alone to just sit and talk or go out to dinner or whatever it is. But I do think it's essential and it's just like that 15-20 minutes a day. It's not easy but if you make the intention, the time will probably create its self. So wither you can do that every week or every other week, I don't know, but I do think it's something that is essential to having a powerful birth. Conflict between partners that isn't resolved, wither it's like big time conflict or just small time conflict. You know can manifest in labor and be a blockage. So I think regardless of that, it's just a great thing to suggest anyway.

{#8 Do Your Work}

#8 on my 10 steps to have to a powerful birth, kind of intertwines with some of the other things. Which is do your work, do your work. Don't be afraid of yourself; don't be afraid of your fears and your traumas and your past births and your anxieties. Face them and that takes a lot of courage so I'm not saying that's easy. But I am saying that no one can do it for you. And that's where the similarity with labor comes in. Because, you are the only one, that can birth your baby. And you are, the only one that can clear the comb webs, sort to speak, to allow that happen. Now, of course, people have differing layers and levels of these kinds of things to work out. So again I'm not saying it's easy but being aware is the first step. So feeling everything in pregnancy, Gosh- that's just ridiculous isn't it some days. Feeling everything so intensely, right, wither its even happiness or just fear or anger. It feels like in pregnancy it's just magnified. But feeling it is part of the work and then identifying- what you have to do. You know- is it a fear? How can you work on that fear? Can you reach out for help? What are your resources? You Know- is your midwife available for these kind of things? I know, I try to be, because I do believe they are so important. You know making the space to talk about real things is not something that were, kind of, not all trained to do. Right, were just more trained to talk superficially. But having someone you can talk real with, as you prepare for birth, I do think is a great- great gift. So I always mention, "*The Presences Process*" when I'm talking about this kind of thing. So this is a book by *Michael Brown* and it has been in my life for a pretty long time. And it's pretty transformational, so if you are someone that is feeling kind of stuck with, you know, like you don't even know what I'm talking about. And how to work through things that, are feeling really hard. You know, in addition to all of the more recommended kind of things like therapy and all that, which I think are great and have their place. I think this book is amazing, so if when I said that, it kind of- called out to you. Than just Look it up on Amazon and see how you do. I think it's an amazing way of doing your work.

{#9 Visualize Your Birth, Create it}

So number 9 on my 10 steps is visualize your birth, create it. Now I know, I know, it's kind of a contradiction, sometimes, when we say, you know, we don't have control over birth and the baby is in charge. I think it's a balance of these things of we don't have control- birth is a natural process. And then, I think, we do in a lot of ways have very powerful minds and spirits and so it can't hurt, right, I don't think, to powerfully visualize your birth. Now that doesn't mean that's

what you get but I do think it does play a part for many people that try it. So I don't see why it's not worth a shot. I know with Deva's birth in particular, I visualized her birth every day. For a long time meaning, like probably 15 full minutes. And I would almost try to feel it, which of course, is hard if you never had a baby before. But I had almost tried to feel it as best I could. And just see it and imagine how it would just flow so easily and naturally and, you know, down to detail. Where was I? And how did it feel for the baby to come out? And the baby comes out and is pink and happy. And, you know, then the placenta releases and that's just in the bowl. And I feel great and I'm in bed and I'm nursing. So anyway, I mean, you can hopefully make your own version. Even if you haven't birth before, you just positively see this- the way, you know that it can go. And your baby, I think, has a part in that visualization. You know in talking to the baby too, like 'here's what were going to do' and 'this is how it can go' and 'were going to do this together.' I think there's no reason, to not spend time visualizing your birth in the most positive way, just in the way you see it.

{#10 Reduce Negativity, Invite Positivity- in your life}

And the final step for having a powerful birth is- reduce negativity, invite positivity into your life. So all the 'nay-sayers' in your life, you know, I hate to say get rid of them, it's not that easy. But you have to find a way to insulate yourself from the negative comments and negative questions- in the world. And honestly, I think, the way you do that is to set that intention. To only invite positive interactions into your sphere and as I've stated already, just working on your own fears and issues. Because sometimes we really attract the kind of negativity, that, we need to get over a fear our-self. So we work on ourselves, we try not to blame anyone else for bring negativity in, we accept that, that has something to do with us and we go forward and we invite the positive in and we do our work. I think it's particularly worth saying in this world that we're trying to create here of this new birth paradigm. There are so many Indie Birth groups, you know, free groups on facebook in particular, resources. Margo and I are almost continuously available; I don't know that it will always be that way. But we can almost always answer emails or whatever it is. We both do consults, so in other words, I'm saying there's lots of support out there if you're looking for it. And if you're listening to this podcast then you know hopefully that the Indie Birth world is growing and that you are more than welcome to take advantage of the support that these amazing women have to give; because sometimes that's a huge piece of us growing as powerful woman in our pregnancies and birth. We really do need each other, we really do need support. So I hope you've enjoyed my 10 steps for a powerful birth. Feel free to share. And visit the Indie Birth site for the newest events and podcast and blog post and all that great stuff. Thanks so much for listening. Have a great day.