



Module one

## **THE MOST IMPORTANT BIRTH STORY**

### NAOMI'S STORY

I'd been working on a very busy consultant led maternity unit as a Midwife for a few years when I bumped into Naomi\*.

What I saw with Naomi truly blew me away and has stuck with me ever since. Watching her changed my attitude to birth and is the moment Calm Births really began.

So, to backtrack a little, I had been to school with Naomi many years previously and not seen her since as we'd both moved away. It was a lovely coincidence that she should arrive on my shift in established labour. She was happy for me to care for her as her Midwife, and so I settled her in to our 'home from home' birth room on the Labour Ward.

Naomi was quickly progressing, with her sister as her birth partner. I noticed what a beautiful relationship they had, with

the sister quietly and soothingly whispering to Naomi during each surge. I sat back quietly and watched in awe as the two sisters worked as a team and my amazing friend gently and serenely breathed through each surge.

With the arrival of each surge, she would simply close her eyes, listen to her sisters' whispered words, let her shoulders relax and allow her body to do its thing. And even more amazing to me, was that in between those powerful surges, almost as if a light switch had been flicked, Naomi was back in the room and chatting and laughing with me, catching up on the gossip of mutual friends.

Labour continued like this for a couple of hours until Naomi's body decided it was ready to birth this baby, and so began the most amazing birth I had ever witnessed as this amazing woman breathed down her baby boy (who at 9lb 8oz was a considerable size!). There was no drama, there was no panic, there was only calm and peace for the entry of this gorgeous boy who simply looked around the room and took it all in.

As a Midwife, one is well aware of the natural process of birth, and the capabilities of our bodies to birth. But that birth changed everything for me.

As the years went by, I began to see more and more women coming in using the same techniques as Naomi and her sister had. They didn't all come in and just breathe their babies down, because life doesn't work like that and, frankly, I am not going to lie to you and fill you full of fluffy stories. Babies sometimes simply get in the wrong position, Mums & birthing people sometimes have a condition or circumstance which means they can't birth vaginally.

The difference I found, however, between everyday birthing people and *hypnobirthing* people, is that when the proverbial sh\*t hit the fan and things didn't go smoothly, the hypnobirthing people and their partners just simply took it in their stride, made sure they understood what was happening and why, *and just carried on*. They didn't lose their cool, they didn't lose control and they remained in a wonderful positive mind-set. I think you can guess who had the more positive experiences?

Now, hundreds of thousands of families across the globe are using hypnobirthing techniques to birth their babies and reporting positive results.

It's important to note that the *Calm Births* course is not a one trick pony. Hypnobirthing is an important component of it, but not all of it. One of the big stumbling blocks I see in people is the fear of the unknown with a first baby, or really not understanding what happened in a previous birth. This is a big problem, as we will find out later on.

So, I would like to guide you through the very basics of what is happening to the body during labour. If we can understand the process then we can recognise what is happening to us and why, thus eliminating that portion of fear and allowing us to feel a little more relaxed.

(\*Names have been changed within this story to protect identity.)

(Note: In this course, the common term of 'contractions' is being replaced by the word 'surges' - this is a more logical description of what is happening in the body and is gentler on the subconscious mind).