

A different way of being.

TABIB, M., HUMPHREY, T., FORBES-MCKAY, K., HOLLINS-MARTIN, C.
and MCVICAR, S.

2022

The Creative Commons licence applied to this file covers only the authors' own text and images. Any third-party materials present in these slides remain under their original terms of use.

A different way of Being



Research student: Mo Tabib

Supervisory Team: Professor Tracy Humphrey, Dr Katrina Forbes McKay, Professor Caroline Hollins-Martin & Dr Sonya McVicar

With special thanks to Iolanthe Midwifery Trust

An experience



Did you feel slightly more relaxed?

Let's talk about physiology ...

Have you heard about the Fight-
Flight (Stress) Response?



Have you heard about the
"Relaxation Response"?



Relaxation Response

The biological opposite of the Stress Response

(Benson 1975; 2011)



A health generating state

A salutogenic Question

Can this “**understanding of physiology**” along with the “**skills**” to frequently evoke the Relaxation Response influence our psychological wellbeing and experiences of life?



Research Aim

Explore the influence of a single Antenatal Relaxation Class (ARC)
on maternal psychological wellbeing and childbirth experiences

ARC

- A single 3-hour NHS class
- Facilitated by midwives
- Free of charge

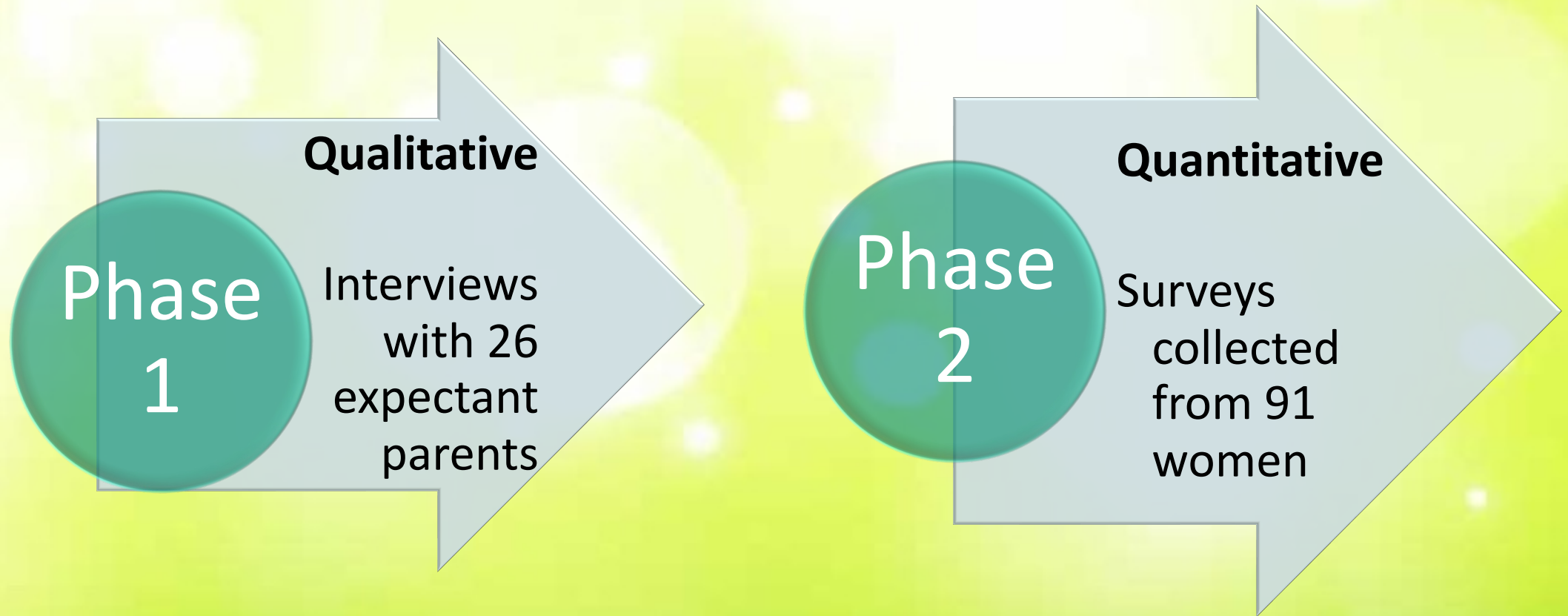
Content

- Psychophysiological processes
- A range of relaxation techniques
- Positive birth stories
- Handouts & audios for home practice

Research objectives

1. Understand what emotions or aspects of childbirth experience can be influenced by ARC.
2. Test the generalisability of any influence of ARC in a larger sample

