



The One Word That Transformed My Birth Experience



P R E G N A N C Y

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I used to be really uptight (OK, I'm still a little uptight), but during my pregnancy I was even more high strung than usual. I read 32 pregnancy and childbirth books, scrolled through all the things on all the mama sites and made a lot of lists.

I convinced myself that the more I planned and prepped, the birth would be easier. I convinced my body that if I ate the right foods, my birth would be easier. And I convinced my partner that if we mastered all the birth positions and massage techniques, the birth would be easier.

I moved into birth with this rigid plan.

But, when I went into labor and didn't have more than twenty seconds between contractions, I thought

something must be wrong because “This wasn’t part of the plan.”

But, nothing was wrong; I was just having a baby.

I resisted the unpredictability of my birth experience for the first three hours, continually forcing myself onto that dang birth ball, or sniffing essential oils that were making me nauseous. But, the ball and oils were on my list, so sit and sniff I did.

On top of being exhausted, my cervix was being stubborn and I was devastated that all my planning seemed worthless.

Then, my sweet partner Eric smoothed my sweaty hair back, leaned in and whispered, “Just surrender. You don’t need to do anything else.”

That word surrender triggered a release in my mind and body and I just let go. I stopped trying to “birth the right way,” or think my way out of pain. I just laid there and allowed my body to move through birth, and then it got easier.

As the word “surrender” repeated in my mind, the breathing I had learned in my childbirth preparation class began to flow, my body organically moved into one of the positions I had been practicing.

Stuffing all that birth information in my mind wasn’t done in vain, but it only served me if I used it in conjunction with surrender. The more I surrendered to birth, the more I intuitively knew what I needed, and how to go about getting it.

The rest of my birth was really freakin’ hard, because you know, I was still pushing a human out of me. But, it unfolded in a way it had not done before I decided to let go and allow it to just happen. I remember little about the final phase of birth because I wasn’t doing anything but allowing my body to birth my baby.

Before giving birth, I never understood the concept of surrender. I thought the best plan was always to plan, then implement that plan. But, learning the value of letting go, during the most challenging experience I’ve ever been through, changed me. It loosened me up and prepared me for one of the most unpredictable and uncontrollable journeys- motherhood.

I now surrender on the daily. I surrender to my son dumping out all the tiny toys right after I pick them up. I surrender to my body drooping down instead of perking up. I surrender to my sink that’s always full of dishes. I surrender to the hormonal tears that come all the time and I surrender to the joy that enters my life when I simply let go.

Are you pregnant or new to motherhood?

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