## ‘Soften’ relaxation

Just allow your breathing to slow down and deepen; so comfortable and so serene. As I speak, let your eyes close gently and easily, so that you start to relax, serenely and confidently. Breathe comfortably, slowly and deeply. Allow your body to sink ….. deeply relaxed ….. completely comfortable……

Now let the relaxation in your eyelids spread outwards to your forehead so that it too relaxes and becomes smooth and comfortable. Enjoy the feeling of comfort and wellbeing.

Just pause for a short time, and now allow the relaxation to spread naturally from your forehead, to the bridge of your nose, flow in and around your eyes, and on downwards through your cheeks, to your jaw, and your neck, everything relaxing as the soothing comfort gently spreads.

Now allow your mouth to let go as well, so that it is entirely soft and comfortable, with your lips and your eyes gently smiling.

Feel your tongue releasing completely naturally in your mouth, so that now your whole face and head are totally and gently relaxed. Enjoy the feeling of comfort and wellbeing.

Finally, allow your shoulders to release and sink to their natural level, so that your whole body is calm, limp and relaxed, and your breathing is soft and slow.

I want you to imagine now that you are looking up at the sky. The sky is overcast with dark, heavy clouds. The clouds represent any worries you may have about birth and any pain. Now a ray of bright sunlight penetrates the clouds, shining directly down on you. You can feel its warmth, and you remember that, above the clouds all is sunshine, warmth and softness.

In a moment I am going to say the word ‘sssoften’. Are you ready now? ‘Sssoften!’ As you hear the gentle rushing sound of the word ‘soften’, feel yourself rising gently higher and higher along the ray of sunshine, easily, lightly. Are you ready now? ‘Sssoften!’ ‘Sssoften!’ You hear the air rushing beside you and, as you approach the clouds, the fear and the imagined pain intensify, but the ray of sunshine protects you – ‘Sssoften!’ - and you rise through the clouds to the softness and light above the clouds, so soft, so warm, so safe, so comfortable; to the place of confidence, calm and comfort. Enjoy the experience of confidence, calm and comfort.

Now you look down through the clouds along that ray of sunshine and see yourself with the sunshine shining on you down below. All the confidence, calm and comfort flow into your body and mind as you sit where you are now. Notice that as you see yourself you feel confident, calm and comfortable. All is well. All is very well. Your subconscious mind has absorbed the confidence, calm and comfort permanently. Now these changes have been made, float gently back into your body again as you sit in this room. And now rest in the sure knowledge that this wonderful calm relaxation is there for you when you give birth to our baby so gently and naturally, filled with serenity and confidence.

You realise your body has been specially designed to give birth naturally, easily and comfortably, so you look forward to giving birth to our baby as the most wonderful and empowering experience, and meeting our baby happily and calmly.

Next time you will go even more deeply, easily and quickly into relaxation, knowing how good it feels and how comfortable it is, and each time you hear the word, ‘Sssoften!’ you are filled with confidence, calm and comfort. Now open your eyes and take your time fully becoming aware of your surroundings, gently and calmly.

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## Stroking relaxation

Gently and easily allow your eyes to close…. so that you can better focus on my voice. ….. Just allow your breathing to slow down and deepen ….. so comfortable and so serene. …..Now feel the weight of your feet on the floor (***or on the bed***), ….. As you focus on your feet, ….. feel all your stress and tension flow irresistibly down out of your body through your feet …..down into the ground ….. to be replaced by a wave of relaxation and serenity ….. so you feel relief and comfort ….. as a feeling of warmth and wellbeing permeates your whole being. Your breath becomes slower and deeper, ….. slower and deeper. ….. Comfort and wellbeing.As I speak, I’ll begin to stroke your hand very gently and softly.

***Start stroking her hand and arm, speaking slowly and calmly.***

Just allow yourself to enjoy the pleasant sensation in your hand, ….. the soothing, relaxing touch. Your hand feels as though it is safely enveloped in a silk or velvet glove. ….. Endorphins spreading throughout your body …..So soft ….. so warm ….. so safe ….so comfortable.

