Experiential factors promoting normal birth and positive childbirth experience

Introduction: Substantial research has described risk factors associated with negative childbirth experiences.

Objective: To gain insight into factors that may promote normal birth and positive childbirth experience.

Design/Setting: In-depth interviews of 12 first-time mothers. Qualitative data were analysed through systematic text condensation.

Findings: Emotional strength, a supportive environment, stability in everyday life and close relationships were important factors. The women reported having a positive attitude toward the birth, wanting to give birth normally, and consciously using learned coping strategies. The midwife’s individualized care, behaviour and continuous presence were essential, since the midwife promoted the women’s inner strength and, in turn, self-empowerment.

Conclusion: A woman’s emotional strength and a supportive environment are important factors to normal birth and a positive childbirth experience. By mapping and strengthen pregnant women’s resources, midwives may contribute to their increased sense of empowerment and confidence, which are also promoting women’s long-term health.