

BIRTHING NATURALLY TOPICS IN BIRTHING

BIRTH PLANNING

LEADING AND FOLLOWING

SETTING YOUR GOALS

Think for a few minutes about what your perfect labor experience might be. Consider who is with you, where you are and what things are available to you. Imagine how you might handle both the expected and unexpected situations that may arise. Reflect on which of these is the most important to you.

Keeping these things in mind, write out your plans. This will not be a script to be followed exactly, but a sort of calling card to help those with you understand what help you would like during labor.

Your Birth Plan is just as

important before labor begins as it is during labor. You should be using it to talk with your midwife about questions you have and options available to you. In this way, you can be sure you will work together to achieve the best labor experience possible.

Understand you may not be able to do anything on your birth plan. Your labor may move too fast for you to try some comfort measures or give birth where you had hoped. Or, you may be able to do everything on your birth plan with a labor that gives you plenty of time to try every comfort technique and ends with a

surgical birth they way you had planed for such an outcome.

Your success in labor is not determined by how strictly you follow your birth plan, but in how effectively your plan is able to meet your needs. For this reason you must know who you are and what you will need when you write your plan.

A plan that lists everything other people felt was important has little chance of expressing what you will need in labor. A well written plan helps those attending you know who you are and how they can be the most help to you.

GOD REMAINS IN CONTROL

The book of Judges shows an interesting way in which God works in our plans. Gideon was told to fight, but before God sent him into battle He weaned the army down to about 400 men.

This idea of decreasing the army size goes against our worldly wisdom of the way to achieve victory. In our minds we think, "Give me

more God, prove everything will turn out OK and then I'll trust you." Gideon had to trust God's seemingly backwards plan would work.

Yet this having less was exactly what God needed to show Gideon it was not the strength of his army that would win, but the strength of God.

Which leads us to an interesting question. What can God wean from your birth plan? Where might you be relying on your power or strength instead of God's?

More importantly, does your plan really express what you feel is important, or does it express what is socially acceptable? Was it written with God, or alone?

SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

- *Psalm 20:4*
May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.
- *Proverbs 15:22*
Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.
- *Proverbs 16:9*
In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.
- *Proverbs 20:18*
Make plans by seeking advice; if you wage war, obtain guidance.
- *Isaiah 55:8*
"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the Lord.
- *Zechariah 10:1*
Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime; it is the LORD who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone.
- *Haggai 1:5-6*
Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."