Now you notice that all feeling begins to fade away from your hand. ….. You can feel my touch, ….. but all you are aware of in your hand is warmth and comfort, ….. maybe a slight tingling, ….. and your hand becomes increasingly numb, ….. it rests relaxed, loose and senseless. ….. As I keep stroking, ….. so the feeling in your hand becomes less and less. …... You feel so relaxed, ….. because you know your hand is completely safe and comfortable ….. and gradually your hand becomes more and more free from sensation ….. until you feel nothing at all in your hand

Now you can apply this warm, comfortable numbness wherever you wish to in your body. ….. All you have to do is just bring to mind the part of your body that will be free from sensation, ….. and all feeling gradually fades gently away, ….. fades gently away. ….. Enjoy this sensation ….. Comfort and wellbeing. As you are now very relaxed, just spend a little time to:

1. Allow a feeling of wellbeing and empowerment to permeate your body, and fill you with confidence at the birth of our baby.
2. Appreciate the power of your maternal intuition, that guides and protects you and our baby through labour and birth.
3. Grow in confidence that your body has been made to give birth efficiently and calmly.
4. Allow your body to loosen and relax, as it will during labour and our baby’s natural birth.
5. Allow your mind and body to grow in harmony for a swift and gentle labour and birth.

***(Pause.) Stop stroking.***

This has been a very special time as you become so relaxed and happy in the knowledge of the fulfilment that is before you in the birth of our baby. You now know that you are able to affect your body as you wish. But in a minute it will be time to come back to me in this room, bringing the calm confidence with you, wonderfully relaxed, refreshed and empowered, confident that our baby’s birth will be relaxed and healthy, calm and quick. Knowing that, next time we do this you will relax even more deeply, your confidence will be even more profound, and you will quickly become even more free of all sensation ….. and now, in your own time, open your eyes – wide awake and alert. © Copyright Katharine Graves 2015

## Calming touch

**(Gently rest your hand on her abdomen)**

As my hand rests on your abdomen, so your eyes close, and your eyelids rest just as lightly, just as gently on your cheeks, as your breathing slows and deepens….. slows and deepens. Allow your attention to rest on your eyes, relaxed and calm, on your jaw, relaxed and calm, on your shoulders, relaxed and calm, on your stomach, relaxed and calm, on your feet, relaxed and calm, on any other part of your body wherever you choose relaxed and calm. Your whole body sinks into deep and comfortable relaxation, deeper and deeper, so comfortable, so easy; a wonderful feeling of wellbeing. Every organ and cell within you functioning healthily, easily, restfully. Calm and serenity flowing throughout your body and filling your mind with confidence and trust. And every time you feel a hand on your abdomen, you will immediately go twice as deeply into relaxation.

Now observe that your breathing has slowed ….. and deepened. Breathing in ….. and breathing out …….. , breathing in …. and breathing out …… Deeper and deeper ….. so comfortable, so profound.

Now I shall gently raise your arm a little. Let me take all the weight **(raise arm).** Notice how heavy it feels. It feels very, very good just to allow me to lift your arm, knowing that, in a minute, when I gently let go and let if flop down onto your lap, your relaxation will deepen more and more **(let go of arm)**.

Now again, just notice your arm rising easily as I raise it **(raise arm)**. And when I drop it your relaxation will be very, very deep **(release arm).** So deeply relaxed. Deeper and deeper.

And again, now, I’m gently raising your arm **(raise arm).** As I let go, you go many times deeper **(let go of arm)**. Deeper and deeper. More and more relaxed. So comfortable. So profound.

As you rest, so comfortably and calmly, notice a colour gradually entering your mind….. A colour that carries with it all the calmness and relaxation that you have just created…… A colour that you can bring to mind at any time, any time at all, to take you powerfully into this wonderful deep relaxation that you are experiencing now. And each time you bring this colour to mind you become more calm, more relaxed and confident, and you feel happy and positive about the birth of our baby.

Enjoy this unique comfort and depth of relaxation that you have created in your body and in your mind. Deeper and deeper. Know now that this easy, deep relaxation is there for you as you, your body, and our baby share the empowering experience of labour and birth, gently, confidently, calmly.

You realise your body has been specially designed to give birth naturally, easily and comfortably, so you look forward to giving birth to our baby as the most wonderful and empowering experience, and meeting our baby happily and calmly.

Allow this feeling of intuitive confidence and calm to remain with you as you gradually become aware of your surroundings again and, in your own time, open your eyes, calm and aware, awake and confident, both now and when you gently and naturally give birth to our baby. © Copyright Katharine Graves 2015