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## Preparing for Natural Childbirth

*Meditation, Pregnancy Yoga, Water Birth, Lamaze and More for a Drug-Free Delivery*

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Better for you and for your baby, natural childbirth poses fewer side effects, helps you stay fully aware, and gives you the opportunity to feel more empowered than any other event in your life. Of course, natural childbirth does involve a different approach to pain—one centered on working with the pain rather than blocking it—and so it requires achieving a sense of peace with that reality.

Natural childbirth preparation therefore involves practicing several useful techniques to help you achieve a greater sense of calm amidst the pain.

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including pregnancy yoga, Lamaze breathing, and meditation. The following are some of the best techniques for achieving the most positive natural childbirth experience possible.

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## Bradley Method

This natural childbirth method focuses on the education of women and loving support from a coach. By working on self-awareness and self-advocacy, as well as teaching the mother-to-be to lower the stress of labour through relaxation, the goal is to help women give birth drug-free.

## Meditation

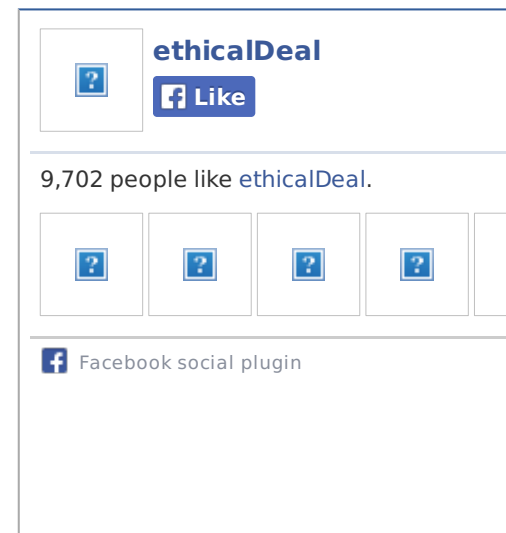
Meditation is incredibly healthy for **controlling everyday stress and anxiety** as we've discussed previously, but it can also be extremely beneficial during childbirth. Visualizations and focused breathing patterns help to release tension, make you feel nice and loose, and can decrease the sensation of pain.

## Exercise and Pregnancy Yoga

Light exercise—both cardio and strength training—are useful for childbirth preparation to help you be as fit as possible, which is important since childbirth is a lot like a long distance race requiring stamina and strength. Practicing yoga can be extremely relaxing for relieving the kinks of pregnancy and preparing your body for childbirth. Just be careful not to overstretch—your body produces a protein hormone called relaxin during pregnancy, making you more flexible than normal.

## Hydrotherapy (Water Birth)

Using water can help to ease the discomforts of childbirth. Best known as a water birth, hydrotherapy can take place in a tub, a baby pool, or Jacuzzi tub, and it benefits the labouring mom by helping her to remain alert while being immersed in water to relax muscles and relieve pressure on the body.



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## Lamaze

As one of the most well-known forms of natural childbirth, Lamaze also promotes education and advocacy to help women face childbirth with confidence, fully supported and informed. Classes in Lamaze cover topics such as anatomy, labor basics, and comfort measures such as Lamaze breathing techniques.

Other methods for achieving a natural childbirth include hiring a doula or teaching yourself hypnobirthing techniques.

## About the Author:

*Maryruth has been seeking the keys to environmental justice—both at home and at work—for over a decade. Growing up adjacent to wild spaces, Maryruth developed a healthy respect (and whimsical appreciation) for things non-human, but her practical mind constantly draws her down to earth to ponder tangible solutions to complex eco-problems. With interests that range from green living to green business, sustainable building designs to organic gardening practices, ecosystem restoration to environmental health, Maryruth has been exploring and writing about earth-matters for most of her life. Of special interest is the subject of ecopsychology and the role the natural world plays in the long-term health and well-being of humanity. You can learn more about Maryruth's work by [visiting her site](#).*

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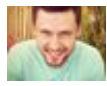
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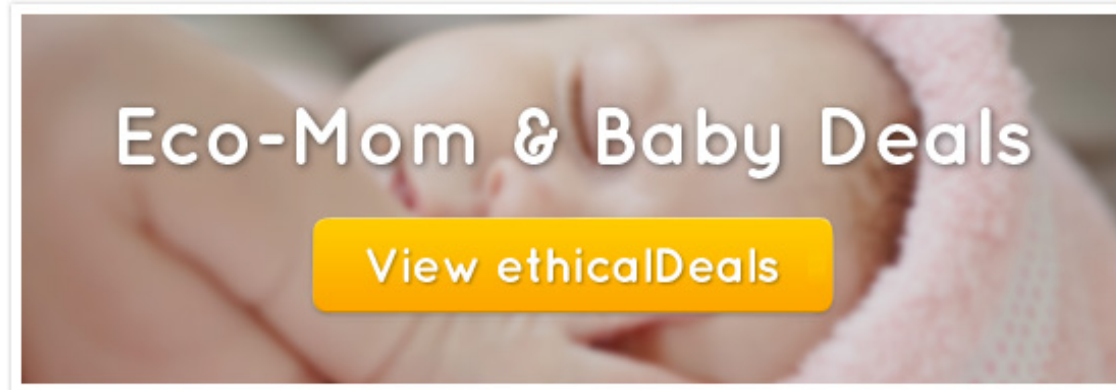
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