Birthing Better: Achieving a Positive Birth

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Birthing Better with The Pink Kit Method®
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Good Birth/Bad Birth—or Positive Births for All?

Probably the worst thing that has happened in childbirth trends in the last 40 years is classifying births as good ones or bad ones. A positive birth experience, or knowing how to birth better, does not mean you should expect a “perfect” birth or even the exact one you want or imagine. Instead, expect one that you can feel proud of. Your Pink Kit Method For Birthing Better® will lead you to having a positive birth if you learn the skills. In fact, feeling proud of birthing better is the story repeated again and again by thousands upon thousands of women and their exceptional coaching husbands/partners who have used The Pink Kit.

Of course, there are millions of women who have had good births without knowing anything about how to birth better or without knowledge of or access to The Pink Kit. But, often, women don’t know how they had a good birth. They may just feel they were lucky, had a quick birth, or made good guesses.

There has to be more than that, or we are just left with that pesky old adage: “There is no way to know what your birth will be like, so there is nothing you can really do to prepare for it.” What a hopeless belief, and one based on such little control and empowerment!

Fortunately, your Pink Kit skills can change all that, not only for you, but for all expectant parents. At last, there is a skills-based pregnancy/childbirth system that leads toward a positive birth experience for all mothers and fathers-to-be who take the time to learn, practice, and use the skills.

What is a bad birth?

For all the pregnant women in the world, there is an equal number of birth stories. What distinguishes a good story from a bad one is more often our own perception of
our experience than the experience itself. Bad births may be about poor outcomes, particularly if the outcome is unexpected, but not usually.

Bad births can range from

- a woman who was angry her husband didn’t know how to help her and then stayed angry with him for months or years to
- a woman who felt that the staff midwife was rough when she did an internal to
- a woman who was angry because her favorite midwife was sick the day she gave birth.

What you will discover as you work through your Pink Kit is a clearly articulated pathway to take to birthing better and achieving a positive birth no matter what the situation. You do so by incorporating an old Chinese saying: “If you can’t change the situation, change the attitude.”

There is hope.

**Simple: I had to know how to birth**

“The lesson The Pink Kit taught me, after having five bad births but trying after each one to change every factor I could think to create a good birth, was simple. I had to know how to birth. Once I learned ‘how to,’ my next birth was great, even though the circumstances around it were even less desirable than my other births. Something so simple, but not spoken of at all.”

**Positive Births and Pain**

Frankly, you will probably experience a lot of the natural pain that is part of giving birth. You might not love labor or think it is easy or pleasurable, yet your positive birth can be accomplished by applying your skills. This is what “birthing better” means. To have a “better birth” is more commonly tied to factors outside yourself, but, to truly birth better, you must apply your own skills. Do this along with your
husband/partner in the role of being a good coach, and together you can feel really proud of your management of a challenging experience.

Additionally, when you have appropriate birth skills, you are much more likely to be able to cope with the natural pain of birth. Pain relief is usually used by women who have neither good birth skills nor a partner with good coaching skills. When you have moments of difficulty, though, you can turn to your partner, your closest support for relief, focus, help, and encouragement, who has learned the correct coaching skills to keep you on track and as relaxed as possible. A skilled husband or partner is even likely to notice that you’re having a moment of “OOOH” and immediately move to help you without being asked.

It is much better to bond with your husband/partner than even the most caring birth professional, the gas mask, or the epidural. You can always birth better, even if it’s just for a moment in time when you apply your willpower and determination coupled with skills. After a well-managed, painful birth, you will feel an unbelievable high.

**I could hate labor and skill feel proud of myself**

“I hate labor. There’s no better word for how I feel about contractions. In my first birth, I focused on the total dislike of the experience. I couldn’t imagine any woman liking this experience. Can’t say I coped well at all. The best I could do was shut up and lie still. Everyone complemented me afterwards for ‘handling’ it so well. That’s only because I was quiet and not like the lady down the hall who was screaming her head off. I’m not a screamer.

“My midwife gave me The Pink Kit when I was pregnant with my second. She thought I might get something out of it. I liked it right away. The message was clear: I could hate labor and still use skills and feel proud of at least that effort. The second time around is supposed to be better. I still hated it. It wasn’t until two weeks after the birth that I realized I could look back and hate it and still see that I managed it better than the first time. This time, I wasn’t passive. I was still quiet, but in my head I was using my skills. Funny, I actually look forward to my next birth.”
Positive Births and “Natural” Birthing

Since the 1970s, there has been a pulling apart of the fabric of birth by developing an either-or system. We’ve gotten to the point of assuming that women who choose midwifery care and a home birth will have a “natural birth,” while women who choose doctors and a hospital birth will have a “medical birth,” and that the former is better than the latter.

