

Labor Rehearsal:

- A. Turn off the lights (?). It is 2:00 a.m. when pregnant women, you wake from a sound sleep with “cramps.”
 - a. What is your first response?
 - b. What is the most logical thing to do? (*go back to sleep, if possible*)
- B. You have difficulty going back to sleep and relax yourself through “thinking into relaxing” or a simple tense-relax exercise (from face to toes).
- C. You just get back to sleep and you have another very strong contraction.
- D. A trip to the bathroom confirms there is a little blood-tinged mucus coming from your vagina.
 - a. What does this mean? (possible cervix dilation)
 - b. What should you do now? (*go back to sleep, if possible*)
- E. As you start to leave the bathroom, there is a very strong contraction and you feel a great deal of wetness between your legs; you turn on the bedroom lights.
 - a. What does this mean? (probably your bag of waters has broken or is leaking and you should wake or call your partner and perhaps notify your caregiver).
 - b. Now what do you do? (prepare to go to your birth place is “standard” answer, I would suggest spending much more time at home!)
- F. You are getting very excited and tense.
 - a. How could you relax and focus? (lots of possibilities, do a brief partner-led relaxation here)
 - b. What do you need to gather up for your trip to the birth place?
- G. You stand up to walk out to the car—couples stand up and walk a few steps—and a very hard contraction comes quite fast; assume the slow-dance position and practice a one-minute contraction.
- H. Walk back to your car (chairs) and sit as if you are riding in a car with partners keeping eyes forward; another intense contraction comes—partners, talk her through the contraction reminding her to relax, focus, and take a deep relaxing breath at the beginning and end of the contraction.
- I. You arrive at the hospital and park where?
- J. You enter which door?
- K. Have couples practice at least two contractions for early labor, active labor, and transition with different scenarios (back pain, etc.)
- L. Assume your favorite pushing position (practice three contractions)
- M. Take a look at your baby! How do you feel? Does your baby look the way you thought you baby would look? (many of us expect a “model baby”—most babies are a surprise!)

Modified from exercise in the manual for *Pregnancy, Birth, & You* published by ICEA (www.icea.org).