

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas

Active Birth: The New Approach to Giving Naturally by Janet Balaskas

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas is a revolutionary concept that has transformed the way we understand childbirth. This approach emphasizes the natural capabilities of a woman's body during labor and delivery, promoting movement, freedom, and active participation in the birthing process. Janet Balaskas, a pioneer in this field, introduced this method to empower women, reduce medical interventions, and create a more fulfilling birth experience. If you're curious about how active birth can change the way you perceive childbirth, this article will guide you through its principles, benefits, and practical applications.

Understanding Active Birth: A Fresh Perspective on Labor

Active birth is not just a technique; it's a philosophy that views childbirth as a normal physiological process rather than a medical emergency. Janet Balaskas, through her groundbreaking work, challenged the traditional hospital-bound, bed-confined methods of delivery. Instead, she advocated for allowing women to move freely, choose comfortable positions, and engage actively with their bodies during labor.

What Does Active Birth Entail?

At its core, active birth encourages women to listen to their bodies and respond naturally to the sensations of labor. Rather than lying flat on a hospital bed, women are free to walk, squat, sway, or use birthing aids such as balls and stools. This movement helps facilitate the baby's descent and can ease pain by using gravity to aid the process.

Janet Balaskas highlights that active birth involves:

- Freedom of movement during labor
- Upright and gravity-assisted positions for birth
- Minimal medical intervention unless necessary
- Supportive environments that respect the mother's choices

These principles create a nurturing atmosphere where the birthing woman feels in control and connected to the experience.

The Origins of Active Birth and Janet Balaskas's Role

Janet Balaskas is widely recognized as the mother of the active birth movement. Her journey began

when she experienced firsthand the limitations and discomforts of conventional childbirth practices. Motivated to improve this experience for women worldwide, she developed and popularized active birth through workshops, books, and advocacy.

Janet Balaskas's Contributions

Balaskas's book, **Active Birth: The New Approach to Giving Naturally**, became a seminal text that introduced these ideas to both expectant mothers and healthcare professionals. Her work emphasized that by enabling women to move and adopt positions that feel right, labor can become less painful, shorter, and more aligned with natural physiology.

Her teachings also focus on:

- Educating women about their bodies and birth mechanics
- Encouraging birth partners and midwives to support movement and choice
- Promoting holistic preparation including breathing techniques and relaxation

Thanks to her efforts, active birth has gained international recognition and is now incorporated into many birthing centers and home birth practices.

Benefits of Active Birth the New Approach to Giving Naturally Janet Balaskas Advocates

The advantages of adopting active birth principles are numerous and backed by research and anecdotal evidence alike. Women who embrace this approach often report more positive birth experiences and better outcomes for both mother and baby.

Physical Benefits

Moving during labor facilitates the opening of the pelvis, making it easier for the baby to navigate the birth canal. Upright positions harness gravity, which can accelerate labor progress and reduce the need for interventions like forceps or cesarean sections. Additionally, movement often helps manage pain naturally, decreasing reliance on epidurals or other medical pain relief.

Emotional and Psychological Benefits

Active birth empowers women, giving them a sense of control and accomplishment. This empowerment can reduce anxiety and fear, which are known to interfere with labor progression. The ability to choose positions and move freely creates a more relaxed and positive environment, fostering a strong bond between mother and baby from the very beginning.

How to Prepare for an Active Birth

If you're considering active birth, preparation is key. Janet Balaskas emphasizes education and physical readiness as essential components to successfully embracing this natural approach.

Education and Mindset

Understanding the stages of labor and how your body works during childbirth is empowering. Reading Janet Balaskas's book or attending active birth classes can provide valuable insights. Learning breathing techniques, visualizations, and relaxation methods also prepares you mentally and emotionally for an active birth.

Physical Preparation

Regular exercise that promotes strength, flexibility, and stamina can be very beneficial. Activities like prenatal yoga, swimming, and walking help condition your body for the demands of labor. Practicing different positions—such as squatting, kneeling, or using a birthing ball—can familiarize you with movements you might use during active birth.

Implementing Active Birth in Different Settings

One of the challenges and beauties of active birth is its adaptability. Whether you plan a hospital birth, a birthing center delivery, or a home birth, active birth principles can be incorporated.

