

Debra Pascali-Bonaro of Orgasmic Birth writes:

Are you expecting or planning on having a baby? I have been teaching childbirth classes and attending births as a doula for almost 30 years. As Director of the documentary [Orgasmic Birth: The Best-Kept Secret](#) and Co-Author of [Orgasmic Birth: Your Guide to a Safe, Satisfying and Pleasurable Birth Experience](#) as well as receiving comments from thousands of women around the world, I have created a top-ten list of tips for a safe, satisfying and healthy birth to share with you. Let me know your top ten tips for natural birth and join our discussion at www.facebook.com/obirth

"Thoughts become things... choose the good ones!"

We all know the power of our thoughts. I often joke at my workshops that I have cleaned the floor with a chemical that may cause some people to itch. Just a few words about itching and telling them that they will have the opportunity to medicate later in the day (if the itching gets too strong), and I instantly see a few people start to move and scratch. I let them know I will use my itch scale every hour so that "we can evaluate your itching, are you beginning to feel a bit itchy?" Ok, you get the point! You have heard about the placebo effect. Could it be that by talking about the pain of childbirth, hearing scary stories, and using a language that makes us think of pain, that we are leading women to a painful experience? I not only believe this is true, but studies show that our labors are longer today than 20 years ago. Think of all the advances in the last 20 years- cell phones, computers, and travel, yet women's bodies are taking longer to give birth? I believe our fear has grown and so has our use of drugs and interventions, both life-saving when used appropriately, but when applied to all women, often cause us more harm than good. It is time to change this. As Lonnie Morris in the Orgasmic Birth Documentary says "Women of Earth Take Back Your Birth!" Let's look at ways you can find comfort, joy and pleasure while giving birth! To start here are my top-ten tips. Please send me your tips to add.

From Pain to Pleasure:

Debra's Top-Ten Tips for a Natural Childbirth

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“ Let your inner Wild Woman take your little Inner Good Girl in her arms, cuddle her and tell her not to be afraid, because the WOMAN in you is about to *stand up and roar*. The actual work of birth was exhilarating, magical, miraculous, wondrous and immensely satisfying. It felt natural, normal, raw and real.”

- Julie B., (Melbourne, Australia) Orgasmic Birth birthstory

Address and Release Your Fears

Fear prolongs or stops labor. This is the elephant in the room that must be addressed.

Choose a Language of Pleasure

Ride the wave, hug your baby into the world, surges.... What are words for the sensations of labor and birth that help you move from pain to pleasure?

Dream

Create and use visualizations of birth that bring you calm and confidence

Feel Safe and Secure

No animal will birth where it does not feel safe. Birth where and with whom you feel safe.

Create Privacy

“The energy that gets the baby in - gets the baby out.” Ina May Gaskin. The same elements of privacy are needed to birth a baby as to make a baby. I call it creating your birth ambiance, an environment of privacy.

Keep Continuous Support

Add a Doula to your birth circle- [studies show](#) that women feel more secure and cared for when they have a doula at their birth.

Drink Water, Immerse Yourself in Water

Many women call the tub an *Aquadural* as it provides as much comfort as Epidural, without all the side effects. Make sure showers and tubs are available for your comfort in childbirth. Drink as needed, withholding water to laboring women is not only harmful but adds to stress and fear all causing labor to be more difficult.

Help Yourself Relax

Deep breathing, touch, massage, prayer, meditation are helpful ways to relax. How do you relax your body and mind? The softer and more relaxed your body is the easier it can open.

Be in Charge of Your Choices- Don't Give Them Away!

As Lonnie Morris, CNM says... "(the word) *No* is a complete sentence and laboring women need to know this is a choice." Informed decision making includes informed consent and informed refusal, know your options!

Allow Freedom of Movement

Dancing, swaying, and rocking are just a few ways to move. Choose positions and movements that will provide comfort, use gravity, and help your baby to rotate. One of my favorite workshop exercises is having the women spell their initials in the air with their pelvis! Just like wiggling a ring over a fat knuckle, we need to move-and-sway to bring your baby thru your pelvis.

Well that's Ten Tips! See what happens when we are not counting the numbers and watching the clock? Time flies by! (Oh there's another one- don't count the minutes, cover the clock!). I know I said 10, but I had to add 11....

Remember Birth is sensual

The more you can move thru the first 10 tips, the more you can open yourself to the sensuality of birth- kissing, caressing, nipple stimulation. As many say, "the biggest sex organ is between our ears" so we need to allow our minds to be free to experience all that is possible in birth. All the above will enhance the flow of oxytocin, *the hormone of love*, that will facilitate a safer, easier and more pleasurable birth.

Add you tips and comments as well as consider sharing your birth story with us. To learn more join our [upcoming webinar series](#) on pleasurable, natural childbirth, as we will discuss the many ways to address your fear and move from pain to pleasure in birth.

“ Simply being OPEN to the possibility that birth (or moments of it) can be pleasurable. So many women can't even cross the line of being open to this idea. True support and feeling safe is key, and within that, being open to experimenting with ideas that might feel foreign to many. Ex: kissing during labor.” - [Alisa Blackwood](#) shared on our [facebook.com/obirth](#) group