AIMS For a better birth...

My favourite birth was an induced birth!

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Don't get me wrong, I really do not like 'Induction', and I am not an advocate, but I do think it helps women to be able to hear about the induced births that turned out well.

The birth of my second baby was an unnecessary induction due to being "overdue".
If I knew then, what I know now, would I have done things differently? Yes.

I would have questioned the reasoning behind the induction, and I knowing what I do now, I would have said no.
But I didn't. I didn't know I could say no.

The reason they gave for induction was that I was "2 weeks overdue", when in fact I wasn't even "overdue". I was made to feel like my body was failing me. I didn't know that my baby would have come anyway.

I was told that my placenta would fail the baby, and any delay would be risking her life.
If I knew then what I know now, I could have requested a Doppler scan, which measures the blood flow through the umbilical cord and around different parts of the baby's body. They can check to ensure the baby is getting all of the oxygen and nutrients they needs via the placenta.
My baby was still active, and I felt very tuned into her, but this would possibly have helped me feel confident with just waiting until my baby triggered spontaneous labour.

With hindsight I would definitely have said no to induction, but my hindsight isn't all bad, as the birth

turned out well anyway… I do feel that I was lucky though.

I feel lucky that despite the induction I experienced an Orgasmic Birth. I had no idea that was even a thing. At the time I kept it super quiet, didn't mention it to anyone, and hoped that my husband and midwife didn't notice.
I do wonder how much better it could have been if it was spontaneous labour. Probably less time and less intense.

For a little bit more insight into where this birth story fits in context with my other experiences of birth, I will share a snapshot.

1st baby (7lb 6oz), spontaneous labour at 41+3, traumatic, epidural, 3x failed ventouse attempts, then forcibly removed from me by forceps and cord cut from around babies neck before her shoulders were even born. Such a badly handled birth. Full of fear.

2nd baby (9lb), pessary induced at 42 weeks, orgasmic birth… my favourite birth of all!

3rd & 4th babies (4lb 14oz & 6lb 1oz) Gel induction at 38 weeks. Birthed naturally, 10 minutes apart. Amazing birth. I now know that I can do anything.

5th baby (Surrogate pregnancy with embryo from the biological mother, ie not my egg - around the 10lb mark) 43 week induction (pessary, then synto drip, 3+ days of great unpleasantness, finishing in emergency cs). My least favourite birth to put it mildly.

6th baby (2nd surrogate birth, same parents, around the same weight as her sister). Spontaneous birth at 41+3. Successful and very healing & empowering VBAC.

I went into my first birth very naively. I thought that the midwives would truly have our best interests in mind, and there was no point making birth plans etc, as I would just do as they told me anyway. It was the most hideous idea… so as I went into my second pregnancy, I made an effort to learn more about my body, the physiology of birth, sought out support, and made some better plans.

All that being said, I turned out to be very lucky too, as I had the best midwife I could have had at that point in labour. I had never met her before that moment. She just made me feel safe.
She believed in physiological birth, she believed in my body, in the dance between me and my baby, she believed in me, and she made sure that I knew it.
She listened to me, and acted accordingly. She made sure I was warm, that I had privacy, motivated me when I needed it, and allowed me to be quietly inside of myself when I needed to. She supported my husband to support me in the best way that he could do (by being distracted!)

Her support made the birth what it was. I spent the time between contractions resting in an exhausted upright stupor, but then during the contractions I spent my time reading the same 3 lines (warning

sticker) on the electrical arm of the bed. I was resting over the back of the bed at the time.

I don't know how long that birth was. I think it was only about 12 hours from the pessary being put in, to my baby being born. But it felt far longer. It was probably only that short due to the fact that I had already birthed a baby previously.
The early stages really felt like forever. I remember the previous shifts' midwife doing a couple of vaginal examinations and telling me the same thing both time "unfavourable cervix, 2cm dilated. No real progress", and I remember how heavy my body felt when I heard those words. Those words triggered disappointment, lack of faith that I was capable of doing it right, they made my body feel like a lead weight, one that I was totally disconnected from my own body. My mind became busy, and full of self-doubt.

Then the shift ended and my midwife changed. The minute she walked into the room and introduced herself, I felt myself relax. I felt safe with her.
She asked if I wanted her to check my progress, and I agreed. She said something along the lines of: "Lovely. You are 2 and a half cm… great progress".

I know, I know… no one measures in half cm… and I knew that at the time too, but it didn't matter. What I heard was motivation, someone who cared about the words she was using. A midwife that made me feel like she had my back. Her words and positivity triggered something in me. A spark of hope, optimism, my body shifted, not sure how, but changes happened.

I birthed my baby within an hour of that conversation.

Never once did she say that I couldn't be ready to push, as she had only just checked my cervix, never once did she doubt me.
She made a gentle suggestion to move, when I was pushing, and encouraged me to a new position and added a mirror, so I could see what my efforts were doing.
Then, with a huge orgasmic rush, my baby was born.
I slipped down onto the bed and drew my baby up to my chest. My husband didn't faint in this birth, as he was busy with the camera, capturing the very moment, when I pulled baby Eva up to meet me face to face for the first time.

As a birth worker, it still surprises me when I say that my favourite birth was an induced birth, but it'strue.