Active Birth in Hospitals

While hospitals are often associated with more medicalized birth practices, many are now embracing active birth. Some maternity wards provide birthing pools, stools, and balls, and encourage women to move around during labor. Communicating your birth plan clearly with healthcare providers and having a supportive birth partner or doula can help ensure your preferences for an active birth are respected.

Home and Birthing Center Births

These settings naturally lend themselves to active birth because they offer a more relaxed, personalized environment. Women often feel more comfortable moving freely without the restrictions of hospital protocols. Midwives trained in active birth methods can provide guidance and support to maximize the benefits of this approach.

Common Misconceptions About Active Birth

Despite its growing popularity, some myths still surround active birth that may deter expectant mothers from exploring it fully.

Active Birth is Only for Home Births

This isn't true. Active birth can be practiced anywhere, including hospitals. The key is having a supportive environment and a care team willing to facilitate movement and choice.

Active Birth Means No Pain Relief

Active birth encourages natural coping mechanisms but doesn't exclude medical pain relief if needed. Women can still opt for epidurals or other interventions if they choose.

It's Too Difficult to Move During Labor

While labor can be intense, many women find that movement actually alleviates discomfort. Learning and practicing positions before labor can make moving during labor more manageable.

Active Birth's Impact on Modern Childbirth Practices

The influence of Janet Balaskas and the active birth movement has been profound. It has shifted perceptions from a passive, medicalized event to an empowering, natural experience. Many maternity care providers now integrate active birth principles into their care models, recognizing its benefits for mother and baby.

This new approach also encourages respect for the woman's autonomy and acknowledges the importance of psychological well-being during childbirth. As more research supports the benefits of movement, freedom, and upright positions, active birth continues to shape how we think about and support natural giving.

Embracing active birth the new approach to giving naturally Janet Balaskas champions offers a refreshing and empowering alternative to conventional birth. It invites women to trust their bodies, engage fully in the experience, and welcome their babies into the world in a way that feels right for them. Whether you're expecting your first child or expanding your family, exploring active birth can open doors to a more connected and fulfilling journey into motherhood.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Active Birth' according to Janet Balaskas?

'Active Birth' is a concept introduced by Janet Balaskas that emphasizes allowing women to move freely and adopt positions that feel natural during labor and birth, promoting a more natural and empowering childbirth experience.

How does 'Active Birth' differ from traditional childbirth methods?

'Active Birth' encourages women to be active participants in their labor by walking, changing positions, and using gravity to aid birth, unlike traditional methods that often involve lying flat and limited movement.

What are the benefits of practicing 'Active Birth' as per Janet Balaskas?

Benefits include reduced labor pain, shorter labor duration, decreased need for medical interventions, enhanced maternal satisfaction, and promoting a more natural and positive birth experience.

Can 'Active Birth' be practiced in hospital settings?

Yes, 'Active Birth' can be practiced in hospitals as long as healthcare providers support movement and natural positions during labor, and facilities provide adequate space and equipment like birthing balls or mats.

What role does the birthing partner play in 'Active Birth'?

In 'Active Birth', birthing partners provide physical and emotional support, help the mother maintain comfortable positions, encourage movement, and assist in creating a calm and supportive environment.

Are there any risks associated with 'Active Birth'?

'Active Birth' is generally safe for low-risk pregnancies. However, women with certain medical conditions or complications should consult their healthcare provider to determine the safest birthing approach.

How can expectant mothers prepare for an 'Active Birth'?

Expectant mothers can prepare by attending childbirth education classes focused on active birth techniques, practicing exercises that promote flexibility and strength, and discussing their birth plan with healthcare providers.

Additional Resources

Active Birth: The New Approach to Giving Naturally by Janet Balaskas

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas has redefined the landscape of childbirth education and practice since its introduction in the late 20th century. This paradigm shift encourages women to engage actively in the birthing process, emphasizing freedom of movement, informed choice, and a trusting relationship with their bodies and the natural rhythms of labor. Janet Balaskas, a pioneering advocate and author, has been instrumental in popularizing this method, which contrasts markedly with conventional, often medicalized, birth practices.