Methods



Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods Design

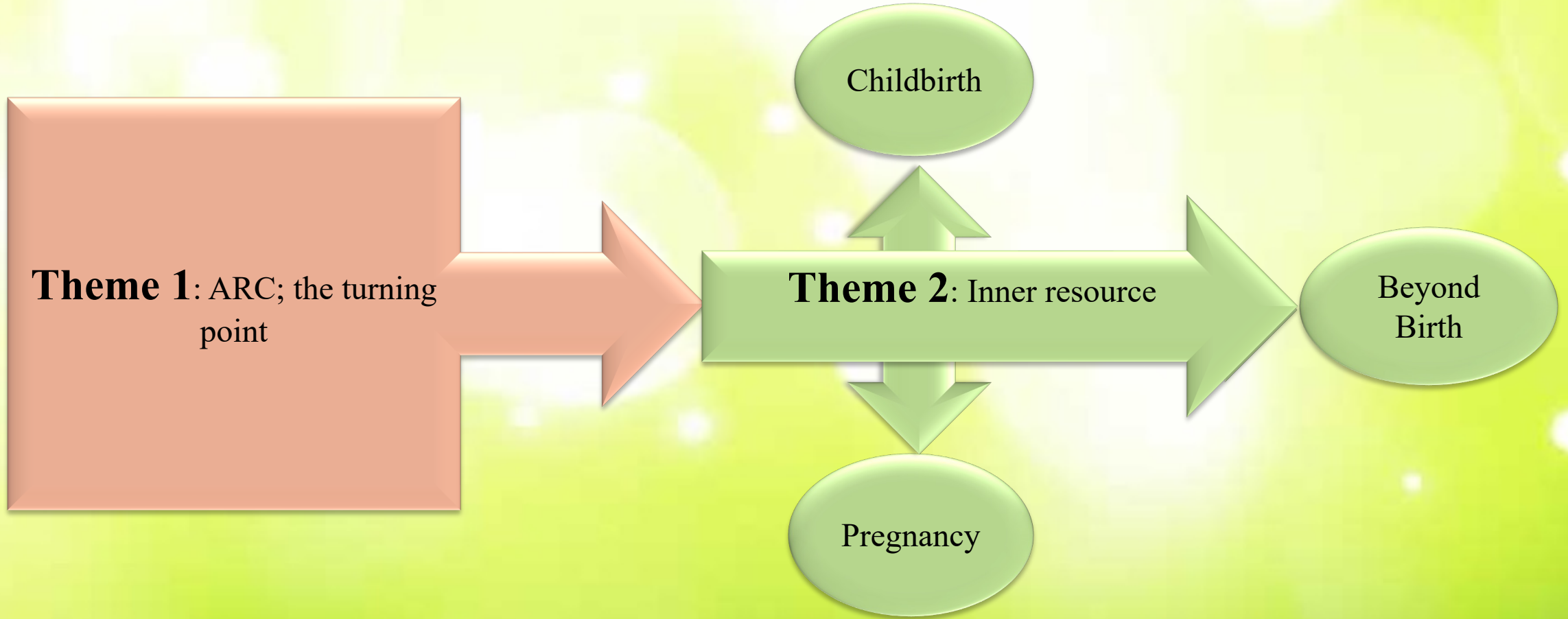
Phase 1 Results



*Phase 1: Sample
Characteristics*

*17 women - 9
birth partners*

- Three were multiparous, and the rest were primiparous.
- Aged between 26 and 41 years (Mean age 31.9).
- From a range of ethnic groups with 11 being white British.
- Sixty percent were educated to degree level or above.



