**These case studies are being collected to help understand the role of hypnotherapy, in this case for hypno-birthing.**

**This case study is written not only to give evidence of how hypnobirthing aids pregnancy and birth, but also to illustrate the importance of working in a completely individual and holistic way. How we live our lives is not the same as how we have experienced those lives, therefore the pathway to a calm birth can hold different feelings, experiences, and desires for each one of us.**

**Meet Rosie – not her real name:**

Rosie was pregnant with her second baby. The first time around, the birth had not gone to plan, and baby was born at home shortly after returning from the hospital with a diagnosis of ‘early labour’.

With this pregnancy, Rosie was understandably not only anxious about the birth but also about not being believed by the maternity staff regarding her progress of labour. She had set her heart on a waterbirth in the hospital with her partner present. Her hypnotherapy goal was to be calm, to be more present and to not worry about the what if’s. Rosie wanted to feel she had control over any given situation, and to be able to make informed decisions throughout her pregnancy and during the birth. She also wanted to allow herself to rest physically and emotionally, and to feel clearer and calmer about the present and the future.

Ultimately, she wanted a calm birthing experience; to have time for a water birth, and to have a stronger sense of control.

As is often the case, the second pregnancy can be an even more anxious time. Birth is traumatic – ask any woman who has given birth – therefore an important aspect of the pregnancy and birth is to feel like there is a joint element of control over any given situation or decisions to be made, and to be prepared for all eventualities.

**Process:**

We had 6 hypnotherapy sessions.

We began the sessions when Rosie was 28 weeks pregnant. We started with three 2-weekly sessions, followed by three 1-weekly sessions. Her partner was present for the first couple of sessions, but after that they decided for Rosie to have the sessions on her own. He was fully supportive of Rosie’s care and her goals.

The first 3 sessions focused on reducing general anxiety, and whatever else Rosie was thinking about at that time. After these sessions, we focused more on and around the birth itself and whatever else came up during these sessions. This is a natural part of hypnotherapy whatever the reason and in trusting the process and going with the flow, means that whatever the subconscious mind needs to deal with is the right thing. For Rosie, it meant that she was then able to create the space needed in her brain so to reduce anxiety giving clarity and calm which is so important during pregnancy and birth. By understanding this process helped Rosie to have gain control and therefore to be able to understand and trust both her mind and her body. Importantly, she was able to relax which contributed to her birthing experience.

**Outcome:**

Rosie had a calm and safe birth experience. She had her waterbirth and because she was so calm throughout, managed without much pain relief. There was no physical or emotional trauma, and she had the most beautiful baby girl.

**I asked Rosie to answer some questions. Here is what she said:**

**Why did you choose hypnotherapy and what was your initial understanding of hypnotherapy?**

I chose to do hypno-birthing, because, after the birth of my first child, I was anxious that I would have a similar experience. My first child was born unplanned at home and very quickly. I didn’t have any techniques to stay calm and it was a bit of a shock. My understanding of Hypnobirthing was breathing techniques, being able to separate myself from the pain and be calm.

**Did your goals change throughout the process?**

Yes - after the first session Pen identified some other anxieties I had, and we worked on those before continuing with birth specific sessions.

**Has hypnotherapy helped you to reach your goal/s?**

I was able to have a calm complication and intervention free water birth with only a small amount of Gas and Air.  I still use some of pen’s audios as I enjoyed the experience.

**How has hypnotherapy changed your life?**

Hypnotherapy has changed my life as prior to the course I had a tendency to catastrophize and had difficulty relaxing. More often now I can take things in my stride, and one thing at a time rather than jump to the worst possible outcome.