

Seminar 11: “Confident Birth”: How to lessen fear and stress during birth

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Background

The foundation of the book “Confident Birth” is that the knowledge of how to give birth already exists in the female body. On the other hand, feelings of fear and stress too often block this inherent ability, due to the fact that it triggers powerful survival mechanisms. The fact that more and more women today are experiencing fear and stress before and during childbirth is a well-known phenomenon within the maternity care sector. The problem has been *how* we can support and help birthing women to change these negative spirals created by stress and fear.

Aim

Confident Birth will not only deepen the understanding of how fear often has a negative effect on the delivery, but also provides a solution, based on physiology and modern science. The method is unique and has already been taught at several midwifery schools, conferences in Sweden and abroad and to staff at maternity wards in Sweden.

Methods

This oral presentation/workshop offers knowledge and practical training in how to detect, break and change stress patterns. The method used is based on physiological knowledge about the autonomic nervous systems role in birth and the existing evidence about the importance of support during birth.

Results

To educate midwives and other staff to become more competent and confident in their ability to give physical and emotional support to women during labour and birth. Despite the evidence that support has a significant impact on the medical outcome and the emotional experience of birth, there is a lack of training in *how* this support can be given.

Conclusion

In parts of Sweden and other northern countries the implementation of continuous support during active phase of labour is under development. With this comes a need of training expressed by many midwives. Confident birth offers a method to meet those needs.