

(introductory music)

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MARYN: Welcome to Indie Birth's series of podcasts here on iTunes, *Taking Back Birth*. Hi, Maryn here today with an amazing guest. I've been having a lot of fun these last couple months featuring powerful women. And some have been solely focused on birth like Angela Gallo, which has been recently, and some have not like Lisa Lister. And today we have another really powerful woman, who is doing amazing work both in the birth world and on her own as a mother and entrepreneur. So I'd love to welcome Sarah Bivens to my podcast. Welcome, Sarah.

SARAH: Oh, thank you so much, Maryn. It's really an honor, and I'm so excited to be hanging out with you.

MARYN: Me too. I definitely want you to tell our listeners a little bit about you. But before that, I just wanted to share how Sarah and I got together because I think they're always fun social media, online kind of stories, which is how a lot of us connect, right? So it was a couple months ago, I think, that I reposted one of your super cute photos from your Instagram account. And correct me if I'm wrong, but it was a side by side of you pregnant, very hugely pregnant, which was beautiful—

SARAH: That's a great descriptor.

MARYN: Hey, I get hugely pregnant too. So I'm allowed to say that, right?

SARAH: Love it.

MARYN: A side by side with a postpartum photo. And it just was so poignant and so beautiful. And being postpartum myself, of course, not that recently, but just seeing that and seeing the look on your face and what you said in the post just really felt connected with you. Didn't even know you had a podcast, so that was the double surprise. So I let a little bit leak there that you have your own podcast. But feel free to add whatever you'd love. I don't like doing intros for people. I think it's more natural for you to share what you think is important at this moment about you.

SARAH: Oh, I love that. Yeah. Because I mean we all have a lot of roles, right? We all wear many hats. But to your point of things are in flux and they're in flow, and so something might be more on your heart or might be more relevant at a point in time. So for me, what's really relevant right now, as you mentioned, I have a podcast. And it relates to pregnancy and birth in that I decided to have a home birth midway—about midway through pregnancy. And my husband and I found that there was a certain lack

of empowering information—mainstream information that is about home birth. And that was a little bit frustrating at first, but then we kind of turned that and saw it as an opportunity. And I mean we started our own show basically. We had a little bit of background in podcasting. Matthew, my husband, has done two other shows. So he brought that knowledge to the table. And then me being pregnant, I brought that to the table. And we just sat down, hit record, and here we are now 14 months later. And we have this show about home birth and home birth stories. So that's what I do in one avenue. I'm a podcaster. And I'm mamapreneur. I also a Balance Lifestyle Coach, and I work with people that I like to describe as IOUs. People who are imbalanced, overstressed, and uninspired with their current life experience. And so I work with people in curing the IOU syndrome.

MARYN: Yeah. That's amazing. So many, many hats that we wear. Totally understand that. Well, I would love to talk a little bit about your podcast just because the obvious. I think a lot of listeners—yeah. We've got so much in common. And even scrolling your list of podcasts was super fun. You guys just hit 100 episodes I believe, right?

SARAH: Yes. We did. This past week.

MARYN: That's fantastic. I mean really I think a lot of podcasts don't make it that far. So congratulations on that.

SARAH: Thank you so much.

MARYN: Yeah. And just scrolling, like we were talking about before we started recording, I listened to one today on sex and pregnancy and was literally laughing in the car. And yours is the only birth podcast I have ever listened to. I have to tell you that.

SARAH: Oh wow. that's cool.

MARYN: Yeah. I was super impressed. Yeah. So I could talk about a million different things, but I think it just being about homebirth. And you guys having the idea and focus to just get out there and do it is so inspiring and amazing.

SARAH: Thank you. Thank you. It's been a truly amazing experience. This podcast. I mean we kind of joke that it's our other baby because it actually launched, I think, a day or two before Mia, our daughter, was born. So it's been a passion project and a labor of love. And we're just—we're so grateful for the opportunity. I mean we got to share part of our story and our journey. We still do that. We continue to do that. But a lot of what the show is is birth stories of women, families, and then thought leaders and powerful figures in the birth world just riffing on all things empowered birth. And through these conversations, I mean the knowledge that I—the wisdom that I get and the connection and the juice that I get from these conversations is just above and beyond anything I

would have ever imagined when we started this show. And it has given back to me tenfold. It's just this abundant experience of love and empowered conversation. It's just been truly magical.