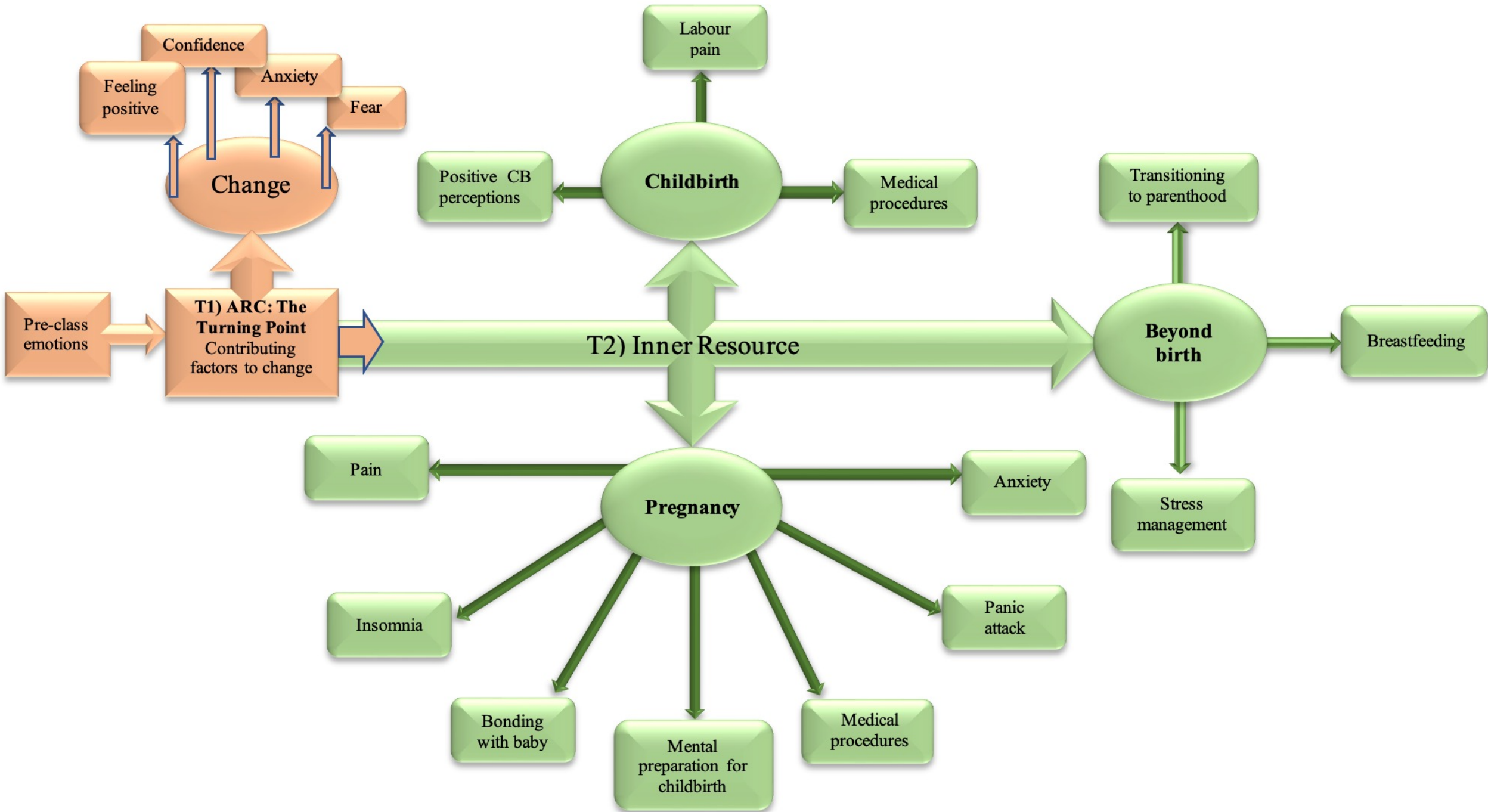
Theme 1: ARC; the turning point

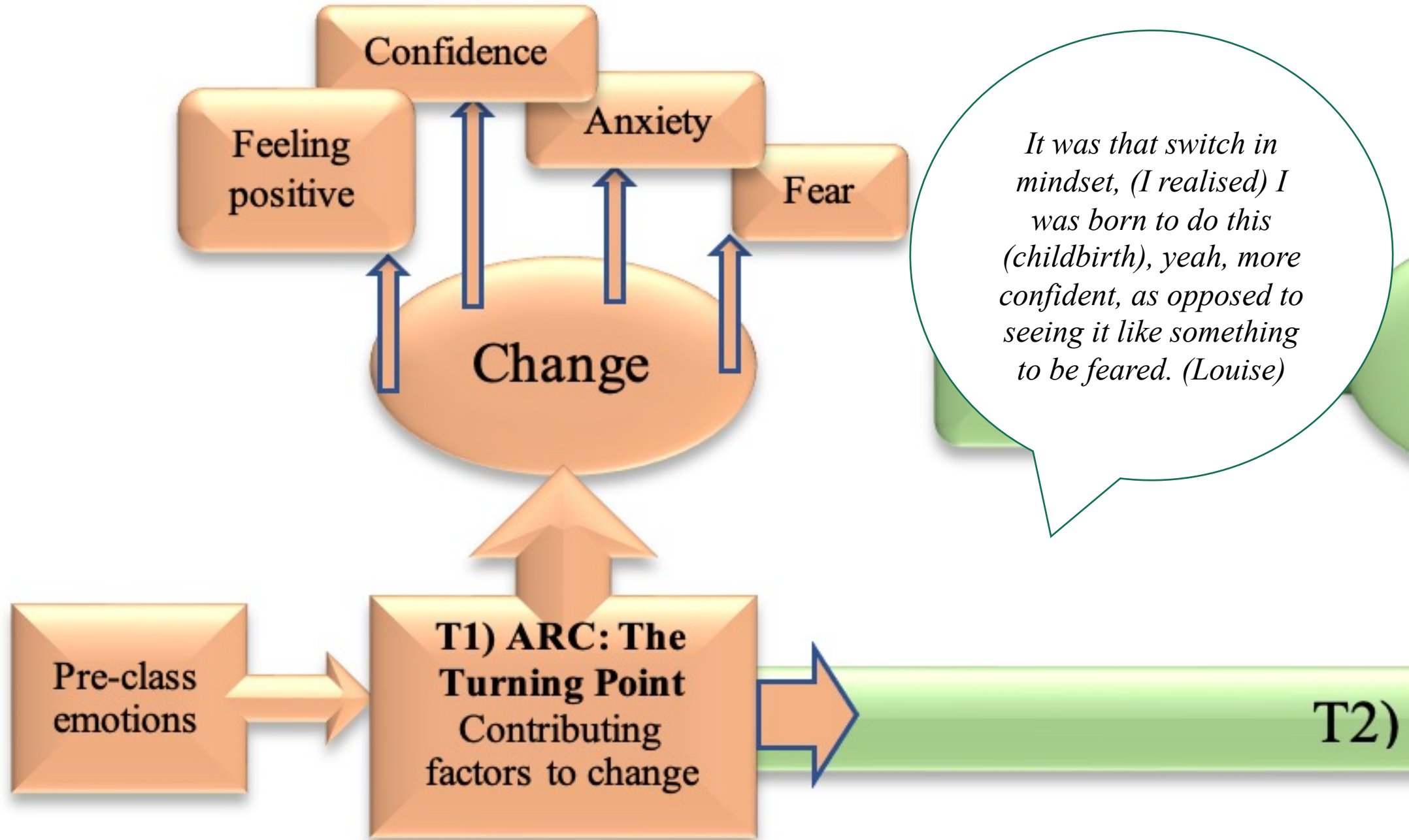
Childbirth

Theme 2: Inner resource

