

biggest takeaways



First and Foremost

I believe knowledge is power. Knowledge allows you to feel empowered in your birth and helps you create the birth experience you desire. It gives you the information you'll need to best prepare for birth, tools to use to cope in labor, gives you an understanding of different interventions offered, and allows you to make decisions in your care, easing your mind as you get ready for the unpredictability of labor having everything you need going into it.

That is exactly how and why "Intimate Mama" came to be about – to spread the power of knowledge for pre and postnatal education and to have more holistic care by bridging the gap between natural methods and medical intervention. Being able to offer both and have the knowledge of both is essential. They each play an important role and have their time and place. Birth is a natural and primal experience and it has also been elevated in many ways thanks to medicine, but it doesn't have to be all medicine. We can still preserve the beauty and sacredness of childbirth.

After having necessary information for birth, here are some other thoughts about labor and the months to follow:

the biggest takeaways

For Labor:

Focus on positive thoughts and deep breaths. That's it.
You only have control over those two things.

Slow deep inhale and exhale. Bring your attention to just this.
Blow your contractions away, horse lips, make low tone noise, and
release.

Stay open minded to whatever your birth experience may bring.
Set the vibe in the room that speaks to you and the environment you
wish to create.

Release tension in your body (if you're tense, your cervix is too).
Relax your jaw (this helps to relax your pelvic floor)
Relax your face, your body, and your mind. Don't overthink.
Think primal and follow your body's cues.
You've got this! You were made for this! (Cue affirmations, visualization,
uplifting/calming music, & moving your body in whatever way feels good
to you)

It is important to feel safe and calm. Our bodies don't want to deliver
when we don't feel safe. It's a physiological response to stress. Relax into
the experience and trust.

Ask your team for information - risks and benefits.

Know that you can ask the medical team to step out of the room while you discuss and process any of the information with your support person, then invite them back in the room when you're ready with a decision. Don't ever feel pressured to make a decision you're not ready for.

Of course, emergency scenarios are the exception here.

Move, change positions often, ask for support and what you need.

Communicate what's working for you, nourish yourself, and don't discount anything - what feels good in one moment may not in another and vice versa.

Have your partner or support person learn along with you. In the fog of labor, it's nice to have someone offer you different ideas and coping tools rather than having to come up with them yourself when you're in deep focus.

Breathe. Trust. Surrender.

Days & Months Following Birth:

It sounds simple, but enjoy every single moment. Soak in every little snuggle, admire every smile, coo, and giggle. The time truly does go by SO fast. In the moment it feels like forever, but then a month goes by and they're already different little humans. Take it all in!

With that, focus as much as you can on all the positive and fun things about each phase. We really do miss the moments when we get stuck thinking about some of the challenges. Remember, everything is a phase and it'll soon be over. I always think "what's coming is going."

Trust your judgment, follow your intuition, and know that you know what's best for your baby. Know that any decision that you make is going to be the best decision with the resources and knowledge you have at that time. Don't stress, you're doing great!

Verbalize your needs. Tell your partner, support system, family, friends, etc what you need. When you and your partner wake up, list your top three priorities for the day and try your best to make sure each of you get those met. When visitors ask what they can bring, don't hesitate to ask for a meal or something you could use for self-care. You're not the host – they are here to take care of and cater to your needs.

On the topic of self-care, DO IT! And not just once, but do it every day. I mean it. Start your day and end your day with 5-15 minutes to yourself and create a little routine. Don't forget to get outside every day for some fresh air and hopefully some sunlight.

Sleep when you can, nap when baby naps (if it's your first), cuddle and nap together, whatever you need for the first month. Maybe bring diaper changing supplies next to the bedside so you don't have to physically get up all the time in the night. Whatever works for you. You will create little habits and a method or way of doing things that you find easier for your lifestyle.

know you're not alone! You have a huge community of people to support you. know that postpartum is a time of tears and that's normal from the hormone changes in your body after birth.

When you're ready, join a mommy group. It's great to have friends with babies of similar ages so you can bounce ideas off each other through each stage.

Take pictures, but also take videos, it'll capture the moments so much better! They change so fast and become different little humans all the time, especially in the first year.

If you have things you need to get done around the house, choose one maybe two things a day. That's productive!

Let yourself heal slowly, take it easy, listen to your body, and be kind to your body. Hydrate hydrate hydrate! 3-4L/day especially if breastfeeding! Also know that breastfeeding takes time to learn for both you and baby. If this is your goal, be patient.

know that our bodies are not meant to be the same after birth or go back to the way they were. You, yourself, are a new and different person. You are a mama, you have a different purpose, your personality may change, your heart will become bigger and softer, you'll feel more, your perspective will change, and your body changing is a beautiful remnant of all that you had the opportunity to experience. Embrace that and love the new you & the mama that you are!

Lastly

know how amazing and strong you are! You are beautiful and you are resilient.

Your baby picked you for a reason. You are the best mama for your little and your baby is so lucky to have you!

I'm so excited for you!

xo
Jess