

## Core Training for Birth

I practiced transverse abdominal activation and pelvic floor relaxation over the past few days when using the restroom. I found that using this technique while urinating helped me to empty my bladder each time more fully. This was extremely helpful because I have been struggling with feeling the urge to urinate immediately upon standing after already urinating. Sometimes even feeling a little urine leak out. When using the TA activation and PF relaxation I did not feel the urge to go again right away. Trying to use the same technique while having a bowel movement did not give me the results as easily. It has been taking a lot of practice to replace old habits of bearing down and holding my breath. The first step I have achieved is breathing while bearing down. I have that step down good. The second thing I have been practicing is engaging the TA muscles while trying to relax the pelvic floor. I do not have this one down yet, but I am working towards it steadily. I think it will just take time. I am glad that practicing this during pregnancy is recommended so hopefully by the time birth happens our clients will be pros at it. I think the biggest cue I can use to help clients is to breathe while gently pushing.

When practicing the alternate pushing positions, I discovered some interesting things about myself. In the dead bug position it was the most difficult to activate my transverse abdominal muscles or release my pelvic floor. It seems like the position most likely for clients to curl up to push, the way we are trying to avoid. The side lying position was slightly easier to activate TA muscles, but still a little difficult to relax PF muscles. It was more comfortable and took pressure off my back. The hands and knees position was

the best for me overall. I am unsure why exactly, but I was able to activate the TA muscles and release the PF muscles quite easily. I did find a neat trick that helped me relax even more. If I tilted my head down it made it harder to relax the PF. But if I raised my head, looking in front of me, I could feel my pelvic floor relax more. I found that very fascinating and plan to try it out on my clients to see if it works for them too.