

JULY 2005 PCAPE Newsletter

Practical Childbirth and Parent Education

Expectations

I just finished a phone call from a happy first time mother announcing the birth of their son last evening. This couple completed their childbirth preparation and baby care classes exactly one week ago.

What struck me most about our conversation was the repetition "I made it to 5" (centimeters).

I made it to 5. Such a simple statement. But that statement was full of pride in her achievement. "I made it to 5. My water broke at 7:30 PM Sunday evening. Labor was long. Labor was hard. When the nurse checked me at 3:30 PM I was 5 cm's. I made it to 5!" She had met the challenge she set for herself. She made it to 5 centimeters cervical dilation without medication or anesthesia. She had climbed her personal Mount Everest. Now it did not matter if she chose analgesia or an epidural or continued with the labor coping techniques that she and her husband had been using throughout labor to this point. She had made it to 5!

What happened next does not matter. She made it to 5.

Mother, father and baby are all happy and doing well in their hospital room. She expresses security knowing the nurses are nearby to answer questions and show how to care for baby and herself. Dad is on the sofa holding their son as mom tells me of her accomplishment. She made it to 5.

As with all new mothers, she will tell and retell her birth story as she "takes in" and "takes hold" (Reva Rubin) of all that has happened and all that she has accomplished in giving birth and becoming a mother.

She made it to 5. Let us not diminish her accomplishment. Did she deliver vaginally? Need forceps or vacuum extractor? Have a C-Section? It does not matter. She gave birth. She met her goal. She made it to 5.

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EXPECTATIONS This issue focuses on books, videos and other teaching resources to assist you and the expectant parents you teach plan and prepare realistically for labor and birth today.

I recall an article from the 1970's childbirth education literature titled "Pain or Peak Experience". Why can't we acknowledge and agree that labor and birth can include both, one or neither of these. In 2005 some childbirth educators, doulas, nurses and physicians are still engaged in an ideological war over these topics. Physical vs spiritual. Physiologic vs existential.

Mind over matter. "Evidence-based" vs "Birthing from Within".

Epidurals and labor coping skills both have their place.

Choose from the selections that follow to achieve balance in your classes:

Booklet: *Simkin's Ratings of Comfort Measures for Childbirth.*

Penny Simkin uses a rating system to explain 18 methods for relieving pain in childbirth.
24 pages. illustrated. cost: \$6.50
available from: www.birthsource.com or phone 1-866-88-BIRTH
Item # BKS00115

Laminated Chart and tear-off Pad: *Penny Simkin's Roadmap of Labor*

This is an essential for me. The poster is permanently displayed in my classroom. Each class I can refer to choices, preparation and expectations for labor and birth. The green background highlights the yellow brick road of labor which is liberally illustrated with labor coping techniques. There is a Detour for back labor also illustrated with appropriate comfort measures. A large green highway sign indicates the choice "Scenic Route: continue uphill" on the yellow brick road of labor or the "Epidural Highway: pay toll". The epidural path's illustrations demonstrate both medical equipment and intermittent loving care from the male partner. (Penny's bias) Those familiar with Penny's work will note her 3 R's as reminders on each path.

Available as an 8 1/2 " x 11 " pad of 100 sheets with explanatory text on back and as a 30" x 23" laminated chart. Order from the ICEA Bookcenter. www.icea.org

tear pad \$14.95 order item ND1101

laminated chart \$28.95 order item ND 1102

Game: Birth Plan Game

Encourages discussion, decision-making and communication between expectant parents

*Eight sets of thirty -two cards, with game directions. \$15.00/package
available from the ICEA Bookstore www.icea.org*

Videos: The Choices in Childbirth series

If you are not familiar with these excellent teaching tools, it is time to preview them and decide how best to use one or more in your classes or childbirth education program. All are available in English and Spanish.

Each costs \$\$199.00 Pricey, yes. But in my opinion, no other producer's animation and graphics can compare with Injoy Video's. I am biased. I was able to preview and review each volume as it was released. Yes, I do have them all. I use them as needed depending on the needs of my class. My current class is pro natural childbirth so I won't show Epidural Anesthesia. I will use the regular information in "Understanding Birth", also from Injoy, to explain epidurals. Every woman in my last class was planning for epidural anesthesia, so this was an excellent teaching tool and worth the time.

Vol. 1: Epidural Anesthesia

released 2000 20 minutes

Vol 2: Induction and Augmentation

released 2001 15 minutes I like this one the least. It needs more content.

I prefer the information on induction and augmentation from "Works of Wonder" from *Hello Family* by VIDA.

Vol.3: Cesarean Birth

released in 2002 22 minutes The animation and illustrations are excellent.

The father is positive, the mother seems negative about the experience. But, that negativity may come from the voice inflections of the translator for Mary Pat, the mom. (Both parents use American Sign Language.) When I read the script, it does not come across the same way. That should make all of us aware of how our tone and facial expressions can distort the meaning of our words.

If you have the money in your budget, these are worth consideration so you can make your own evaluations.