

Nancy Cooper: Okay, I think we are recording.

Melanie Kinsey: Yay!

Nancy Cooper: Yeah. Hi, welcome. Thank you everybody for bearing with us while we tried to go live. I had to do the good old Zoom. It always seems to really work. I want to introduce Melanie Kinsey. She is ... What would you call it? A hypno birthing therapist, or instructor?

Melanie Kinsey: Instructor. I'm a Hypnobabies childbirth instructor.

Nancy Cooper: Okay. That's a mouthful.

Melanie Kinsey: Yes.

Nancy Cooper: How did you get into doing this?

Melanie Kinsey: I have three kids, all three natural, but the first two were the grin and bear it method. Not a whole lot of planning. With my daughter, I had friends that had done Hypnobabies and actually knew an instructor. They're the ones that convinced me that I needed to do it. It was a beautiful birth. She was a complete cake walk, and then after that I just couldn't imagine not teaching. So when we moved back to Indiana, I immediately started researching what I needed to do to become an instructor.

Nancy Cooper: How long have you been doing this now?

Melanie Kinsey: A little over two years.

Nancy Cooper: Okay, great. And you love it?

Melanie Kinsey: I do. I love working with expecting moms. I love working with their birth partners and watching them grow because everyone comes in very skeptical to begin with, and then by the time they leave class six, they've grown tremendously. So I love it.

Nancy Cooper: That's great. Tell us what hypno birthing is.

Melanie Kinsey: Hypnobabies is a six week childbirth ed class. We cover everything: health, nutrition, exercise, process of birth, the whole nine yards. Then also we teach medical grade hypnosis. This is something someone would use if they were allergic to anesthesia and needed to have dental work done, anything of that nature. They would learn hypnoanesthesia so that they could have those procedures performed. So same thing, but we teach this to moms. It's called Eyes open Childbirth Hypnosis. So they're able to learn relaxation techniques,

fear clearing techniques, and then tons of positive affirmations so they can go into birth positively and stay calm, relaxed, and very much in control.

Nancy Cooper: How do they get into that state? Do they have to watch like a watch, or-?

Melanie Kinsey: No, nothing like that. Hypnosis is a very common state of mind that you're in every single day. If you're engrossed into a TV show, you laugh, you cry. You've been driving in a state of hypnosis. If you go from one place to the other, especially a common drive from work to home, and you're not really paying attention and you pull up at home and you're like, "Oh wow, I don't even remember making this drive." That's a state of hypnosis because your subconscious is doing all the work for you, and you're kind of thinking about something else. That's a state of hypnosis. We teach moms how to control that, how to enter hypnosis and stay relaxed.

Nancy Cooper: Okay, yeah. Is it six classes?

Melanie Kinsey: It is six classes, yes. Classes are about three hours long, once a week for six weeks. That's about how long it takes for a mom to really learn what she's doing with hypnosis confidently.

Nancy Cooper: Then do you do group classes, or are they individual?

Melanie Kinsey: Well, both. I do some individual classes. I really prefer to do group classes, and that's no more than six couples, or single moms. Both are welcome, obviously. But yeah, no more than six moms in a class. I love teaching group classes because people start feeding off one another. I feel like they learn better because people will ask silly questions that they think is silly but are actually really relevant, and they don't necessarily ask those questions with private classes.

Nancy Cooper: That makes sense, yeah. Or they might learn from the other participants and not thought of something that they asked. Do you have to have a partner to do this, or can you do it by yourself?

Melanie Kinsey: You don't. The program is set up for a birth partner because we love teaching dads how to truly be a birth partner and not just someone that gets to sit on the sideline holding mom's hand. We love to teach them how to support mom, what they can really do, and how to do that effectively. But for moms that don't have that birth partner or maybe it's mom or sister or whoever, they're always welcome to come. But we also are set up to help moms that don't have birth partners, as well.

Nancy Cooper: How is it viewed in a hospital setting? Are they okay with hypno birthing, or Hypnobabies?

