

The Birth of Jesse Joe

Contributed by Lisa Leal

Who knew after what seemed like an intense day of "practice" that I'd actually be having the baby? Certainly not myself. I kept telling myself not to overreact having heard the stories of women going to the hospital a few times and being in false labor. Around 11 pm I started having pretty intense contractions that I couldn't quite ignore, but I didn't want to overreact either. We went to bed around midnight and the contractions were still pretty regular. I knew from chatting with Beth and Liz previously that if today was the day I'd better get some rest so I went to bed and tried to deal with the contractions as best I could.

I listened to one of the hypnobabies scripts, right now I don't recall which one, but I think it was one of the deepening sessions. I couldn't really get into the whole hypnosis thing and I think that was due to my poor practice schedule. I did manage to get some sleep. I got up to go to the restroom about 3 am and noticed some blood which I'd never had before. I started timing my contractions then and noticed they were more intense and closer together.

I figured before I called Beth I'd let them get longer, they weren't quite longer than a minute, but they were about four to five minutes apart. When I got back to bed Issac was fully aware of what was going on, but I told him we both needed rest and to go back to sleep that I would wait till the contractions were longer.

I went back to bed till about 5:30 am. Again I got up, used the restroom and noticed more blood so I timed my contractions and realized they were closer together and lasting longer than a minute so I decided to get in the shower. I thought the warm water might help me relax some and figured I still needed to dilate so I enjoyed a nice warm shower.

I asked Issac to start getting the birth pool ready for me and I called Beth. She was so sweet and said she'd call Liz since she was closer to me and could be here sooner. When Liz arrived closer to 6 am I was already 6 cm dilated and she told me I was doing great. By then the contractions were starting to affect my back so as I went through them Liz was massaging my back to take some of the pressure off.

I put some meditation music on my laptop and just let nature take its course. I prayed that everything would progress normally and that Jesse and I would be fine. Time sort of went by quickly for me until we got stuck. Issac had to run to Walmart to get a hose to fill up the birth pool so while we waited for the pool to fill up Liz massaged my back during each contraction and timed them for me. She checked Jesse's heartbeat often to be sure he was handling the changes well and he did.

Finally the pool was full and I got in and it was a nice relief - not total, but nice enough. It was hard to get leverage in the pool and would have been nicer had Issac been in there with me, but we made it through with him outside the pool. We progressed really well and rather quickly it seemed till about noon when I got stuck at about 9 cm.

Finally Beth and Liz suggested I get out of the pool and walk around to see if that would help. Plus I hadn't emptied my bladder since earlier that morning and they wanted me to try and relieve myself. Issac was in the restroom with me refilling up the pool with warm water and so he had to stop occasionally to massage my back through contractions, but he was great and obliged me. I tried standing up and rocking my hips in a circular motion sort of like hula hopping sans the hoop.

An hour later we were almost 10 cm dilated and the pushing was about to begin. Now I did have the sensation to push earlier when I was 9 cm, but I was trying not to waste that energy since it would have just worn me out, but it's hard to do when you've never done it before and it felt as if my body really wanted to push already.

I got back in the pool around 1 pm and my water still hadn't broke. I began pushing and Liz was assisting me. She very gently kept encouraging me and leading me on what to do next. I kept relaxing and letting my body lead me at the same time.

Pushing was different and I had read a lot of women feel relief during the pushing stage and I didn't feel that. Pushing was when it really started to hurt. I felt like I wasn't doing anything yet Liz said she could tell the baby was moving down more and more. Finally my water broke and everything started happening after that. That was when I started yelling, not so much from the pain because really only pushing the head out hurt, the rest was manageable.

Our poor Chihuahua Chi Chi was so upset, she was crying hearing me yell. It was probably the most noise I made the entire day. It just felt good to have some sort of outlet from the pressure. I pushed for an hour and right at 2 pm Jesse was born! The head was the hardest part of it all and after feeling his hair I couldn't wait to see him. Once I knew he was crowning I just kept pushing to get him out and I ended up tearing a little bit and had to get a few stitches. Once he was born Liz handed him to me and I held my baby boy in my arms!!

He had so much hair, that's the first thing I noticed. He cried a little bit and then he opened his eyes and looked at me and I was in amazement. I checked his fingers and toes and took a glance over him. I checked to be sure he was a boy. LOL

The cutest part was he was making these noises like whimpering and whining, but it was precious. I tried nursing him and he didn't seem too interested at that time. Issac came and got him shortly thereafter while I birthed the placenta and then got out of the pool to take a bath.

The midwives prepared an herbal bath for Jesse and me and we sat in there for a few minutes and got the gunk off of us. I tried nursing again and then they took Jesse to weigh and measure him and I finished up my bath.

When I got out, we laid on the bed together as a family and stared at each other pretty much the rest of the day. It was a very surreal day. I guess because it was so early it didn't really seem real till it was all done. The lack of sleep hasn't bothered me a bit, I think I'm used to it with all the pee breaks I was taking during the night while I was pregnant.

I'm thankful to have had some experience with babies so I'm not totally ignorant and Beth and Liz have been super helpful getting me prepared for nursing. It took us a while to master latching on and we still have some trouble periodically but we're doing good for the most part.

As far as hypnobabies goes, while it didn't give me a painfree experience, I think that was due to my lack of dedication to it and yet it still helped me stay relaxed and progress as quickly as I did. I tried listening to several tracks early on during labor, but it didn't work and I ended up spending more time praying and focusing on relaxing. I will definitely try this with my next pregnancy and will dedicate the time to it.

As far as homebirthing - I loved it!!! I know it stressed Issac out quite a bit, but I was calm the entire time and I was comfortable with the midwives checking his heartrate periodically and Jesse did great. His heartrate never dropped at all. I loved being able to shower and sleep in my own bed. It was more comforting to me than anything. I would love to do it again, I just need to convince Issac - again!