The concept of active birth presents childbirth not as a passive event controlled by medical interventions but as an empowering, dynamic experience. This approach invites expectant mothers to move, change positions, and use gravity to facilitate labor progression, thereby potentially reducing pain, shortening labor duration, and decreasing the need for interventions such as epidurals or cesarean sections. As birth practices evolve globally, revisiting Balaskas's contributions offers insight into how active birth continues to influence both expectant parents and healthcare professionals.

Understanding Active Birth: Principles and Philosophy

Active birth is fundamentally about respecting the natural physiology of birth and a woman's autonomy during labor. Janet Balaskas's book, "Active Birth," first published in 1983, laid the groundwork for this method by challenging the then-prevailing norms of labor management, which often involved women lying on their backs, restricted movement, and heavy sedation.

Core Tenets of Active Birth

At the heart of active birth are several key principles that guide the birthing experience:

- **Movement and Positioning:** Women are encouraged to adopt various upright and forward-leaning positions, such as squatting, kneeling, or walking, which help open the pelvis and use gravity to aid the baby's descent.
- **Freedom of Choice:** Laboring women maintain control over their environment and decisions, including the choice of birthing place and presence of supportive companions.
- **Trust in the Body:** The method promotes confidence in the female body's innate ability to give birth without unnecessary interference.
- **Minimal Medical Intervention:** Interventions are reserved for cases where complications arise, rather than as routine procedures.

These principles collectively foster a more holistic and woman-centered approach, contrasting with more clinical, intervention-heavy practices.

Janet Balaskas's Role in Shaping Modern Maternity Care

Janet Balaskas's advocacy was revolutionary for its time. Her work coincided with a growing movement questioning the institutionalization and medicalization of childbirth. By highlighting the benefits of active participation, she empowered women to reclaim childbirth as a deeply personal and natural event.

Her influence extends beyond writing; she founded the Active Birth Movement UK, which offers training for midwives, birth educators, and doulas worldwide. This network supports the dissemination of active birth principles, ensuring that they inform not only expectant mothers but also healthcare providers.

Impact on Healthcare Practices

Evidence suggests that active birth techniques can reduce the incidence of common birth interventions. Studies comparing active birth to conventional hospital births have reported:

- Lower rates of epidural analgesia usage
- Decreased need for instrumental deliveries (forceps or vacuum extraction)
- Shorter labor durations, particularly in the first and second stages
- Increased maternal satisfaction and sense of empowerment

Such findings have encouraged some hospitals and birthing centers to integrate aspects of active birth into their protocols, promoting more natural birthing environments and encouraging mobility during labor.

Active Birth in Practice: Techniques and Benefits

The practical application of active birth centers on creating an environment where the laboring woman feels supported to move freely and respond to her body's cues.

Movement and Positions

Unlike traditional supine or semi-recumbent positions, active birth encourages positions such as:

- **Squatting:** Widens the pelvic outlet and uses gravity to assist fetal descent.

- **Hands-and-Knees:** Can relieve back pain and rotate the baby into an optimal position.
- **Walking and Standing:** Promotes progress in early labor and may shorten its duration.
- **Sitting on a Birth Ball:** Provides comfort and facilitates pelvic mobility.

These positions enable the mother to work with her body's natural mechanics rather than against them.

Breathing and Relaxation

Balaskas emphasizes controlled breathing and relaxation techniques that help manage pain and anxiety. These practices complement movement by promoting oxygenation and reducing muscle tension.

Partner and Midwife Roles

Active birth also redefines the role of support persons. Partners and midwives act as facilitators, offering physical and emotional support while respecting the mother's autonomy. Their presence is crucial in ensuring the woman feels safe and confident to follow her instincts.

Comparing Active Birth with Conventional Birth Practices

In many Western healthcare settings, childbirth has traditionally been managed in a highly medicalized manner. Women often labor in bed, receive continuous electronic fetal monitoring, and are subject to standardized protocols that may limit movement and choice.

