

# Hypnosis - The Answer To Natural Childbirth

By Dr. Martyn P. Williams.

Many hypnotherapists are aware of the use of hypnosis for the removal of pain and the production of analgesia/anesthesia, It is therefore not surprising that they would be aware of the use of hypnosis during childbirth but how many understand the advantages of hypnosis during pregnancy?

It is a known fact that the more a client practices hypnosis the greater the depth achieved, thus over a period of time even clients who can only achieve light trance will soon allay their fears of the hypnotic state and will easily enter the deeper states needed for analgesia/anesthesia and or pain relief.

## **First trimester 0 to 13 weeks.**

There are many advantages to the use of hypnosis in early pregnancy, by early I mean as soon as confirmation is obtained, normally around 3 to 4 weeks gestation, this will not only in most cases guarantee a good outcome at birth but will allay most of the normal aches, discomforts and anxieties. One of the first and I feel the worst problem during pregnancy, is the onset of morning sickness, though known as morning sickness, this in some cases does not just happen in the morning but can last all day and well into the evening and throughout the night. Morning sickness is believed to be due to hormonal imbalances, the first hormone to appear is HCG (Human Chorionic Gonadotrophin), which stimulates the production of the pregnancy hormones, Oestrogen and Progesterone.

I personally believe that during this early stage of pregnancy, though further research is needed, that there is also an imbalance between the pregnancy hormones and another hormone called Cortisol. Cortisol is a hormone associated with Stress & Anxiety, there is extensive scientific data available to explain that during times of stress, Cortisol levels in the body increase, could this be the cause of sickness & nausea during early pregnancy? Hormonal imbalance is also to blame for unusual tiredness and emotional highs & lows during this early stage of pregnancy.

When using hypnosis in early pregnancy in most cases within one or two sessions, feelings of nausea and sickness subside on their own without suggestion being given other than to relax and to release any stresses and tensions, the relaxation through hypnosis also removes the tiredness.

The emotional highs & lows however, need further investigation using hypnoanalysis, to allay any endogenous anxieties, tensions or depression, relating to prior life traumas and experiences. For a successful outcome in childbirth, I feel that analysis is essential and should be carried out on every client, as early into the pregnancy as possible, once this has been carried out and all fears, anxieties and tensions have been allayed, pregnancy can become a wonderful and pleasant experience.

It is normal for midwives during ante-natal clinic attendance's during this trimester of pregnancy, to expect all sorts of moans and groans plus fluctuating blood pressure and so on, they are pleasantly surprised to see a mum-to-be relaxed and in control, this is also evident when the baby is monitored, midwives immediately comment on how relaxed the baby is, even at this early stage.

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## **Second trimester 14 to 26 weeks.**

The next trimester of the pregnancy, is relatively uneventful, this gives the hypnotherapist plenty of time, to increase depth of trance, to teach self hypnosis and to produce analgesia & anaesthesia in preparation for the 3rd trimester and imminent birth.

## **Third trimester 27 to 34 weeks.**

The 3rd trimester can be quite daunting, with many minor ailments but to the mum-to-be these ailments can be the most troublesome, with heartburn, flatulence, haemorrhoids, backache, swollen feet & legs, blood pressure, headaches, fluctuations in temperature, aching joints & aching of the breasts, almost all of these ailments are due to the increased weight as the baby grows. All of these ailments can be controlled by hypnosis and in most cases removed completely, where hypnosis has been used in early pregnancy, by now the mum-to-be is quite adept to achieving somnambulism and is a wonderful practitioner of self hypnosis with the ability to produce self analgesia if needed (with restrictions).

The last few weeks of the pregnancy can be frustrating particularly with first time mums, It's now a waiting game, this is the time for the hypnotherapist to keep the clients mind occupied using visualisation of the birth without Pain, ensuring to cover all eventualities (complication) and to give suggestions to alter the clients perception of the contractions, from that of painful and prolonged to enjoyable tingling sensations, at this point involve their birthing partners, by teaching them how to put their partner into the trance state and how to reinforce positive suggestions, throughout the labour, all of which can now be done by the installation of triggers and posthypnotic suggestions.

## **The Birth.**

If everything to this point has gone well, there is now no reason not to expect a successful outcome, the only reasons for failure at this point are that the client has not been practising self hypnosis or that there are still some unresolved anxieties.

Again the birth itself is a waiting game, slow labour (unestablished labour) can last from 1 hour to 72 hours and in some cases even longer, therefore during this time there is no point in inducing the trance state, until such time that labour has been fully established, the clients self hypnosis will work well during this waiting period. You will note, if the client has practised self hypnosis successfully during pregnancy, that their breathing into each contraction is exceptional and natural as well as enjoyable, this should now continue throughout the labour. It is essential during early labour that the midwife check the client at regular intervals as the client could be more advanced in labour than the midwife realises, It is common for midwives to believe that the client is not in established labour because of the belief that they should feel pain.

As soon as the midwife has confirmed established labour, the trance state should now be induced, most hypnotherapists believe that the coma or plenary trance should be used, this I feel takes away the experience of birth, the somnambulist state however allows the client to see, hear and participate in

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the birth by being able to converse, drink if needed and enjoy the experience in a wakeful state with eyes open and with full memory of events.

Once labour is fully underway, constant positive suggestions should be given to relieve aching or discomfort, stresses or tensions and to breath into each and every contraction, as well as to follow all instructions given by the medical team. It is essential to keep the client in the trance state until well after the placenta has been born.

## **Waking up.**

Once the placenta has been born, suggestions can be given to stimulate lactation (if breast feeding) by simply suggesting a tingling sensation in the breasts, asking the client to confirm the sensation, should repair be required after an episiotomy (a small cut at the entrance of the virgina) analgesia can now be suggested in that area.

Once all is complete then suggestions of well-being and energy can be given with wonderful results, the client will be up and about straight after the birth with no tiredness or fatigue, suggestions for control of bleeding can also be given.

After all suggestions have been given, re-orientate the client slowly, you must remember the client has been in a deep trance state for some time, if re-orientated too quickly they can experience headaches. Most clients adapt easily to the use of hypnosis during pregnancy and birth, as the goal is not in achieving hypnosis but in achieving a painfree natural childbirth, even though “natural childbirth” has many definitions.

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