

NATALIE'S BIRTH STORY



Natalie is the mum of a five month old baby girl called Tallulah and below is her story of how Fertility2Birth's HypnoBirth program helped her through her pregnancy and birth.

"I felt, before I had a baby, that there was an elite group of women telling you that you will know what they have been through once you have had your baby. It is like this clicky group that find it quite easy to tell you all their horror stories. Or they just won't tell you anything.

As soon as I had Tallulah I wanted to tell people and inform them of just how my birth had been, and share that birth doesn't have to be like that.

I thought beforehand that it was going to hurt and that I was going to tear, I was so anxious about it all, I mean really anxious. I remember having panic attacks on the toilet as I was having a pooh. I was constipated and I likened this to having a baby and surely having the baby is only going to be worse because of the size.

I also never thought that I would have a baby because of the pain, I passed out when I was a kid and had my ears pierced, I pass out when I have needles. I would love to give blood as I have a rare blood type, so know that I should but I would rather have another baby than give blood!

There are many things from the course that helped me during my pregnancy, like having pictures and sayings stuck around the house, from a picture of a baby in the correct birth position to positive affirmations that I had to write, although I did find this very difficult, as we don't often say positive things to ourselves. I felt that I had done all I could to prepare myself for the birth. From the HypnoBirth to yoga, I read and looked at everything, and just knowing that Sue was on the phone at any point reassured me a great deal.



I am so happy that I wasn't overdue; I kind of knew that I was ready even though she was early, but I was prepared. I didn't go into hospital thinking that I was having a premature baby, I didn't even worry that they would take her away, and I didn't think that she would be in danger which is really bizarre. It is as though my brain had changed everything into a positive.

I had been into hospital 2 weeks earlier, when I was 34 weeks, as I had some bleeding. Whilst I was being examined I just thought of the lake, concentrated on my breathing and tried to keep my bottom jaw relaxed. All of this helped so much as I hate having smear tests and examinations. This happened again at 36 weeks; I just thought here we go again.



It was a Saturday night and we had sky + Ant and Dec, I was just settling down to watch it, Craig was cooking us a curry and I went to the loo, when I wiped it was just like the last bit of a period, sorry for being graphic but I think people need to know. When Craig brought me my dinner I told him that I had had some blood on wiping, as he passed me the tray I felt something just like a period cramp, I didn't think anything of it. I had no idea that this was the start of labour. So I ate my dinner just in case I needed to go to hospital again due to the bleeding. Thinking of it I never did get to watch Ant and Dec as he deleted it! The cramps started coming regularly so I thought that we had better call the hospital, I wasn't in any pain, just a slight discomfort.

I also realised that I hadn't got any make up on, and that my bag and the baby's bag wasn't done, so I went upstairs and pottered around for about an hour just calling down to Craig every time I felt a contraction, but again I wasn't in pain.

We were advised to go into the hospital to get checked due to the bleeding, so as we eventually got into the car, Craig said shall we take the baby seat, I told him not be stupid, why would we want it, as I couldn't be in labour. I thought I was having Braxton Hicks, as they were not painful; they were inconvenient, and annoying. I felt like I needed a great big pooh a little bit like having stomach bug. We decided to take the baby seat and in hindsight I am glad that we did.



On the journey all I needed to do was my breathing, I loved the breathing because I had been into hospital so many times what with my scans and bleeds and when I did my breathing Tallulah would always kick and move around, this would always reassure me that she was ok.

When we got to the hospital I thought that it would be like it is on the films, that the car would screech to a halt outside the doors and then there would be loads of medical staff waiting with a wheel chair, oh no, we had to park miles away and then climb what felt like a million sets of stairs, it is not like it is portrayed on the films and TV so why do they

need to portray it that way, always such a drama, mind you I suppose that TV does that all the time, they always televise dramatic births but never calm ones and we wonder why we all have this fear of childbirth!

Even when we got to hospital I still did not think that I was in labour.

They showed me into a delivery room, I sat on the bed and saw the baby cot, and for the first time I actually thought that this might be it. By this time my ripples (commonly known as contractions) were increasing, they still were not painful there were just more of them and they lasted for longer. The midwife then came into the room and asked how I was feeling and then asked if she could examine me, to my astonishment I was nearly 7 cm's dilated! I asked her if I would be going home, much to her amusement. My legs then started to shake as I realised that this was it I was going to have my baby girl. I then started asking her about everything that was going to happen as I love to be in control. If I know about it I can then remain calm about it which the HypnoBirth has taught me, it also taught me that I can deal with needles if I have too and not to worry about it. I told the midwife that I didn't want Pethadine because I believe that it can make the baby floppy and spaced out and also because it is morphine based, it may sound silly but heroin and morphine are in the same family, heroin is a nasty drug and I never wanted to put that in her or me.

