

I now pass on what I've learned



Melissa Spilsted, 43, Varsity Lakes, Qld.

It doesn't have TO HURT

The moment my husband Stephen and I had eagerly awaited had finally arrived.

Closing my eyes, I took another deep breath. I visualised myself riding over a wave in the ocean, then being drawn up to the peak and slowly coming back down on the other side.

I focussed on picturing that scene several more times.

Then, in total silence and feeling perfectly calm, I pushed my baby boy into the world.

"I've never seen a first-time mum so relaxed!" the midwife said, looking impressed as she placed my son, Sean, in my arms.

"You were amazing," Stephen said. I smiled. My whole labour and birthing experience had been

serene and beautiful. And it was all thanks to an article I'd read a month earlier on hypnosis for childbirth.

Obviously, I'd been terrified about giving birth. So no matter how far-fetched it sounded, I was willing to give anything a try to ease the pain.

I'd contacted a lovely woman who taught me self-hypnosis. The combination of breathing and relaxation

techniques had kept me calm throughout every contraction of my natural birth.

After Sean was born, I realised how powerful the mind can be. Just by concentrating on my breathing and the wave scene in my head, I was able to block out everything else.

Over the following few years I had two more positive natural births using self-hypnosis. It felt like I was daydreaming as my sons entered the world.

But I knew it wasn't the same for every mum. I'd heard some real horror stories.

I wanted to help

other women realise it doesn't have to hurt. So I decided to study hypnotherapy to teach others the skills that had helped me.

I became a clinical hypnotherapist and wrote a program for mums-to-be.

Soon after, I launched Hypnobirthing Australia – offering women classes to prepare them for a peaceful birth. I also created hypnosis

tracks which became available on iTunes.

Birthing professionals from all over Australia contacted me wanting to learn.

There are now nearly 100 certified practitioners throughout the country teaching my program.

I've recently created a world-first program to prepare parents for a scheduled caesarean birth using my techniques.

I'm so happy I can help women to enjoy the most magical day of their lives.

"My whole labour had been serene"

AS TOLD TO JOHN PARRISH

"You've got to be crazy!" he said. "You could buy a new car for 20 grand!"

But I was determined. After numerous vet examinations, the animals were cleared to migrate.

It took nearly a year to complete all the paperwork. Meanwhile, Damien and I got married.

Finally, we were ready to start our new life in Australia.

The animals flew from the UK to Singapore, then on to Melbourne for quarantine.

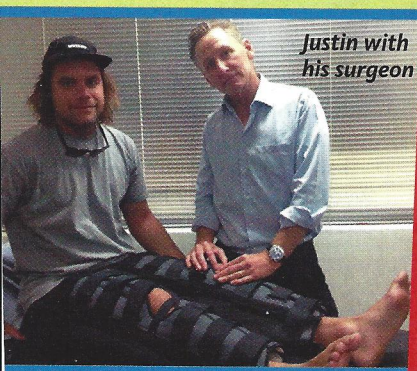
After 10 days there, we were finally reunited.

"My babies!" I cried, giving them all cuddles.

Everyone I tell thinks that we're nuts!

I'm driving a \$5000 car and could have got something much nicer if I'd left my animals behind.

But when I see my dogs running on the beach and my cat sitting in the sun, I know I did the right thing.



Justin with his surgeon

from a standing position.

After years of hard work and persistence I launched Couple It Undies Release Clips. And more recently I also launched Couple It Side Fastening Underwear – packs of three pairs of underwear with clips ready to wear.

Justin's now a bricklayer and so proud of what I've achieved.

I've won awards for my idea and my next goal is to see my undies in hospitals.

I've put my experience into an eBook called *My Great Idea*.

Hopefully, it will inspire others to follow their dreams!



Me with Stephen and our boys

AS TOLD TO SONJA KOWANJKO PICTURES: BREAKLIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

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