Melanie Kinsey: Yes, they are. A lot of physicians love seeing Hypnobabies. If a mom is going to do natural childbirth, physicians usually recommend some kind of childbirth ed, and I know a lot of physicians, they really like Hypnobabies because they feel like if you're going to study something, Hypnobabies is usually the most successful because it is so complete. It's a building block, so it's step by step each week we teach something new. They learn each step very thoroughly, versus a lot of programs are like, "Here, read a book." Or, "Here, listen to one track." We actually have a six week manual. We have a quick reference guide. We have cheat sheets for moms so they don't have to remember everything. Then we have 18 audio tracks as well-

Nancy Cooper: Oh, wow.

Melanie Kinsey: ... for moms to use.

Nancy Cooper: I was reading that some people do this online. What's the difference between doing hypno birthing online, or Hypnobabies ... I keep calling it the wrong thing.

Melanie Kinsey: Yes, so there is now an online class, and then there's a home study course. It just kind of depends on the person. When you're doing an in-person class, a group class, you also get to meet other people. You stay more on track because you have someone holding you accountable for your work each week. "Did you do all your home play? Did you listen to your audio tracks? Did you read your materials? Did you practice?" That type of thing. Then when you're at home, you might pick and choose. Like, "Oh, well, I really like this part of it, but I don't want to do this part of it." You really have to do the whole program for it to be effective. It's easier to commit when you're going every week to a class, versus online. Then also you have an instructor that will answer all your questions and things of that nature.

Nancy Cooper: We found out this summer that my daughter is not very good at online. She did an online gym. Most people get As in gym, and she didn't. I said, "I don't think online is for you." I think it takes a special person to [crosstalk 00:07:33] online.

Melanie Kinsey: Yeah. Someone that's really committed, that will do every single step, they can be more successful. People that do the online, they still have the option of contacting an instructor if they want to do one in-person class or if they have questions. They can still contact an actual instructor if they're needing extra help outside of it.

Nancy Cooper: What kind of person can do ... Can everybody do this? I mean, because there's some type A people that might not be able to relax. Can they do it? What's the best candidate?

Melanie Kinsey: It's actually more beneficial for them because people that are like, "I am not a relaxed person. I'm always going. My mind never stops." This is actually a

chance for them to fully relax and actually go ahead and turn off all that thought process. So usually those are the ones that really excel because-

Nancy Cooper: They're overachievers?

Melanie Kinsey: They are overachievers, but they're the ones that really put in the work and they are very critical of everything. So they want to make sure they're doing everything right. But honestly, just about anybody. If you can watch a movie and cry or laugh, you can absolutely learn hypnosis. But it is a practiced skill. It's not something that you can just do a few times and then think that you're going to get the full benefit. It is a six week course. You do have to do it for six weeks, and then the time after the class, up to your birthing time, that's time that you have to spend practicing using it.

Nancy Cooper: Will moms have a pain free birth, then, if they use this?

Melanie Kinsey: I usually don't like saying pain free. There are moms that do have the pain free births, but it's not a medicalized birth. It's not your pain meds, it's going to completely numb you out and you're not going to feel anything. You still feel all the stretching and sensations of birth, but you're not going to feel them in a pained way. You're going to be able to relax. You're going to feel pressure, and there's suggestions in all of our audio tracks and verbiage that we use that will ... Contractions are not contractions. We say pressure waves, pressure sensations, things of that nature, so that moms are able to feel them in that manner versus anything that's "painful."

Nancy Cooper: Right. Let me see if I forgot anything. Will a mom remember her birth if she does this?

Melanie Kinsey: Absolutely!

Nancy Cooper: Okay.

Melanie Kinsey: Yes. If anything, I believe that you're able to remember it a lot more because you're so calm and in control. That's the biggest thing that people see. You know, a mom will walk in to be admitted in triage and she'll be six, maybe even eight centimeters dilated, and she walks in completely calm and in control. Then of course the nurses at the desk are always like, "Oh, well, we're sending her home." They get her back there and check her, and they're like, "You're eight centimeters? Really?" The mom's just completely calm, talking in between her pressure waves, and happy. So it's nice, being able to watch moms do that.