Active birth contrasts with this model by:

- **Encouraging Mobility:** Movement is restricted in conventional settings due to monitoring equipment and IV lines, whereas active birth promotes movement for comfort and progress.
- **Reducing Routine Interventions:** Conventional births often involve routine interventions like induction or episiotomy, while active birth reserves these for medically justified situations.
- **Enhancing Psychological Well-being:** Active birth's emphasis on empowerment correlates with lower rates of postpartum depression and higher satisfaction scores.

However, active birth is not without its challenges. It requires supportive environments and trained

personnel who respect and facilitate this approach. In some hospital settings, institutional constraints and liability concerns may impede its full implementation.

Global Influence and Contemporary Relevance

Since its inception, Janet Balaskas's active birth philosophy has transcended the UK to influence childbirth practices worldwide. Many birthing centers, home birth midwives, and natural childbirth educators incorporate its principles, contributing to a broader movement toward less interventionist maternity care.

In contemporary discourse, active birth aligns closely with other natural birth approaches, such as the Lamaze method and hypnobirthing, all of which emphasize empowerment and non-pharmacological pain management.

Moreover, the rise of patient-centered care models and shared decision-making in obstetrics echo the values underpinning active birth. As more women seek personalized birthing experiences, the demand for approaches like active birth is likely to grow.

Challenges to Wider Adoption

Despite its benefits, several factors limit active birth's widespread adoption:

- **Institutional Barriers:** Hospitals may prioritize standardized protocols for efficiency and risk management.
- **Training Gaps:** Not all healthcare providers are trained in active birth techniques or philosophies.
- **Cultural Attitudes:** In some societies, medicalized birth is perceived as safer or more modern, making natural approaches less appealing.
- **Access Issues:** Women in rural or underserved areas may lack access to active birth education or supportive practitioners.

Addressing these barriers requires ongoing advocacy, education, and policy reform.

The Future of Active Birth and Natural Childbirth

Janet Balaskas's active birth the new approach to giving naturally continues to inspire innovation in maternity care. The increasing emphasis on holistic well-being, personalized care, and informed consent aligns perfectly with active birth's ethos.

Technological advances, such as wireless fetal monitoring and portable birthing aids, may facilitate greater mobility and freedom during labor, bridging the gap between medical safety and natural birthing practices.

Furthermore, interdisciplinary collaboration among obstetricians, midwives, doulas, and childbirth educators is essential to integrating active birth principles effectively within modern healthcare systems.

As research accumulates supporting natural, active approaches, the potential for widespread transformation in childbirth experiences becomes increasingly tangible. Women's voices, empowered by knowledge and choice, remain at the forefront of this evolving narrative.

Active birth, as championed by Janet Balaskas, is more than a method—it is a movement toward recognizing childbirth as a profound, natural journey that honors the strength and wisdom inherent in every woman.

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active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: Active Birth - Revised Edition Janet Balaskas, 1992-03-16 It's time to empower yourself and just say no to giving birth passively. This is the book that has revolutionized childbirth, turning birthing mothers from subdued and passive patients to active and empowered owners of their childbirth experience. Janet Balaskas started a movement of women who refused to give birth lying down and she has been teaching women about active birth" ever since. She emphasizes the importance of movement during labor, the wide range of options and positions for delivery itself, and the many natural alternatives to heavy sedation and other medical interventions. Her book is eminently useful whether you are planning to give birth in a hospital, a free-standing birth center, or at home. If such options as water birth or hypno-birthing are appealing to you, this is an essential book; at the same time, it is non-judgmental and encourages you to give birth in whatever manner and position you see fit. It covers: Exercises for pregnancy, to prepare you optimally for childbirth Massage and yoga during labor Labor and birthing positions that maximize your comfort and encourage efficient contractions Essential tips for birth partners, spouses, doulas, and other attendants Relaxation and recovery exercises, for the postpartum period Janet Balaskas shows you how to prepare for and experience a truly natural, joyful, and empowering birth.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: Natural Hospital Birth Cynthia Gabriel, 2017-08 Offers expectant mothers seeking natural childbirth in a hospital a detailed look at pregnancy and labor, explaining how to create a mutually supportive relationship among birth-care providers and make informed choices.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: Natural Hospital Birth 2nd Edition Cynthia Gabriel, 2018-05-15 Many mothers-to-be find themselves torn between choosing a natural childbirth with minimal medical intervention, and the peace of mind offered by instant access to life-saving technology that only a hospital can provide. Cynthia Gabriel, a doula who has attended hundreds of births and who advises hospitals on how to facilitate low-intervention childbirths, knows that new moms can have both. In this fully updated edition of her popular and pioneering book *Natural Hospital Birth*, Gabriel gives moms, as well as partners and even medical personnel, concise and reassuring guidance on how to have as natural a birth as possible in a hospital setting. Gabriel shows expectant mothers how to avoid unnecessary medical interventions,

