

Self-Hypnosis for Birth

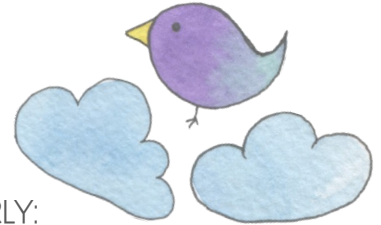


“If you surrender to the wind, you can ride it.”

-Toni Morrison

+ PHYSICAL RELAXATION
+ EXTREME MENTAL FOCUS

HYPNOSIS



HOW?

FLOAT: Imagine your body floating effortlessly. Feel it.

FILTER: Remove the hurt from the pain. Focus on a positive sensation and let it encompass your whole body. Find a feeling or a thought between contractions that you can hold on to.

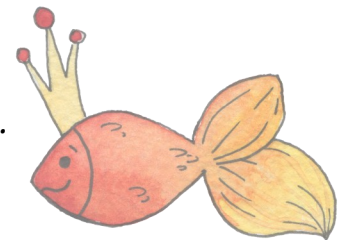
FOCUS: Pay exquisite attention to this sensation or thought. Or, “go somewhere else”—pick another focus. Become totally absorbed in ONE idea, perception, or feeling.

FORGET: Concentrate on less-intense sensations in your body, i.e. the breeze from the window, a hand on your arm, the pressure of the floor on your feet. Especially between contractions, find something very specific to filter out of everything else that’s going on, everything else you’re thinking. Forget about what just happened or what might happen next.

START EARLY:

It’s harder to decrease a long-existing pain cycle with hypnosis or relaxation than it is to prevent one from escalating. The same is true for pharmaceuticals.

The secret to “handling labor” (or life) is to do it **one moment at a time**, to be uninvolved with what happened a minute ago or what may happen next. Be a goldfish—there is no past or future. There is only now.



Recipe for Hypnosis:

1. Ritual Movement
(*sway, tap, walk, rock*)
2. Breathing Rhythm
(*count, use breathing method*)
3. Eye focus or visualization
(*pick a spot/person/image to stare at or imagine*)
4. Listening—inwardly
(*pleasant/interesting sensations get full attention*)

Self-Hypnosis Doesn't Work for Everyone

Everyone can benefit from these techniques. True, deep self-hypnosis is easier for some kinds of people. It’s more likely to work for you if you:

- > Often lose yourself in a movie, sunset, or thoughts
- > Can easily refrain from judging yourself or others
- > Can separate action/thought from identity
- > Trust others easily
- > Practice mental relaxation

Beware Blame! If you believe you can change your perception of your body with your mind, there is a very real danger of judging yourself if it doesn't go how you hoped. Learn to relax and then when labor starts: let it go. Whatever happens—happens and is OK.