Nancy Cooper: If they get to a point where they do need medical intervention, like a C-section, unfortunately, does it still help them at that point, too?

Melanie Kinsey: It does. Usually medical interventions are going to be more if mom has just had a really long birthing time, she's tired, she's worn out. Maybe she goes in, she

has an epidural, or maybe she has to be induced with Pitocin for whatever medical reason. Those are things that she's going to be able to cope with a lot better because she's going to be able to be calm and still use all of her tools that she's learned. Even with C-sections, you're still going to be able to be calm. There's a lot of anxiety involved there, when you're told maybe ... Your birthing plan was a completely natural birthing plan, and all of a sudden maybe for whatever reason, you're looking at a caesarian. Moms can use their hypnosis tools to stay calm and relax through that.

Nancy Cooper: Good. Have you noticed moms saying that they use these tools after having a baby?

Melanie Kinsey: Absolutely, yes. Because there's still all the after birth stuff. You still have all the cramping and all that, that you go through. The mental tools is amazing because we talk a lot about how the mind works and about language and using positive language and how that influences the way you think and the way you behave. We talk a lot about that in class, and that carries on through the rest of your life. Then relaxation tools, a lot of moms will still use their cue word, such as peace or relax, and they're still able to use all of that.

Nancy Cooper: Okay, wonderful.

Melanie Kinsey: Yeah.

Nancy Cooper: Let me think if there's anything else I wanted to ask you. Let's see here. Did I ask you if they still need to take a childbirth class?

Melanie Kinsey: With it being a complete childbirth ed, we actually ask moms not to take other childbirth classes. I know with Sacred Roots they require you to take their childbirth ed, and that's fine. But as far as trying to take Lamaze or Bradley or something through the hospital, it's not required because we do teach a complete childbirth ed course.

Nancy Cooper: Wonderful.

Melanie Kinsey: Along with the hypnosis.

Nancy Cooper: Awesome. Before we end our call today, is there any tips you want to leave for expecting moms? Before that even, I need your contact info. We want to share how to get a hold of you, too, if anyone is interested in taking your classes.

Melanie Kinsey: Tips would be any mom that's looking to have a more natural birth, or even just an easier birth. Maybe mom is not ready to commit to going into birth with no epidural, but she's wanting way to cope with birth early on, before that. I would really suggest making sure to take a good childbirth ed class. Doing your research early on, not leaving it at 36 weeks and all of a sudden, "Oh, man. I didn't take any childbirth ed classes!" Because it really makes a big difference,

being mentally prepared going into birth, knowing all of your options so when a doctor comes along and says, "You know, we'd like to try this or this." You know what they're talking about. You know the risks and you know the benefits of what they're talking about. That helps with the anxiety.

Nancy Cooper: Oh, okay. Good.

Melanie Kinsey: Then as far as contact. Right now I teach out of IU Methodist, downtown Indy. I don't have another class until February, so it's February 7th through March 14, Thursday evenings up there. That will be my only class for end of winter/spring class. Then as far as contacting me, I do believe the class is listed on their website, but I also have a Facebook page, which is Serenity Birthing. Class and contact info is on there, as well.

Nancy Cooper: Okay. Wonderful. Well, we'll make sure to put the contact info on the Facebook page with this video so that people know how to get a hold of you.

Melanie Kinsey: Sounds good.

Nancy Cooper: I really appreciate you coming on today. I, again, apologize for all the technical problems

Melanie Kinsey: No problem. [crosstalk 00:15:26]

Nancy Cooper: I'm glad we connected because it's really good information that we were able to get from you today. So thank you again. I really appreciate it.

Melanie Kinsey: Thank you.

Nancy Cooper: Then we will post this on Facebook and be able to rewatch it.

Melanie Kinsey: Sounds good.

Nancy Cooper: All right. Thanks, Melanie.

Melanie Kinsey: All right, thanks.