

Emotional Signposts

of Labor

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1



Excitement & Nervousness

Early Labor

Laboring person is quick to smile and laugh, showing signs of excited nervousness.

Labor at home, rest as much as possible, eat and drink as you would on a regular day.

REST! REST! REST!

2



Focus & Seriousness

Active Labor

Contractions start requiring more concentration which slowly leads to more seriousness.

Focus on total relaxation at all times, find a rhythm that works for you. If birthing at a hospital, now is a good time to start moving in that direction.

3



Self Doubt & Uncertainty

Transition

The hardest, but often, shortest part of labor. Laboring person often becomes unsure of what they want, doubting their ability.

Try not to fight this stage, relax and trust that your body knows what it is doing. **You've got this!**

4



Motivation & Amazement

Pushing & Birth

Often pushing can feel very different from the rest of labor. You are now able to actively do something to move things along, instead of labor happening to you.

Follow your body and instincts on when and how to push.

You did it!

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Tips for Partners

1

Excitement & Nervousness

Early Labor

- Reminders to eat, sleep and pee regularly.
- Remind your partner to "Breathe all the way down to your baby."
- Be close, spend time together and distract with movies, games or other daily activities.
- Take on the tasks of getting any animals ready, other children settled, the car packed etc.

2

Focus & Seriousness

Active Labor

- Get serious too. Follow their lead and cues.
- Continue to offer sips of water or juice between contractions.
- Reminders to use the bathroom every hour.
- Stay close and help them maintain a rhythm.
- Camera Test - if they can still pose/smile for a picture, it's not time to call your team or head to the hospital just yet.

3

Self Doubt & Uncertainty

Transition

- Stay confident, and remind them of their ability. "You can do this! You ARE doing this!"
- "You are so strong!"
- Remind them you believe in them and that they are not alone.
- Help maintain or go back to a lost rhythm.

4

Motivation & Amazement

Pushing & Birth

- Continued encouragement.
- Apply cool washcloths to forehead and neck.
- Meet your baby!

You did it!