how to take the initiative and consciously prepare for the kind of birth they want, and how to prepare a birth plan to share with doctors and nurses at the hospital.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: An Image of My Name Enters America Lucy Ives, 2024-10-15 From a "brilliant, one-of-a-kind maestro" (Booklist), a vibrant tapestry of memoir, research, and criticism Again, today, if I must choose between love and memory, I choose memory. What would you risk to know yourself? Which stories are you willing to follow to the bitter end, revise, or, possibly, begin all over? In this collection of five interrelated essays, Lucy Ives explores identity, national fantasy, and history. She examines events and records from her own life—a childhood obsession with My Little Pony, papers and notebooks from college, an unwitting inculcation into the myth of romantic love, and the birth of her son—to excavate larger aspects of the past that have been suppressed or ignored. With bracing insight and extraordinary range, she weaves new stories about herself, her family, our country, and our culture. She connects postmodern irony to eighteenth-century cults, Cold War musicals to a great uncle's suicide to the settlement of the American West, museum period rooms to the origins of her last name to the Assyrian genocide, and the sci-fi novel *The Three-Body Problem* to the development of modern obstetrics. Here Ives retrieves shadowy sites of pain and fear and, with her boundless imagination, attentiveness, and wit, transforms them into narratives of repair and possibility.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: The Expectant Parents' Companion Kathleen Huggins, Kathleen Huggins, RN, MS, 2010-10 The number of "must-have" baby products has exploded in recent years, spawning a whole category of baby-gear guides targeting new parents. The *Expectant Parents' Companion* goes beyond these product guides and helps moms-and-dads-to-be prioritize all of the practical things they need to do to prepare for baby's arrival and decide for themselves which baby products will help make their first year with a new baby easier and simpler. In her trademark reassuring tone that emphasizes simplicity and practicality, Kathleen Huggins offers advice on which items to buy, which to borrow, and which are not worth getting, plus guidance on what parents can do to create a safe and comfortable environment for baby. There are chapters on preparing for the baby's birth (including choosing a childbirth class, creating a birth plan, preparing for labor, and choosing a pediatrician), feeding, nurseries and sleeping arrangements, clothing, diapering, daytime gear, traveling with baby, baby proofing the home, and other safety measures. The book also provides guidance on choosing a day care provider, plus checklists for pregnancy and the early months with baby, a recommended reading list for new parents, and more. With 25 years of experience working with pregnant women, new moms, and newborns, Huggins is uniquely qualified to guide expectant parents through these often confusing and sometimes overwhelming decisions. The *Expectant Parents' Companion* will affirm many parents' instincts that they do not need as many baby products as marketers (or even well-meaning friends and relatives) suggest. It's the only book parents-to-be will need to navigate the dizzying array of products and choices available!

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: Journey Into Motherhood Sheri Menelli, 2005-09 Providing both inspiration and education, this guide to natural childbirth offers 48 personal accounts of labor and delivery without medication. Revealing the many options women have beyond birthing location, the testimonials offer insight into the joys, concerns, and realities of natural birth. From delivering at home with a midwife and hearing the right words from a hospital nurse at just the right moment to describing a combination of the Bradley method and acupuncture at a birthing center and discussing a child's birth at home in warm water, this resource combines personal insight with referential information. A glossary of terms and a resource guide to books, magazines, websites, videos, and CDs, and listings of childbirth classes and instructors nationwide are also included.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: The Double Goddess Vicki Noble, 2003-06-19 The first book to seriously study the double goddess that figures prominently in Neolithic and Bronze Age cultures. • Offers an important symbol for modern women seeking to reconnect with their ancient, integral sense of self and wholeness. • Presents an