Our Birthing Better Pink Kit resource makes every effort to point out that having and using The Pink Kit Method of self-knowledge and skills changes our concept of “natural birth” to concern how we manage, cope, and handle ourselves, rather than where we are or what is done to us. In other words, we now use the words “normal” and “natural” with their literal meanings: anything that can happen in pregnancy and childbirth is normal and natural.

A stillborn baby may not be a common occurrence, but it is natural and normal for this to occur, although certainly not desirable. Starting off with a home birth and developing problems that require a high level of medical care is natural and normal, although it may be emotionally challenging to the family. Planning a Caesarean and finding yourself delivering a premature baby at home alone is a natural and normal occurrence, however uncommon.

Everything and anything that happens around pregnancy and giving birth is natural and normal. It just does not work to identify a “natural” birth or a “good” one in narrow terms, so we invite you to think more broadly.

We made the best of what happened naturally

“We had had a c/s for our first baby 19 years earlier with a classical incision. With delight and amazement, we fell pregnant. Times had changed. Now, VBACs were talked about and part of a Birth Plan, so we decided that the first birth was probably due to doctor impatience. We found a great midwife and planned on a home birth with a medical backup. Someone gave us The Pink Kit, but it turned me right off. When we mapped my pelvis and did the Internal Work, we discovered that my pelvis had an unusually small shape. Frankly, we didn’t want to
believe it, and the midwife told us that women are built to give birth and not to worry. To cut a long story short, we ended up having another Caesarean after 24 hours in labor. That actually didn’t worry us, because we loved being in labor and working together as a couple.

“So when we got pregnant 18 months later (this time planned), we decided that we’d still do the labor at home. Then I went off to hospital and had another c/s. No one can tell us we didn’t birth these two children! Having skills made all the difference. Instead of being led by ideology, we were led by our reality and made the very best of the situation. Did we miss having a vaginal birth? In some small way, but our ability to work through labor was far better than my horrible labor 19 years earlier.”

Positive Births and Medical Care

A positive birth can include standard medical assessments, monitoring, and procedures in the course of your pregnancy and birth. It can include the use of pain relief, because, even with relief, you can continue to use your Pink Kit skills.

Yes, pain relief may make it a bit more difficult to focus on these skills, because all relief does affect your head space, often making you groggy, but, with your skilled partner to help, you can still use one or more of your Pink Kit skills. In subsequent births, you might discover the skills can carry you through the whole birth without any relief at all. Just apply your skills consistently, sooner, and more vigorously.

Of course, if you have a surgical birth, pain relief is essential, BUT you can still use your skills. You don’t have to give in to passivity, and you definitely don’t need your birth provider’s permission to remain active in your birth.

A positive birth with medical care is not only achievable for the majority of families, but also desirable. Modern maternity care is normal in developed countries. Therefore, we must work with the scientific approach to childbirth.

Your Pink Kit skills grew from families who wanted a positive birth experience within the embrace of medical care, whether the care was necessary or imposed. You,
like everyone else, wants to birth better. So dig in and thoroughly enjoy learning, practicing, and then using these remarkable pregnancy and childbirth skills in the midst of modern medicine.

**In spite of the height of medical care . . .**

“I was the poster child for medical childbirth. I had so many things falling apart in my pregnant body that my obstetrician could have used me as a study in jabs and tubes. The staff at the hospital was great to my husband and me. This was going to be our last baby, and after four others, darn it I was going to get it right…whatever that meant. Actually, Brian and I knew exactly what that meant—our skills. We had never had any, didn’t think we needed any, and just got on with the births, but something was missing for sure. This time, even with all the medical assessments, poking, prodding and stuff they did to me and our baby, Brian and I just used the skills together. What a wonderful and natural-feeling birth. Doesn’t that sound funny? The height of medical care, and yet feeling like you’re having a natural birth. All the fiddling didn’t seem to impact the labor—that just keeps going on and on. So our skills were much more about working with the labor than thinking about the tubes and monitoring. Great birth!”

**Positive Births and Health Issues**

If you have health issues that require a great deal of medical attention and care, you can still birth better and have a positive birth. This probably isn’t what you hear or read, but it’s true—the birth of your baby is as precious and special as the birth of any other child.

Even if you will have a surgical delivery, whether non-laboring or emergency, and be given a general anesthetic because of the health problem, you can still enjoy preparing for the birth during your pregnancy. Your capacity to birth better and have a positive birth experience resides in what you do for yourself, not what others do to you.

Don’t let the present belief system in childbirth prevent you from birthing better and having a positive birth, no matter what health issues come along with your
pregnancy and birth experience.

