

Guiding Questions to Help You WRITE YOUR BIRTH STORY

Sometimes guiding questions are a great way to start. Use any of the questions below that apply to you to get a framework together, they may help you remember all the details.

- How did you know that labor was beginning? Where were you and what were you doing?
- What was early labor like? What did you do in between contractions?
- Who joined you and when? What did your partner/doula/family do to help you?
- When did you decide to transfer to the hospital or birth center, or call your midwife?
- If you drove somewhere, what was the car ride like?
- Did you listen to any music in labor? Watch any TV or movies? Post on social media?
- What was the room like that you gave birth in?
- What did your contractions feel like? How far apart were they?
- What was the hardest part about active labor?
- Did anything funny/unusual/weird happen during your labor?
- Did you eat or drink during your labor?
- Did you spend any time in the shower or tub during your labor or birth? What was it like?
- What positions did you labor in? Did you favor any particular positions?
- What did you use for pain relief? How well did it work?
- What medical professionals were there for your labor and birth? What did you think of any nurses, doctors, or midwives that you met?
- If you chose cervical checks, when and how dilated were you? Did you have any emotions about your progress? (Excitement, defeat, frustration, surprise, etc.)
- Did you have any physical side effects of labor? Back pain, throwing up, loose stools, hot flashes, shaking, etc.
- Did you use any visualizations or mantras during your labor? What were they?

- What did your support persons say to you to that was helpful or encouraging?
- Did labor ever stall or stop? What did you do to help it pick back up?
- When did you start pushing? Did you feel the urge to push or did your providers help tell you when to start?
- How long did you push? What were you thinking while you were pushing?
- Did you or your baby need/have any medical interventions?
- What was it like to meet your baby face-to-face? What did you hear? Feel? See?
- What was your partner's reaction to the baby being born?
- Did your baby look like you expected him/her to look? Did he/she have any vernix? Was his/her head shaped in any interesting way?
- Did your baby need any medical attention? Help with breathing, or taken to the NICU?
- What was it like to deliver the placenta? Did you do anything with it? (Look at it, lotus birth, encapsulate, consume, bury, etc.)
- Who cut the baby's cord?
- When did you name your baby? Why did you give your baby that name?
- How did you feel after baby was born? Did you have any tearing, stitching, or medical attention? (IV, pitocin, oxygen, etc.)
- Who was the first person to hold the baby?
- What was skin-to-skin like?
- Did you breastfeed baby? What was the first latch like? How long did baby breastfeed?
- If you bottle fed, who fed baby first? How did baby like it?
- Who was your first visitor? What was their reactions to the new baby?
- If you have other children, when did they come see the baby? What was their reaction?

These questions won't cover every birth situation. Use the ones that apply to you, they are just a springboard for your memories!