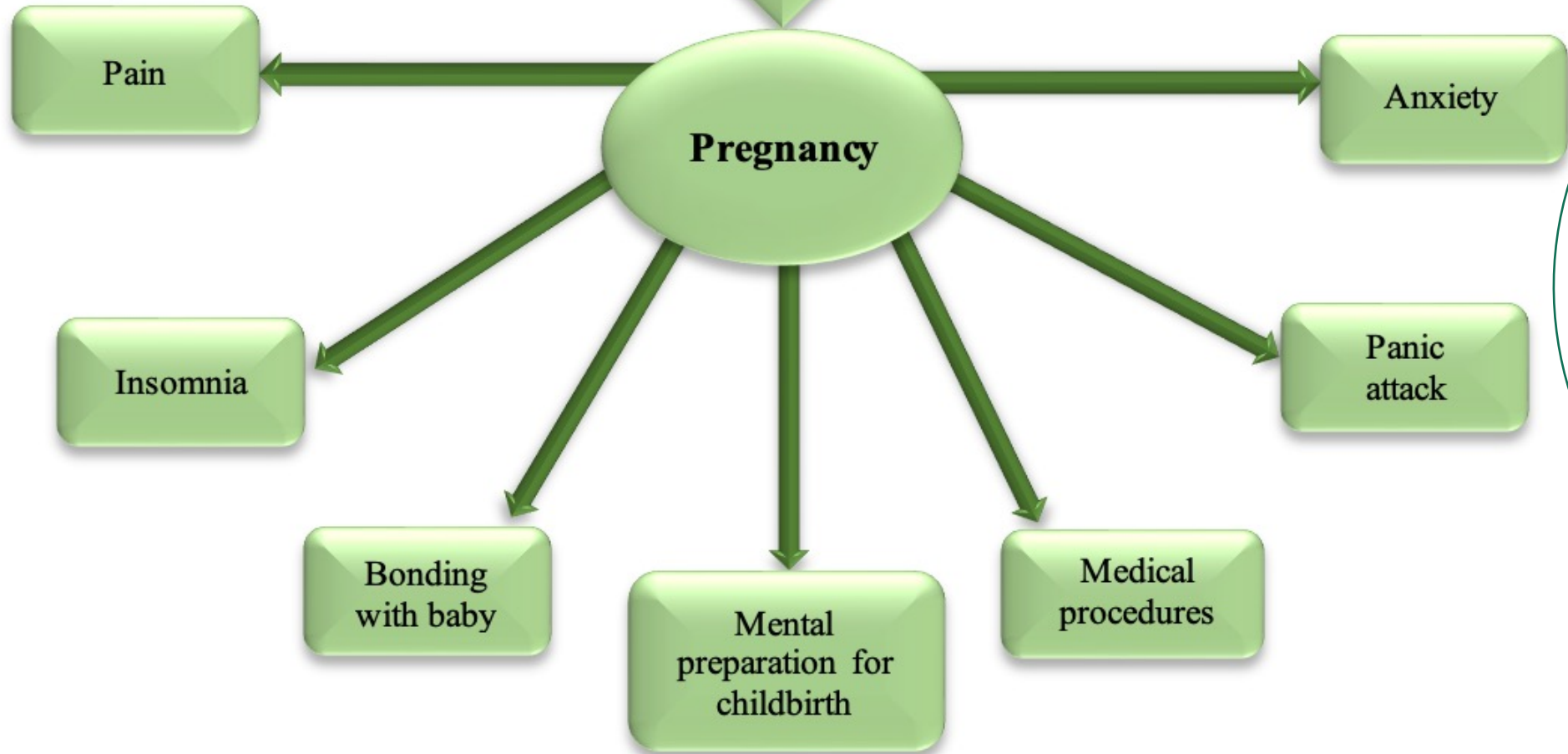
Pregnancy

Beyond Birth

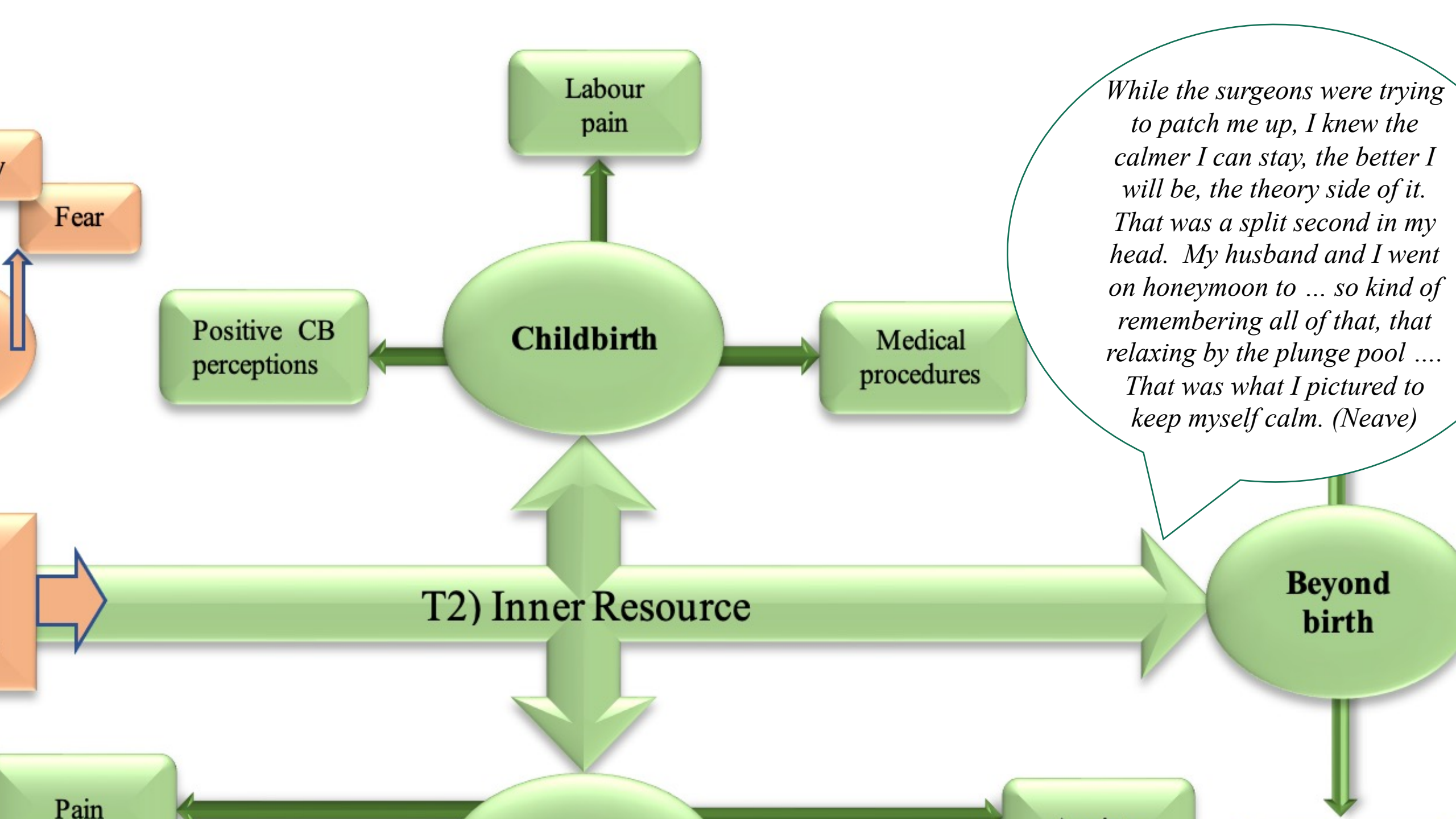




1) ARC: The
Turning Point
Contributing
factors to change



During my pregnancy because I was so anxious, it did make a big difference, probably within a week my panic attacks decreased from seven a week to one a week. (Rosie)