archetype for the sacred potential of female bonding, whether between mother and daughter, teacher and student, friends, or lovers. • Illustrated with 149 examples of double goddess images. Numerous figures depicting two women in intimate relation with one another, or as a single body with two heads, have been discovered in important centers of early civilizations such as Catal Huyuk and Gozo. These have been routinely ignored by scholars or dismissed as mere dolls with no sacred connotations whatsoever. Vicki Noble shows, to the contrary, that this double goddess is an ancient icon that can considerably expand our understanding of female sovereignty, as well as provide contemporary women with a way to reconnect with the integral sense of self and wholeness enjoyed by their ancestors. Ancient Goddess religion was informed by the organic cycles of nature--the dual poles of Life and Death. The double goddess represents phenomena such as the Earth-Moon pair, the Upper-Underworld pair, the Summer and Winter poles of the seasonal year, and the dual poles of the female biological reality of menstruation and ovulation--the dark and the light. The double goddess in all her varied forms also depicts the vast array of potential relationships women can form with themselves and each other. This book is a celebration of an archetype that not only empowers women, but also teaches them how to share that power with each other.

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active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *Gentle Birth Choices* Barbara Harper, 2005-08-09 Birth as every woman would like it to be • Recommended by Lamaze International as one of the top ten books for pregnant women and their families • Includes a 45-minute DVD of six live gentle births • More than 32,000 copies sold of the original edition New parents are faced with a myriad of choices about pregnancy, labor, and birth. In *Gentle Birth Choices* Barbara Harper, renowned childbirth advocate, nurse, former midwife, and mother of three, helps to clarify these choices and shows how to plan a meaningful, family-centered birth experience. She dispels medical myths and reimagines birth without fear, pain, or violence. Harper explains the numerous gentle birth choices available, including giving birth in an independent birth center, at home, or in a hospital birthing room; finding a primary caregiver who shares your philosophy of birth; and deciding how to best use current technologies. She also provides practical advice for couples wishing to explore the option of using a doula or water during labor and birth to avoid the unwanted effects of drugs and epidurals. The *Gentle Birth Choices* DVD blends interviews with midwives and physicians and six actual births that illustrate the options of water birth, home birth, and vaginal birth after a prior Cesarean section. The DVD clearly reveals the strength of women during childbirth and the healthy and happy outcome of women exercising gentle birth choices. It is a powerful instructional tool, not only for expectant parents, but also for midwives, hospitals, birth centers, and doctors.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *Experienced Doula* Cassaundra Jah, CPM, IBCLC, 2011-03-17 If you are an experienced hospital doula here is your most valuable resource - a guide to advanced skills, tips, tricks and techniques. Based on the belief that people become empowered through experiences which awaken within them the knowledge that they are strong, capable and wise; discover how a doula's actions from interview to last postpartum can increase the potential for this self discovery. • Expand with business, marketing and social media skills • Form healthy working partnerships • Clear birth prejudices, prevent trauma and dive deeper with clients • Utilize the hospital setting to your advantage • Build knowledge about interventions, lactation, and remedies • Learn about transitioning into a lactation consultant or midwife Combining

