

## BIRTHING BABY WITH YOGA

Using the following positions during pregnancy and labour may help you advance your labour and ease your discomfort during the process.

### **BIRTH SQUAT:**

**During Pregnancy:** Practice this position for opening the hips. Also practice kegels during this pose.

**During Labor and Delivery:** Use this as a position to open up the pelvic outlet (achieves about 3 mm or 10 % greater space). Helps to bring baby down into the pelvic outlet. Gravity also assists as you are in an upright position. Can be done with less effort by sitting on a birth/exercise ball or supported by partner or birthing bar.

### **WARRIOR LUNGE (with rocking):**

**During Pregnancy:** Helps to strengthen legs and bring awareness to core strength. Also manipulates pelvic outlet as you move in and out of this position. Pay attention to the pelvic outlet as you rock in order to make mind-muscle connection resulting in greater control of the pelvic floor.

**During Labor and Delivery:** Alter this lunge by elevating your foot onto a chair. Using the same rocking motion will change and manipulate the pelvic outlet. This can help to bring a baby lower into the pelvic outlet. Can also help to maneuver a posterior (mal positioned) baby into an anterior (optimal) position.

### **CHILDS POSE WITH KEGELS**

**During Pregnancy:** Provides a relaxed position to open hips and pelvic outlet. Helps to relieve lower back pain as it lengthens stressed lower back extensors. This is another great position in which to do kegels.

**During Labour and Delivery:** Use as a position of recovery between contractions. Take nice long cleansing breaths here, allowing your body to achieve complete relaxation before tackling the next wave of intensity. This position can be used in combination with the birth/exercise ball to add support and an upright angle to child pose, using gravity to help descend the baby further.

### **HALF CAT COW/ HANDS AND KNEES PELVIC ROCKING**

**During Pregnancy:** Relieves lower back pain and increases core strength. As you pull the pubic bone forward feel your lower spine release and abdominal core tighten. As you do a posterior pelvic tilt (away) from the body feel the opening of the pelvic outlet.

**During Labor and Delivery:** Use this hands and knees position to relieve back labor. Use the pelvic rocking motion to help move baby down into the pelvic outlet and achieve optimal birthing positioning.

### **BELLY BREATHING WITH LOW TONING**

**During Pregnancy:** Use to strengthen the abdominals needed for pushing out your baby. Take a deep breath in and release your breath with a vocal tone that is as low as you can make it. Feel your abdominal wall tighten and your pelvic floor relax. This technique helps woman make the mind to muscle connection needed for pushing in delivery.

**During Labor and Delivery:** Use during labor to manage contractions as low toning has shown to help woman lessen their experience of pain. The theory is that endorphins are released into the body offering a natural pain inhibitor. Alternatively woman who scream or use high-pitched tones during labor tend both tighten their pelvic outlet and worsen their experience of pain. Using low toning during the pushing phase of labor helps isolate the abdominals that provide the push and relaxes the pelvic floor to provide the largest opening for baby to pass through.