

Life with Krysti

Contributed by Krysti Rogers

Full circle: To return to a place of origin through a series of developments.

It doesn't seem all that long since my Sarah made her way into my life, bringing with her the monumental changes that come with the territory of childbirth, all of which no baby book or TV channel had realistically prepared me for. A ridiculously controlling Type A and completely uptight personality, I had a hell of a time – literally – bouncing back. Between battling wicked bouts of postpartum depression to nearly a suicidal level, trying to handle the guilt and embarrassment of not being able to pull myself together and forgiving my own personally seen failure of having to have a c-section instead of a “normal,” natural birth, I was, well, a tad overwhelmed. Some took the journey vicariously through me, a few passing judgment, making the assumption that I didn't want to be a mom, others offering support and yet others watching, unsure of how to help. I emerged on the other side of the whole ordeal very jaded, jealous and resentful of anyone having a remotely positive birth experience. I resented my husband for his luxury of returning to work and his life

as usual, and even felt on occasion that Sarah held some of the blame for the sudden halt that had become my life. I had spent too much time creating and believing in my perfectly controlled world to have this sort of chaos descend upon me. How dare life throw me a curve I didn't ask for or change the plan without clearing it with me first. (Looking back, yeah, I must have been miserable to live with even when things were good.) At any rate, as the days passed and the years slipped away, time healed the wounds, albeit not without some therapy, prayer and patience. I returned to a new normal and fell in love with a little girl who has taught me more about myself than I ever knew and who has become my best friend.

So here I am, ten years later, and standing at the threshold of my own full circle. With a due date of August 24, another little girl – Emmalie - is making plans for her grand appearance into this big world via yours truly. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't mildly apprehensive, but with each day bringing her closer to being born, I am also grateful to have a second chance, as I felt robbed of the enjoyment of Sarah's first few

months being caught up in my own drama. Taking the edge off some of this uneasiness, however, is the fact that my environment is a bit different than that of my first pregnancy experience. With a decade to live, learn and mellow out, I'd like to think my perspective has changed, along with my expectations. Being 38 instead of 28, I've had a little experience discerning which battles are worth the fight, which aren't and which ones I have no business fighting to begin with. I've also learned that I can't plan everything – a pretty painful lesson, and not one without regular pop quizzes. Life happens regardless of what your Blackberry says, so planning each moment is pretty much a waste of time. There are also some different players on the field this time. Of course, my Sarah is right there waiting for a baby sister to raise – and don't think she won't try. Strong, independent, compassionate and thrilled about Emmalie, I couldn't ask for better help. Wise beyond her years and just as bossy, she has spent the last nine months advising me on taking it easy, having the epidural and enjoying a second scoop of ice cream (after all, Emmi needs

the butterfat). As for Thomas, my love, the thought of finally becoming a dad after 40 years is certainly unnerving, but thrilling and humbling at the same time. Totally spoiled, he brings me coffee in the morning and give me foot rubs at night. A true nurturer, he's been supportive of my choice to try for a VBAC, yet stands his ground against any attempts at my doing it for hero status. He's listened to me whine and dissect the past, patiently reminding me that it can't be changed, that the future is a clean slate and that I can control this birth no more than I can make it rain. He picks out baby clothes at every turn, and is completely enamored with every kick, punch and roll Emmi throws my way. Together, the three of us are realistic in our expectations of sleepless nights, being thrown-up on and leaky diapers – hey, poop happens. So come August 24, or 14th or 4th, we are making no plans for the manner of Emmi's arrival, other than that she'll be here when she gets here. The goal is for she and I to be healthy and whole, everything else is gravy. Thanks for sharing this new journey with us, and watch for Emmalie, coming soon!