

Models of Childbirth

“Medicalised” Birth

Presumption that body needs help
Machines used freely
Doctors involved
Birth is strictly timed and managed
Free use of drugs
Noisy environment
Mother “hands over” the process
High intervention rates
Believe birth is stressful
Belief birth is dangerous

“Undisturbed” Birth

Presumption that body knows
Minimal interference
Midwives involved
Birth unfolds in its own time
Use of natural pain relievers
Quiet, peaceful environment
Mother births her baby
Lower intervention rates
Belief birth is amazing
Belief birth is an everyday event

These two “models” of childbirth are very much active in our NHS system. Almost all doctors subscribe largely to the medical model (probably all they have ever seen is births that go wrong. That is their job, after all). Midwives tend to vary as to where they fall on the continuum. Their training is increasingly along the “normal birth” continuum, but they still work in hospitals where the medical model can be quite dominant. If you are midwife led, or especially if you choose a home birth, you increase your chances of being helped to have a natural birth. If you are doctor led, or have chosen an induction, you are more likely to experience birth as a medical process. For either circumstance, your hypnotic relaxation techniques will help enormously.