

January 26, 2002

Dear Elly,

It has been a year since the wonderful birth of my daughter Sophia. The word wonderful is probably seldom used when referring to the birthing process.

Sophia is my second child. After the horrible experience I had when delivering my first child, I was certain that I would never have another. I had heard about hypnosis for childbirth through a friend and knew there had to be a better way. I called to make an appointment with you when I was already 38 weeks pregnant. You said the training requires 6 weeks. You were hesitant to take me so late, but after you heard my horror story of my previous 30 hours of labor, you were kind enough to give me a "crash course" on hypnosis for childbirth. I had only 2 sessions of training.

One evening I was at home and experienced cramping in my lower abdomen. It felt like strong menstrual cramps. I decided to listen to your self-hypnosis tapes. Suddenly I felt the urge to go to the bathroom and seconds later my waterbag burst. That's when I knew my labor had already begun. It felt as though the baby's crown was coming out. When my husband and I arrived at the hospital, there was no time to admit me properly. My nurse-midwife examined me and said, "you're dilated to 10cm. Go ahead and push!" I was completely hypnotized. I could hear everything around me. I did not experience strong, painful labor pains. Twenty minutes later the baby was born. The birth of my second child was much more peaceful and pleasant. The hypnosis, I felt, reduced my labor time. Hypnosis for childbirth allowed me to relax during the height of my labor. It also reduced any fear I had about labor.

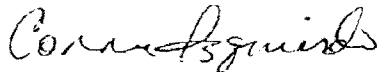
Little did I know that I would find myself in another fearful situation so soon after my labor. Just six weeks after my labor I experienced discomfort in my toe. My physician recommended that I see a podiatrist.

On the morning of my appointment I had my 3-year-old daughter and my newborn baby. The podiatrist took one look at my toe and said that I would need an emergency surgery to remove my toenail. I tried to convince the doctor to schedule my surgery for another week when I could arrange for a babysitter. The doctor said my foot would continue to get worse the following week. The physician began to prepare for surgery.

The nurse said that my surgery would require local anesthesia, which would be given via a shot in my foot. Once I saw the needle I said, "I'd rather not have the shot". The nurse replied, "Everyone has a shot, it's standard. You can't have surgery without it." Both the nurse and the doctor tried to convince me. Finally the physician said, "we can give it a try". I closed my eyes, held my daughter's hand and put myself under hypnosis. Unfortunately I didn't have my audiotapes with me, but I guess I didn't need them. When I opened my eyes, the doctor was wrapping up my toe. She said, "It's all over." She said, "It's amazing that you didn't need anesthesia." I never felt a thing. If it weren't for the bleeding, I wouldn't have believed that I had surgery.

Self-hypnosis proves to be a useful alternative to anesthesia.

Sincerely,



Connie Izquierdo