**We believed differently, and we were right!**

“My wife grew up with a major heart problem. She was advised not to have children because of the possible stress on her heart, but if she got pregnant to have a non-laboring Caesarean. She’s pretty stubborn. We wanted kids, and we decided to have a baby. I would have been delighted with a Caesarean, but not Joanie. She researched everything she could find about heart problems and labor and stumbled across The Pink Kit. What she liked immediately about the resource was the idea that you must prepare your pregnant body to open up effectively to let a large object out. Her doctor’s concern was a long labor and drawn-out 2nd Stage. But she didn’t believe that anything Joanie could do would affect the course of the labor.

“We believed differently. We just thought it was common sense that if Joanie could stay relaxed and focused during the labor, then she would less likely get in the way of our baby coming down and out. The internal massage of her vagina also made sense—not something we speak about publically. We made certain that all the muscles and tissue inside was soft and pliable. The outcome? Unexpected. The labor was five hours, and Joanie gave birth to our gorgeous daughter in the car on the way to hospital in about three good pushes. We’ve since had two more babes. We refresh with The Pink Kit each time and make certain we do the internal massage, as well.”

**Positive Births in Any Place**

You can have a positive birth in the hospital, at home, at a Birth Center, accidentally or intentionally by yourself. A positive birth is something you work to accomplish, not something dictated by the choices or lack of choices about where you give birth.

The present childbirth oppositional model—home versus hospital, natural versus medical, or doctor versus midwife—denies the positivity of too many births, and that’s just not right. You should be able to birth better anywhere, once you have the right skills.
For sure, you are much more likely to have medical care in a medical institution, but that shouldn’t stop you from preparing for the birth in the privacy of your own home, then using the skills at the hospital—why should it? Your hospital can be treated like a sophisticated motel, if you want. The standards of care will come and go, and mostly you’ll be left alone to get on with it.

**It didn’t matter where I birthed**

“Well, I’m probably not a typical woman. I gave birth to my first baby in hospital. It was okay, but I felt that if I had a home birth next time I’d have a better birth. Thankfully, I was given The Pink Kit two weeks before my second birth. I had suffered from a pretty severe post-birth bleed and didn’t want to do that again. Our religious beliefs prevented me from having blood products, so I wanted to try to prevent bleeding if I was going to have a home birth with just my husband. We did fine, actually. The Pink Kit gave us heaps of skills and confidence. So, number two was alone at home. Number three was at home with local midwives, and number four was back in our local hospital. I just wanted a few days off. We used The Pink Kit in number two, three, and four. Each time, I birthed better. It doesn’t matter where you have your baby. Your skills matter.”

**Positive Births and Compliments**

Perhaps this sounds weird, but obstetricians and staff midwives or obstetrical nurses love to see women coping well with birth and dads who really know how to help. They see so few women do this, and many fewer men.

When you use your skills well, your care providers will always compliment you on how well you coped, managed, behaved, or acted and how well your husband/partner coached you. They see maybe one in ten women really know how to birth, and that’s a generous figure. Most women merely get through birth, and others really struggle. The goal of The Pink Kit Method For Birthing Better® is to increase the skills in the general population so that eight out of ten women and men really birth better and coach great.
So expect compliments from everyone at your birth and even staff who heard about it. Staff might still be think pregnant women can’t really do anything to prepare for the unknown, so they might think you had a lucky birth or an easy one. But you’ll know the truth.

**No one can take away what we know**

“My partner and I used The Pink Kit. As a man, my mates laughed at me that I was learning anything from something pink. They actually thought it was a girl thing or maybe about sex. I didn’t care what they thought. I was the first of my mates to become a dad, and I wanted to do it right. Jilly and I loved learning, and we worked together really well during the whole birth. We were over the moon. One of the midwives came in and complimented us. We told her about The Pink Kit, because we thought she’d be interested. Instead, she told us there was nothing we could have done about our birth; that’s just the way ours went. I could have wrung her neck, really, but said instead: ‘You don’t know how hard we worked for this birth.’ I think doctors and midwives think birth just happens. They see so many. But we know, and no one can take that away from us.”

**Birthing Better Produces Less Trauma**

In the story you just read, what is all too common is a belief that we have no ability to make a difference in the process, progress, or outcome of the birth experience. But that really makes no sense. Do you have control over the type of sexual experience you have once you start to engage sexually with your partner? Of course you do. Do you have any impact on whether you eat a good meal or slap something together? Of course you do. The birth process is as physiological as hunger and the sexual urge.