Labour pain

Fear

Positive CB perceptions

Childbirth

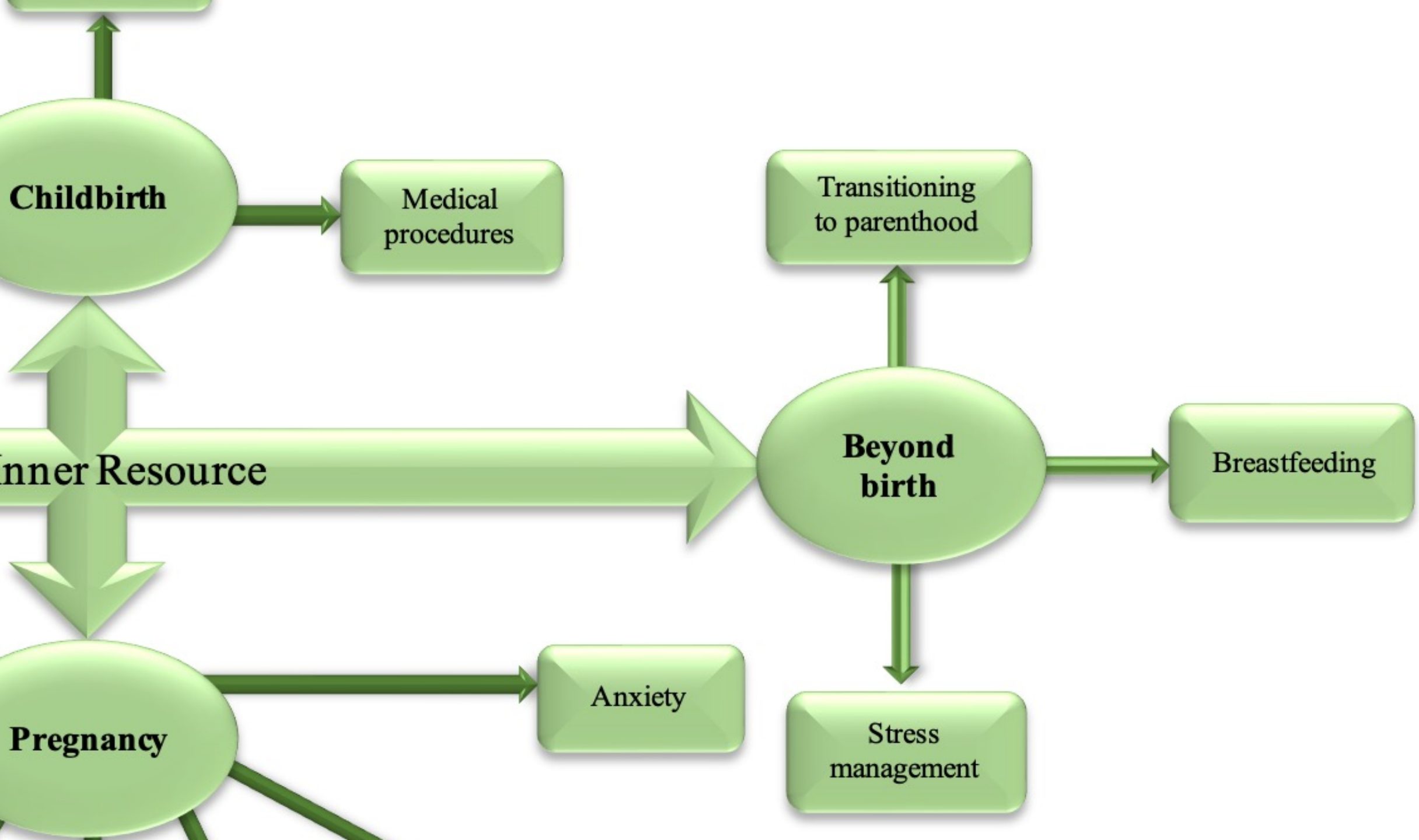
Medical procedures

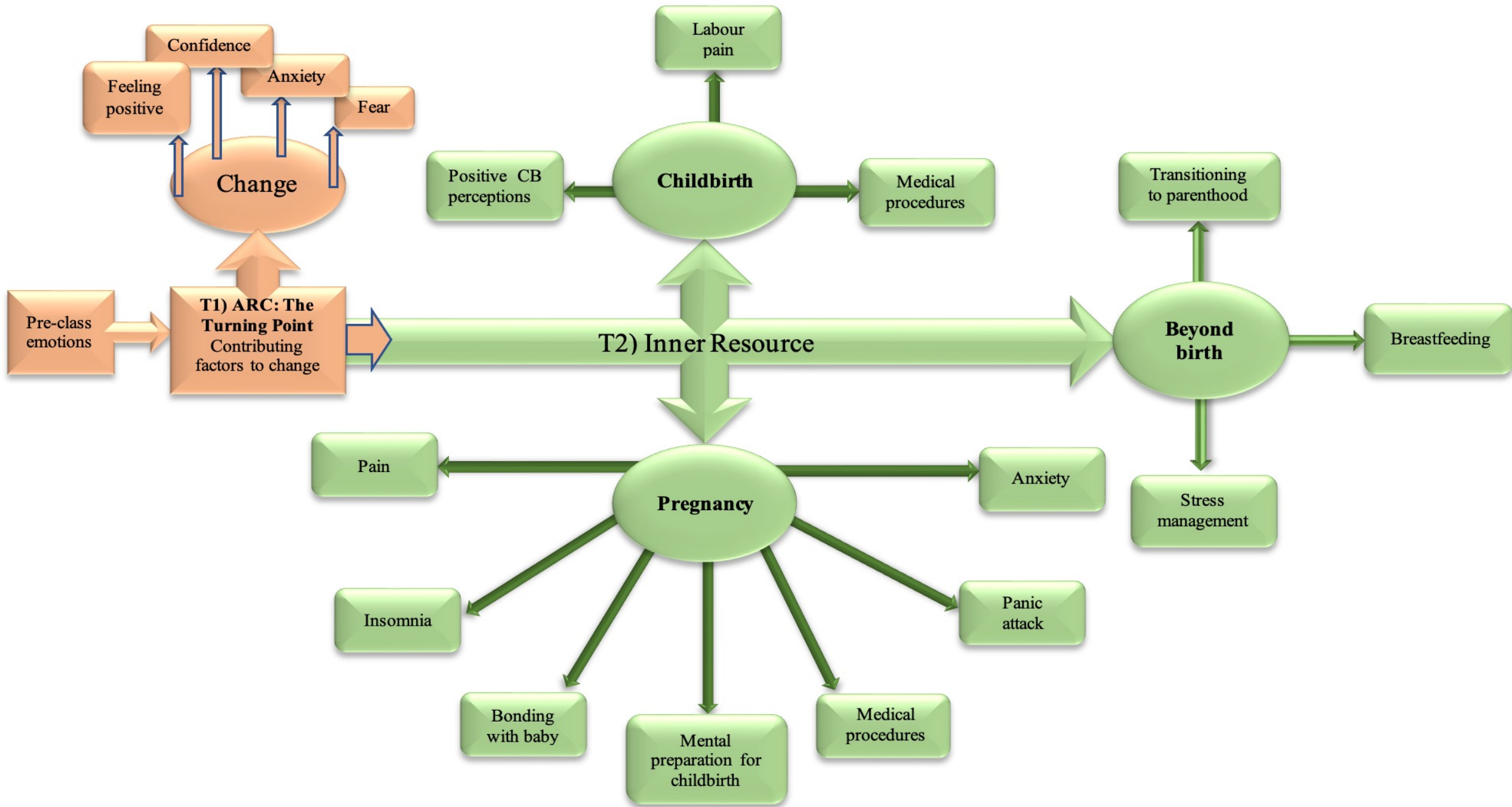
While the surgeons were trying to patch me up, I knew the calmer I can stay, the better I will be, the theory side of it. That was a split second in my head. My husband and I went on honeymoon to ... so kind of remembering all of that, that relaxing by the plunge pool That was what I pictured to keep myself calm. (Neave)

T2) Inner Resource

Beyond birth

Pain





Phase 2 Results

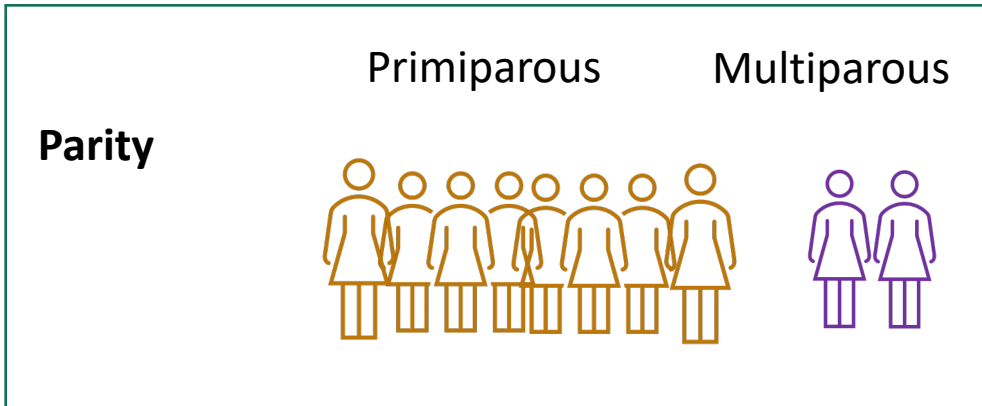
- **Online surveys**
- At pre-class, 2 wks post-class & 4-8 wks post-birth
- To test the generalisability of Phase 1 findings