I just continued with my breathing, as I was doing this I was concentrating on a grey plug socket and the midwife was just casually putting things around the room. I asked her about pain relief and she then told me that I was just frightened. I hadn't noticed but I had become frightened, then I remembered about the fear tension pain syndrome that I had been taught and how that would affect my labour, so I concentrated on becoming calm, with my visualisation of the island and my breathing. The midwife did say to me that I didn't seem in pain, and when I thought about it, no I wasn't I was just a little scared of the unknown. I then remember that the midwife lifted the sheet to see how I was doing and I told her that I was having another one whilst talking all the way through it. She then stood to one side, I wondered why, I thought that can't be the head surely not, but oh no my membranes ruptured and no word of a lie my waters shot across the room at least 10ft! My immediate reaction was has it hit my new boots, which thankfully it hadn't. The midwife then told Craig to come and have a look as they could see Tallulah's thick black hair; she was sitting there just waiting to be born. At that point I asked for some gas and air, not because I was in pain, but because I felt that I wasn't in control, but it didn't last long. Looking back now, if I hadn't done the HypnoBirth program I think just how out of control I would have felt right from the start and how different my birth experience would have been. This is why I wanted to write my story, to educate other anxious mums and let them know that it doesn't have to be

like that. If I had not been bleeding there is no way that I would have gone into hospital and would have probably had Tallulah at home, which actually was my intention from the start.

Anyway very shortly after my waters had gone, I thought to myself how am I going to know that I need to push but-about 30 seconds after that there it was, just as Sue had taught me, an overwhelming urge to bear down just like I needed a poo, the midwife told Craig to hold one leg and she held the other and I just started pushing, I don't remember feeling any contractions, I just remember thinking the harder I push the quicker she will be out, which in hindsight was probably not the right thing to do, as I wasn't listening to my body, after 41 minutes there she was, my beautiful baby girl.

As soon as she was born she was taken by the pediatrician to be checked out as she was only 36 weeks. She was then handed to Craig, at my request, as I wanted him to bond with her as I had carried her all this time. He keeps me safe so I wanted him to do the same with her.

I still couldn't believe that I had done it; I thought that it was going to be worse than it was, but it hadn't been.

The placenta was delivered 13 minutes after delivery, the midwife had a few tugs on it which I felt was quite annoying, but I then pushed and it just came away.

I did have a small tear but I feel that this was because I was pushing too hard as I am stubborn. I didn't allow my body to adjust, this I will remember not to do next time. I didn't have my tear sutured and it healed nicely so just remember they don't always have to be sewn up, just remember when you go for a pee afterwards gently pour warm water over the area to help dilute the urine, which prevents it from stinging.

Tallulah weighed 6lbs and 8oz which was a good weight for 36 weeks; they did put her in a warming cot although we noticed that it hadn't been working and she had been maintaining her own body temperature, which meant we soon had her out of there.

The best thing about doing the HypnoBirth course was definitely listening to the CD's, they calmed me down during pregnancy as I had a high powered job, I also had less migraines and I would sleep much better at night too. The scripts that Craig would read to me were fab as we could all bond as a family, but he was away a lot so I listened to the discs too, they would knock him out in 30 seconds when he listened to them, focusing on his uterus, which was hilarious! I would always see her wrapped up in a beautiful pink colour, safe and happy and this would reassure me. I still use the control room today, actually I used it last

night, it is great as most of the things we learnt on the course we can use in everyday life, they were not just for the pregnancy and birth. And of course the breathing, it actually gets you in tune with your body, so you really can focus on what is going on, it means taking time out for ourselves, which we just don't do anymore. Craig also got to be a part of it all, he read to me and he helped with my affirmations, it brought him into the experience as he had something to do.

Even if I had gone for a C section at the last minute I would have benefited from doing the course, it helped me from 30 weeks of pregnancy, it helped me to relax and trust in my body. I also have a very calm and chilled out daughter, everyone always comments on how happy and content she is, I know that being calm and taking time out when I was pregnant has got something to do with it.

Well, a first baby, a labour and delivery from start to finish lasting only 5 hours and 11 minutes - it doesn't get much better than that does it! I will certainly be using the method for my next one; I wonder how quick that one will be? I just want everyone to know about the course as everyone deserves to have a labour and delivery like I had."