



## Client Testimonial and Birth Story

*What a journey this was! From pre pregnancy phobias right through to postnatal support, I was blessed enough to be there next to Josie and Andrew. Here Josie talks about their story and how investing in their experience of starting a family was a non-negotiable for them from the very start! A wonderful journey of strength, challenges, team work and intuition. Enjoy!*

I've been meaning to do this for a long time but each time I start my son stirs. So, as I lay here nap trapped by him at 15 weeks old I thought I'd write our story.

Terri is a guiding angel in our story and her hypnotherapy, hypnobirthing and Doula skills helped us have our miracle baby and to come out the other side with positivity and strength on what truly was a rollercoaster journey.

The rollercoaster started in 2020 when we decided to seek advice as each month passed and no positive pregnancy tests decided to show.

Then came January 2021, when our world was shattered, especially my husbands who was sadly diagnosed with an extremely low sperm count, with little to zero chance of being able to conceive naturally. We waited for our first fertility consultation in February 2021 and learnt there weren't any other options for us other than IVF with ICSI. As someone who has fainted in many medical scenarios with needles, the hurdles to achieve our dream of having a baby were huge for me. Thankfully a very dear friend of mine who had used Terri's hypnobirthing course pointed me in her direction.

In May 2021, I started a trauma rewind hypnotherapy course with Terri, partly on zoom and partly face to face because of the pandemic. To say this was magical and that I had a moment where I released my internal fear is a real understatement.

Hypnotherapy is not what you think. It is a gentle unwrapping of the past thoughts and feelings and reframing the situation in your mind. I recommend it to anyone with a challenge they need to overcome. With my past traumas dealt with, June 2021 was when our cycle of IVF commenced. My husband watched as I completed my first injection and was totally amazed by the relaxed way which I did this. Along came the harvesting; another situation that I was apprehensive about, but again I surprised myself, the fear was not present as I walked into the room and lay down for the first ever sedation and surgical procedure of my life.

Embryo one we sadly miscarried at 8 weeks. (Oct 2021)

Embryo two sadly never took. (Feb 2022)

Embryo three turned into our miracle boy Maximus (born Feb 2023) who truly lives up to his name as the greatest ... our greatest gift. He was nearly binned on day 5 (the day they usually freeze good Embryos or dispose of poor Embryos that are likely not going to take) as he hadn't quite made the growth needed but he was 'looking good' so he was given an extra night. So, on day 1 of carrying the first Embryo we heard that his Embryo had made it and was being frozen as a day 6 AB graded Embryo. We were over the moon and hoped between our three good quality Embryos, we might be lucky enough to have a baby.

Once successfully pregnant with Embryo number three, I knew I had to book us onto Terri's hypnobirthing course, as the next challenge would be bringing our little one safely into the world. My husband and I entered Terri's course with nerves and many concerns over how I'd birth our baby and how he would support me in doing so. We left with confidence and so much knowledge over what birthing journeys can look like, as well as importantly our rights during the birthing process. The thing that stayed with me most is that women are magical creatures who achieve growing life, birthing life and then feeding life; something society seems to have forgotten to keep championing!

After the course we discussed having Terri as our Doula and it just felt right, after all the investment to date towards having a child, we didn't stop now.

We met Terri several times to discuss our birth wishes and made our birthing plan. One of the most important aspects of this was her encouragement to think of all birth eventualities from spontaneous to c-section. We created a plan for each possibility and thank goodness we did as our wish for a water birth at the birth centre was sadly not the story that played out. The skills we learned however, were essential to our story remaining positive.

At 38 weeks I woke in the night and felt more swollen than my norm in my legs and feet. I took my blood pressure, and it was high, of course the machine then died! Typical! I lay awake worrying for a while and then decided to wake my husband. We rang the emergency triage and got advised to get checked in the morning at our local midwife hub. This confirmed I had high blood pressure again so off to DAU we went where I was tested over several hours. In the end the advice was to decide about bringing the baby out via induction or c-section between 39 and 40 weeks (at this time I was only a few days away from being 39 weeks)! We went home and I spent the next 12 hours crying over what to do. In my gut I knew what the answer was and that going through the induction process and the uncertainty it can bring after all we'd been through was not going to be our route. We decided on an elective c-section, albeit it was far from what I wished for or thought I could handle.

We were booked in for the c-section on Thursday and told that we wouldn't be able to have Terri with us because we'd be in the smaller of the two operating theatres, due to us being on the elective list. This was hard to process but Terri was utterly amazing and adapted her service to our situation and completed a pre section session and then supported us virtually throughout. Thank goodness, as our first c-section date was cancelled on the day due to pressures and moved to the next day!

Once in the operating theatre, the hypnobirthing skills we'd learnt came into their own. We had all the things we possibly could in a medical environment to keep the oxytocin flowing and support us both to

stay calm. I recited birth affirmations in my head and used the breathing techniques as my spinal injection was inserted and then the c-section completed. My husband helped ensure I kept focused on my breathing and used touch to help me stay grounded.

As we learned we had a little boy and he was shown to us for the first time we were beaming. What a journey it was, but he was finally safely earthside and in our arms.

Our story however didn't stop there and we were kept in hospital for few days due to my blood pressure still not reducing - in fact it kept going up despite using all of the calming tricks we'd learned on the course, plus some medication! We managed one night at home before being readmitted due to Max having jaundice and my blood pressure still not playing ball! Terri was fantastic and visited us in hospital as well as checking in on us regularly on the phone. I don't think I'd have personally coped in the early days and weeks as well as I did without all that Terri's teaching had equipped us with, as well as her support throughout.

To anyone we meet, we champion hypnotherapy, hypnobirthing and doula services -especially those of Terri. Even my husband who was a little dubious about booking and attending the course is telling all his friends who are expecting a baby to do so! We truly believe the investment in her services has helped us to have the most amazing birth, despite it not being what we had hoped for at the start of our journey.

Pregnancy and birth can take many journeys and through using all that we learned and listening to my body, we have our beautiful baby boy. There are no words to truly express what this means to us. Terri will always be held in our hearts.

To those reading this to help decide on whether to use Terri for any of her services. DO IT, do them all, we promise you, you won't regret it.