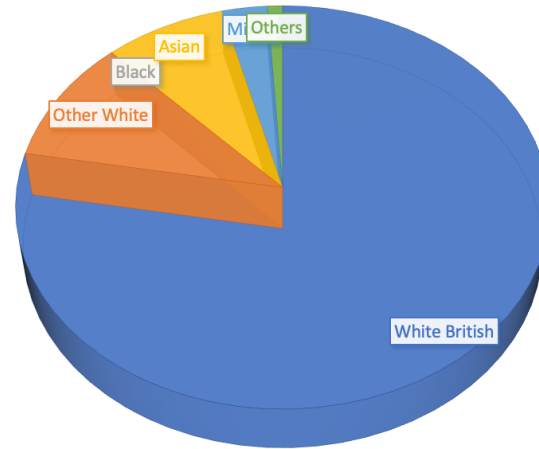
Phase 2: Sample characteristics

91 Women

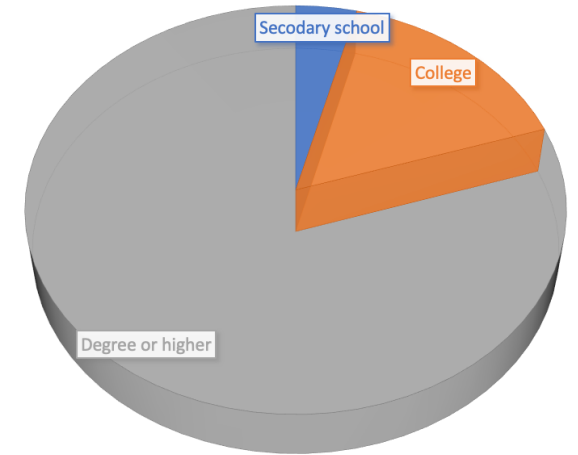
Age: 21-41 ($M = 31.00$, $SD = 3.6$)