Of course, that does simplify things. Giving birth is much more dynamic than those two examples, and many more problems can occur. A baby might instigate a very mild and easy-to-manage birth but arrive with a birth defect. Or a very healthy woman could develop medical issues during her pregnancy that increase the amount of medical care she receives.
However, there really is a simple, common-sense approach to childbirth: viewing the whole experience as an exercise in plumbing, the journey of a big object out of a container. As your Pink Kit teaches you how to open your container/body, especially by doing the Internal Work, so that you don’t hinder the journey of your baby, you learn the skills to activate a part of your human brain that works counter-intuitively when the naturally occurring pain urges you to tense up.

Any tension in our container/body can cause a delay in our object/baby coming down, through, and out. This alone can cause potential risks to our baby. And if our baby moves through our container in spite of tension, this can leave physical trauma, as well. Opening up, on the other hand, can prevent some problems and reduce a great deal of the physical, mental, and emotional suffering/trauma that is too often associated with childbirth.

There’s no doubt that preparing your pregnant body can also truly make a difference in the post-birth scenario. Our babies seemed more relaxed and settled. Our relationship to our husband or partner was more intimate, and we were better able to adapt and adjust to the constantly changing situation of being parents.

**I healed quickly**

“I did the internal massage on myself from about seven months on, because I just knew my baby was going to be big. I had a seven-hour labor. He was posterior the whole time and delivered face up, and weighed almost 11 pounds—first baby. I didn’t tear at all, but more important, by the next morning my crotch felt normal. I walked down the hospital hallway, seeing all the other women walking sort of bowlegged. They couldn’t believe I felt so good down there after such a big baby. I knew it was due to the massage.”

**Birthing Better=A Positive Birth—No Matter the Outcome**

You have in your hands a resource that has been used and loved by thousands of families. Collectively and to varying degrees, we accomplished positive births by birthing better. We achieved this because, individually, we committed and took the responsibility to prepare in a thorough manner for the birth of our baby. We were
truthful with ourselves about what we needed to do in our unique situation, and we did it.

If we had had a previous traumatic birth before we discovered The Pink Kit resources, we often prepared between pregnancies with the resource. This helped us to heal any previous trauma and sort out what we could actually do to improve the situation. If the subsequent birth wasn’t quite as good as we would have liked, we were honest about what we could have done differently, without guilt, shame, or blame. By doing this, we grieved appropriately, without holding onto negativity. And we were honest with ourselves if we didn’t prepare enough or use the skills when we could have. In other words, we continued to learn and grow, and that was always exciting and always led to a sense of birthing better and having achieved a positive birth. We did not need to be perfect. We needed to be involved and pat ourselves on the back.

Childbirth is always a big event in our lives. We keep it in perspective, realizing we have years of parenting ahead that should not be overshadowed by the birth even, no matter how big it was. Because we learned to work with what was happening rather than what we planned or hoped for, we became more satisfied by our own accomplishments. In other words, we moved outside of the present childbirth trend of thinking, where only a small number and a few specific types of birth are considered good. We left that old thinking well behind us.

**Courage and skills**

“We knew our second daughter would be born with a life-threatening condition. Our doctor advised me to save myself the pain and have a Caesarean under a general anesthetic. He thought that would be a kindness. My husband and I knew that being a parent had to do with facing the reality of life. Because of our faith and The Pink Kit, we chose another path. Our faith gave us the courage. The Pink Kit gave us the skills. At home with just the two of us, our daughter was born into the warm water of our bath, able to live her short life still attached to me as we loved her.”
Birthing Better and Positive Births into the Next Generation

All of us Pink Kit families know that, at our next birth, we can refine and improve our birthing experience by being more conscious, preparing more deeply, and working together even more closely. At each subsequent birth, we do have a better experience, even if the unexpected happens. Our ability to adjust to the reality of what is happening means that birthing better and a positive birth is created by ourselves at the time: how we cope, deal, and manage the situation as it unfolds, rather than counting on a hoped-for possibility. Many of our own parents wished they had had this knowledge when we were born. We will pass these skills on to both our daughters and sons.

My son will teach his children

“Without a doubt, my son will teach his children what neither I nor his dad knew. I am so proud of him, feel a bit sad we couldn’t teach him, and envy him and Karen for the experience they have had.”

Your Positive Birth

The birth of your child is precious, special, and important to YOU. Do not compare your experience to anyone else’s. Look forward to the long-lasting effects from your positive birth experience. You will be more relaxed as a mother, and your partner will be more relaxed as a new father. This doesn’t mean the first six weeks to three months are easy-peasy, yet you will be more likely to work with what you have and realize that you are developing skills.

So work toward having your positive birth by preparing for this phenomenal experience, learning the skills, and using them.