

BIRTHING NATURALLY

Perfect Birth Exercise

This exercise will help you sort out your thoughts and wishes about your upcoming birth experience. For this exercise, imagine you are having your perfect labor – everything works out exactly how you would want it. Remember, the answers should be about your ideal birth, not what you think others want for your birth.

The Uncontrollable Issues In real life, you cannot control these things, but if you could how would your labor happen?

- When and where does labor begin?
- Who is with you when labor begins?
- How strong are your contractions?
- How quickly to your contractions progress?
- How long do you push?

The Almost Controllable Issues There are some circumstances in labor which you might have control over or might not. It all depends on how labor works out. If you have a choice about these issues, how do they happen?

- How does your midwife assist you?
- Where do you labor?
- Where do you give birth?
- What tools do you use to cope with labor?
- Who labors with you?
- What techniques are used to help you?
- What techniques are not a part of your labor?
- What happens after the baby is born?

The Most Important Issues After working through the previous two lists of questions, you should begin to have an idea of what issues are most important to you. Please finish these sentences.

- My top three priorities for this birth are...
- My perfect birth place is...
- My perfect caregivers are...
- My perfect labor tools are...
- My perfect emotional support is...
- My perfect pain coping techniques are...

SHARING YOUR GOALS

Now that you have determined what is most important to you during labor, you will need to spend some time communicating these goals with your labor team.

This may involve writing a formal birth plan, or simply having a list of items to discuss. You may want to discuss these issues during a casual get together, over the phone or at a formal meeting or appointment.

WITH WHOM DO YOU NEED TO SHARE YOUR GOALS?

- Partner
- Family Members
- Friends
- Children
- Midwife/Doctor
- Doula
- Birth Center Staff
- Hospital Staff
- Parents