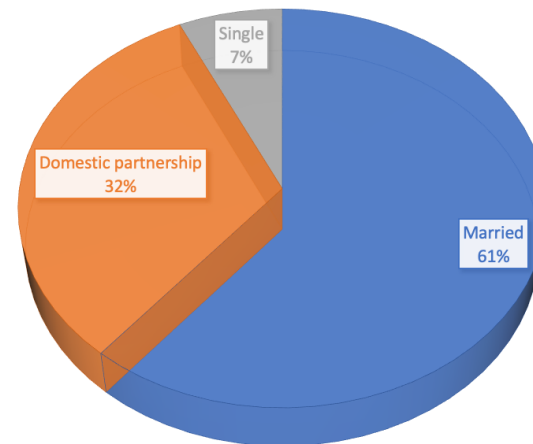
Ethnicity



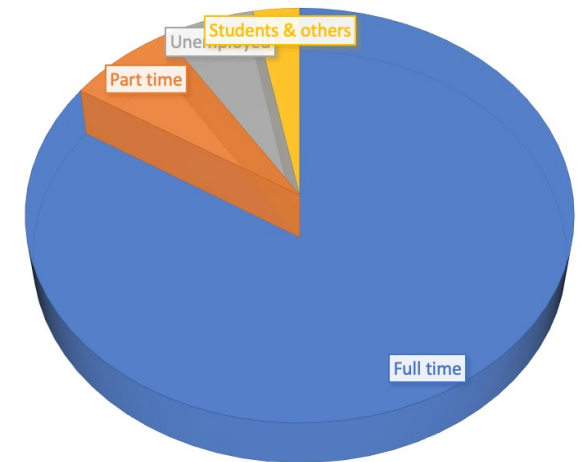
Education



Marital status

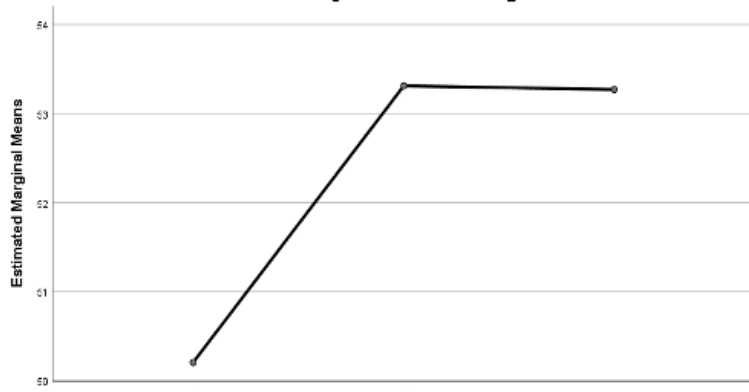


Employment

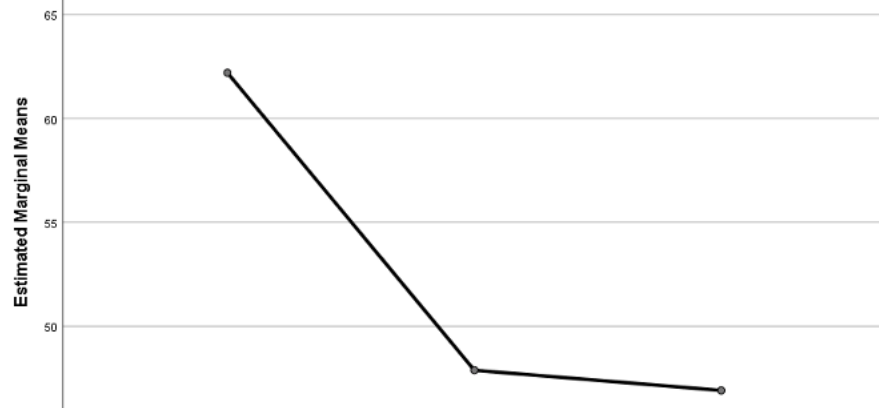


Results

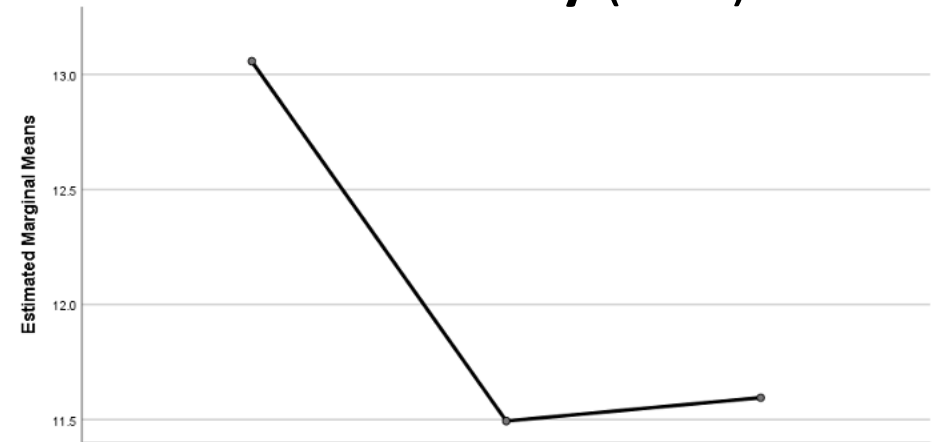
Mental health (WEMWBS)



Fear of childbirth (W-DEQ)



State Anxiety (STAI)




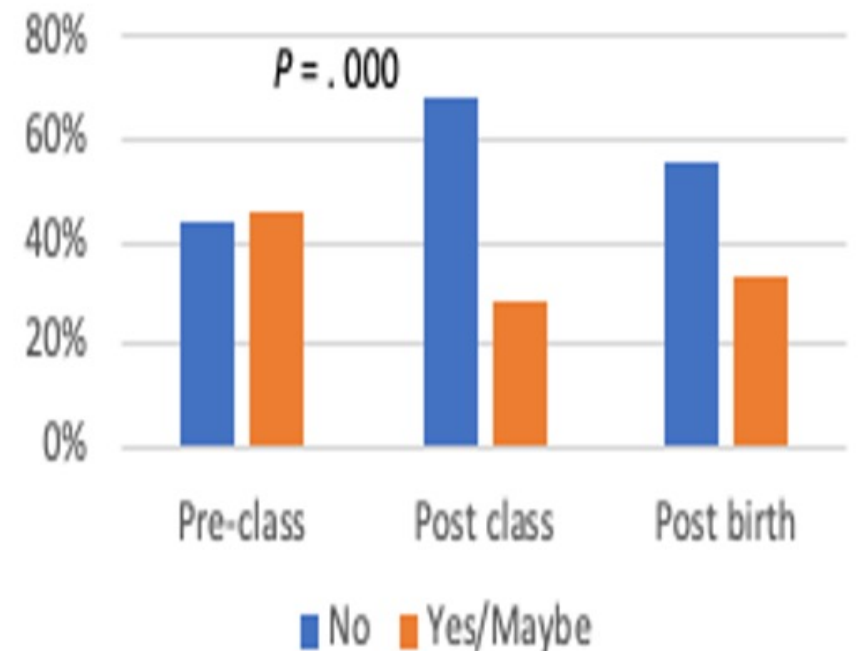
Trait Anxiety (STAI)



Results

Childbirth self-efficacy expectancy (CBSEI) 

Intended/actual use of epidural-
for labour 



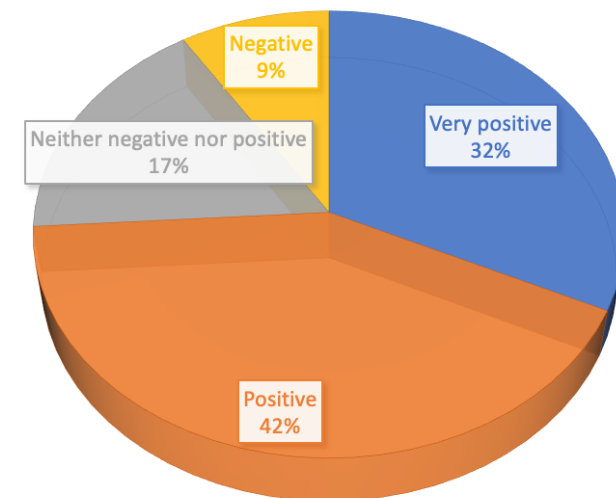
Results



- Time spent at home during labour = 7.5 hours (*Mean*)
- Sixty four percent were admitted to hospital in **established labour**, with 11% being in 2nd stage

Results

- Relaxation techniques were used in pregnancy (by 95.2%) and during childbirth (by 94%)
- Influence of ARC was perceived as positive on pregnancy (by 97.6%) and childbirth (by 84.5%)
- Overall childbirth experience was perceived as positive by majority (74%) despite 2/3rd not meeting their expectations





Conclusion

Including antenatal education on

physiological processes & relaxation techniques

can positively influence maternal psychological wellbeing and childbirth experiences

NEXT STEPS ...





Thank you for listening



Any Questions?

References

Benson, H., & Klipper, M. Z. (1975). *The relaxation response*. Morrow New York.

Benson, H., & Proctor, W. (2011). *Relaxation revolution: The science and genetics of mind body healing*. Simon and Schuster.

Bandura, A. (2010). Self-efficacy. The Corsini encyclopedia of psychology. *John Wiley & Sons, Inc.*
Doi, 10(9780470479216), 1-3.

Bandura, A. (2012). On the functional properties of perceived self-efficacy revisited. *Journal of Management, 38(1), 9-44.*

Lowe, N. K. (2000). Self-efficacy for labor and childbirth fears in nulliparous pregnant women. *Journal of Psychosomatic Obstetrics & Gynecology, 21(4), 219-224.*

Mittelmark, M. B., Bauer, G. F., Vaandrager, L., Pelikan, J. M., Sagy, S., Eriksson, M., Lindström, B., & Meier Magistretti, C. (2022). *The handbook of salutogenesis*.