facts, humor, and a grounded empowered voice, you'll find the skills taught invaluable, making it one of the most important labor companion books you'll ever read and recommend.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *Gentle Birth, Gentle Mothering* Sarah Buckley, 2013-02-20 An authoritative guide to natural childbirth and postpartum parenting options from an MD who home-birthed her own four children. Sarah Buckley might be called a third-wave natural birth advocate. A doctor and a mother, she approaches the question of how a woman and baby might have the most fulfilling birth experience with respect for the wisdom of both medical science and the human body. Using current medical and epidemiological research plus women's experiences (including her own), she demonstrates that what she calls undisturbed birth is almost always healthier and safer than high-technology approaches to birth. Her wise counsel on issues like breastfeeding and sleeping during postpartum helps extend the gentle birth experience into a gentle parenting relationship.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *Real Birth* Robin Greene, 2015-07-14 Intimate and intensely personal, the forty-five first-person narratives contained in *Real Birth: Women Share Their Stories* offer readers a window into the complex and emotionally exciting experience of childbirth. Women from a full range of socioeconomic backgrounds and circumstances recount the childbirth choices they've made and the ways those choices have played themselves out in the real life contexts of their everyday lives. Readers meet women from all over the country who speak to us directly--no interviewer intrudes, no judgments intrude, and no single method of childbirth is advocated. Instead, these women offer us their candid experiences, presented clearly and unflinchingly. Medically reviewed by physicians Dr. Richard Randolph for the first edition and Dr. Deborah Morris for this second edition, *Real Birth* offers readers a plethora of correct information as well the kind of real scoop that other books and health care professionals are often reluctant to reveal. The result is a well-grounded book that reaches across the boundaries of childbirth literature. *Real Birth* is introduced by Ariel Gore, journalist, editor, writer, and founding editor/publisher of *Hip Mama*, an Alternative Press Award-winning publication about the culture of motherhood. Also included are an extensive glossary of medical terms, a thoroughly researched selective bibliography, and a list of resources of interest to pregnant women and new moms.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *The Essential Homebirth Guide* Jane E. Drichta, Jodilyn Owen, Christianne Northrup, 2013-02-12 Two midwives present the *What to Expect When You're Expecting* for homebirths—with a foreword by Dr. Christiane Northrup. Birthing is a miraculous time when you and your baby will work together to bring about life. As you finally cradle your precious newborn in your arms, you should know deep in your soul that every decision that brought the two of you to this special moment was yours. More families than ever are choosing to birth at home. Midwives Jane E. Drichta and Jodilyn Owen answer questions about the kind of care, support, and information you need as you investigate whether this option is right for you. Birth can be an empowering and positive experience, and this book provides gentle guidance, with high regard for your wisdom and ability to successfully navigate your prenatal care, birth, and early mothering. Enriched with real birth stories from new mothers, *The Essential Homebirth Guide* offers thoughtful, compassionate advice on a wealth of birthing topics, including: - Building a supportive homebirth community. - Caring for yourself and your baby from your pregnancy through the postpartum period. - Communicating about your birthing plans with your midwife, your partner, and your family and friends. - Deciding whether homebirth is safe for you. - Educating yourself about common pregnancy-related issues. - Preparing your home and your family for the big day.

active birth the new approach to giving naturally janet balaskas: *The Nursing Mother's Companion, 7th Edition, with New Illustrations* Kathleen Huggins, 2017-05-01 Respected for over 30 years as the definitive guide, now more than ever, *The Nursing Mother's Companion* is the go-to guide every new mother should have at hand. Breastfeeding is natural, but it is not always instinctive for either mothers or babies. *The Nursing Mother's Companion* has been among the best-selling books on breastfeeding for more than 30 years, with more than 1 million copies sold. It is respected and recommended by professionals, including The International Lactation Consultant

Association, T. Berry Brazelton and The American Academy of Pediatrics, and is well loved by new parents for its encouraging and accessible style. Kathleen Huggins equips breastfeeding mothers with all the information they need to overcome potential difficulties and nurse their babies successfully from the first week through the toddler years, or somewhere in between. This fully updated and revised edition provides information on topics such as: Benefits of breastfeeding How to cope with breastfeeding obstacles and challenges Incorporating a nursing routine into working life Treating postpartum headaches and nausea Nutritional supplements to alleviate postpartum depression Sharing a bed with baby (co-sleeping) and the risk of SIDS Introducing solid foods Expressing, storing, and feeding breast milk Reviews of breast pumps You will also find Huggins's indispensable problem-solving survival guides set off by colored bands on the pages for quick reference, as well as appendices on determining baby's milk needs in the first six weeks and the safety of various drugs during breast-feeding. Plus, this edition opens with a new Foreword by Jessica Martin-Weber, creator of the very popular website The Leaky Boob and a new Preface by Kelly Bonata, creator of the go-to site KellyMom. These two much-loved authorities speak to the importance of owning an authoritative breastfeeding book that cuts through the jumble of opinions, information and misinformation on the web.

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