



peace

sixth sense

Emma Smith recounts how God equipped her to deal with a neonatal emergency

As I walked up the steps to the birth centre for my night shift, I prayed (as I always try to before each shift) that the Lord would help me be a good and safe midwife. A few hours into my night shift, a lady expecting her first baby was admitted to the birth centre in early labour. Expecting that the birth might be hours away, I offered her pethidine, commonly given for analgesia in labour. Shortly after the pethidine was administered, her labour unexpectedly

progressed rapidly, and she started to deliver. Although a rare complication of pethidine, being an opioid, it can sometimes cause respiratory depression in babies if given close to delivery, and they may need resuscitation. The birth centre is a low-risk environment for mothers and babies without complications, and as most healthy babies will be born not requiring any form of resuscitation, the resuscitator (a machine for neonatal resuscitation) is kept outside the labour rooms should it be needed.

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Knowing that this mother had received pethidine close to her delivery, I chose to bring the resuscitate directly outside the room, just in case.

The instant this baby was delivered, I knew something was wrong, as it was pale, floppy, and not breathing. I immediately asked my assisting midwife to bring the resuscitate into the room and put out an emergency call.

Thankfully, the baby responded very quickly to resuscitation and required no further assistance. It was only on my own reflection later that I realised I had been anticipating that emergency, and, dare I say it, a part of me almost knew it was going to happen. How did I know? There had been no indication in the fetal heart monitoring prior to birth that this baby might need help at delivery. The more I thought about it, the more I had to conclude

that this 'sixth sense', as some might call it, could only be God-given. Sceptics might say that it was purely my training that prompted me to bring resuscitation equipment close by, but how could they then explain that sense I had that I would meet with an emergency? My heart rose in thankfulness towards the Lord for his help, as a delay in getting the resuscitate into the room could have resulted in a poor outcome for the baby.

Over my years as a midwife, I have frequently known God's help in my work, and at times his protection. I am often reminded of the verse, *'He guided them safely, so they were unafraid'*. (Psalm 78:53) He takes seriously our cries for help, and while he still allows difficult times, it is possible to practice and live without fear because of our experience of his closeness and help.

So, those of you who find yourselves with a quaking heart, maybe as newly qualified or simply just battling with anxiety, have courage and remember these words in 1 Chronicles 12:18, *'Peace, peace to you, and peace to your helpers! For your God helps you.'* (English Standard Version) 🌟

Emma Smith is a midwife in Surrey, England

Let us consider

HOW

we may spur

ONE ANOTHER ON

towards

LOVE & GOOD
deeds

Hebrews 10 v 24