

This Is My Story

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Abstract: The following narrative is based on notes from a personal meeting between the editor, Jeane Rhodes, and Josep Font in June, 2018. Mr. Font had contacted Thomas Verny after reading his book, *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child*, requesting an in-person meeting to relate his experience of having lived with intense memories of his gestation and birth experience throughout most of his life. He reported that finding Dr. Verny's book felt like discovering a lifeline to acceptance of his personal experience.

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This is my story. I am 52 years old, and I remember my birth. It is not a joke. For me, it is not a gift, it is a great pain and, of course, there is no pleasure in remembering pain. Everyone has paid for birth with pain. I have not talked about it before because I am afraid of what people might think about me. My wife, my sons, my mother, and my brothers know about it.

There was a time when I started thinking, when I first realized myself. I do not know when or how, but I knew that I was aware of my being, but not of my limits. This is my secret story that I did not tell anyone for fear of ridicule and joke. I remember that I had a lot of space available, remember the movements of my mother, when she ran or hurried. I remember incomprehensible sounds that kept me curious about everything that surrounded me. I remember thinking with emotions, not words or phrases. I thought with feelings and emotions. Everything surprised me although I was rarely afraid, only curious. I felt safe even though I did not understand who I was or what I was. I remember first experiencing touch and hearing.

I felt a wide space for moving about and there were many moments in which I understood that I rested or slept. It made me angry that my mother was so busy and moved so fast. That disturbed me and scared me. The emotions I felt and the thoughts associated with the emotions were intense. I felt tired and I did not know anything about the physical limits I had.

As I grew, I noticed that the space was smaller and I remember that it worried me because, as time went on, it became overwhelming. My shoulders touched the walls of the enclosure (I later learned this was my mother's womb) and that made me very uncomfortable. I was aware that

I was sleeping and dreaming, and when I woke up, I felt more confined. I dreamed sensations, I did not dream images. I mixed reality with sleep. Very often I was half asleep.

I think I experienced some kind of pleasure that my mother had to experience. She shared emotions with me or I felt she shared them. I did not know what my mother was and here I was inside of her, but I was aware that outside there was something interesting and diverse because of the sounds and movements made by the body where I lived.

There came a moment in which I experienced a huge excitement and my temperature increased. I noticed that I was beginning to sweat. I felt a lot of fear and an uncontrollable force directed me towards the end of where I was. I just wanted to sleep, but I was very scared. My skull got stuck and deformed which caused me unimaginable pain, increasing my state of alarm. My head was freezing cold and I was sweating at the same time. I noticed an external force that pulled me out and pain all over my body, especially in my head.

I saw lights and wanted to be with my mother, but unfortunately my time with her lasted little.

I could not stand the pain, I was cold and shivering. I felt an external force grabbing me. I was afraid of being devoured and I was aware of death as a personal choice. If I could not stand the pain, I could choose to die. I decided to live. They gave me a blow that scared me and I began to breathe and experience the immense expansion of the lungs, I remember how the air came in for the first time as if it were dense and acidic. It made my pain conscious and I cried and I heard myself. I remember lights as I was coming out of the uterus and I remember the water running down my back when I was washed and the pain of the cutting of my umbilical cord. He did me a minor damage but it was very annoying. I remember that my feet touched a metallic surface that I understand now was the scale and finally the desire to be with the being that was my mother. I remember that I was tired and I fell asleep with the discomfort of the umbilical pain.

I saw lights and again wanted to be with my mother but, unfortunately, again, the time with her lasted little.

After my birth I dreamed about it, with the sensations of pain as if they burned me alive, so indescribable and intense pain, as if to desire death. That dream was repetitive and lasted several years. I asked my younger brothers if they had suffered a lot when they were babies, but nobody answered affirmatively. At ten years of age, I saw a film of a birth and observed that the succession of sensations was identical to what I was seeing in my dream. I realized then that I had been conscious of my birth.

My lifelong experience of remembering my birth has been both a blessing and a curse. A blessing in the sense that I have always had this

awareness of how precious life is and knowing that I made a choice to live when death seemed to be the easier option as I was being born. A curse in that I felt so alone and that there was no one with whom I could talk about these experiences.

As I have lived with this and contemplated the meaning and how I could share this with others, it has occurred to me that different levels of consciousness seem to be associated with the levels of awareness that evolved as I acquired various sensory capabilities. I recall that touch was first, then hearing, and finally the perception of light. I am currently working on a book where I can go into more depth about my memories and delve more deeply into this theory of the connection between the acquisition of sensory capabilities and levels of consciousness.

I am now so grateful to have found others who truly understand my memories and can help me process them. Although my mother has always been willing to listen and encouraged my growing understanding of the origin of these memories, she was the only one I could talk with for so many years. My wife also accepts the reality of my memories.

Living with the physical sensations and emotions in my childhood was very difficult as I had no words to describe what was happening. Discovering at age ten that these sensations might be related to my birth, started me on the long path to putting words to this early experience. I am now grateful for having these memories as inspiration to share my experience and help others who may be living with this type of vivid recall of prenatal life and the experience of birth.