MARYN: Yeah. I mean I heard that in your voices for sure. And for those listening, Sarah's podcast with her husband is called *Doing It At Home*. I don't think we've said that.

SARAH: Yeah. We didn't mention it.

MARYN: We'll just go on and on.

SARAH: We got caught up in the other stuff. Yeah.

MARYN: No. That's awesome. So yeah. I think one of my favorite parts is that you and your husband are doing it together. And on my side of the fence, as a midwife working with couples like you, it's so refreshing to hear both sides of the conversation. To feel like you're kind of a fly on the wall hearing how people with their first pregnancy or planning a home birth—what they're thinking, and what their concerns are, and what's on their heart. I think that's why it's so appealing to people.

SARAH: I agree. And we've gotten a lot of really great feedback from listeners that Matthew is there and he is in it in the process, in the experience with all of us. We've gotten a lot of great emails and reach outs from couples who are going through their first either pregnancy or home birth or even not. More seasoned. But just to bring dads and birth partners in to the dialogue has been huge. And we've found through our conversations with the midwifery model of care I think it provides that opportunity for partners to be more hands on, to be more in the mix, to ask the questions, go to the appointments. And as a result, I think it supports the decision whatever it is around birth, whatever it is you choose to do. And everyone just goes in with that much more love and excitement around the experience rather than the sometimes fear or reticence or not knowing.

MARYN: Mm-hmm. Yeah. And I think you'd agree the use of this media meaning podcast obviously—it's so revolutionary for stuff like this because I was listening to this sex and pregnancy. And like I said, I was laughing. But so much of it was so beautiful and heartfelt, and I felt like these are the conversations we kind of want people to have. But yet, for the midwife or the doula or whatever, it's not really something you can often facilitate as beautifully. So having kind of, again, that ear on the door kind of feeling, listening to that one at least, I really appreciate it. And I thought, "Gosh. All my—all the moms that I work with need to listen to this with their partners. And they need to just laugh and share and not have anyone else around them if they don't want." Yeah.

SARAH: Right. Right.

MARYN: It's a cool resource.

SARAH: I love that. Absolutely. And podcasts. I mean it's great. You just pop in some ear buds or connect in the car. It's a great—you can pause it when you want. Podcasting is awesome in that sense. And I think it's what you said. The media of it. I think podcasting is still kind of in this wild, wild West stage where it's still kind of new to some people. And it's a really exciting time to be in podcasting as I'm sure you can relate.

MARYN: Yeah. Yeah. I agree. It's a really unique way of getting a message out. And, again, I love that your message is appealing to people that may not have made the decision yet. So appealing to a wider audience and just making it really accessible to them. I mean that's an amazing gift. I'm sure you've heard that from many different people. But it really is. It really is a great thing.

SARAH: Yes. Yes.

MARYN: Yeah. It's a really, really cool thing. And it makes you think, right? If everybody that was having a home birth or had a really powerful birth in whatever way was speaking in this way, our world would just change so much faster.

SARAH: That resonates on a very deep level. I completely agree with that. I think part of what this show has done—and it's opened my eyes to it. Like I said, a lot of the intentions and plans for this show came as it progressed and snowballed into what it is now. And one of those big things that is right there on my heart with the show is encouraging women to share those stories. And do it boldly and do it unapologetically and with love and all of that great stuff because I truly believe through birth and through our education around birth and the community around birth the world can heal. I really, really believe that. And so we need everyone in on the conversation.

MARYN: Mm-hmm. Yeah. Of course, I totally agree. I mean those are the things that people probably used to talk for granted that the community knew what was happening with other people and women told their birth stories to each other whether it—people younger or people older. And we saw birth. So this is the best we can do. Things like this now which is why it's so important.

SARAH: Absolutely.

MARYN: Yeah. Totally. So what was your experience been as far as the podcast goes? Feedback you guys have gotten or I don't know. Things you've learned like any good things come up for you recently. I'm sure it's been a journey.

SARAH: It has been. It has been a journey. In our own process of exploring home birth and then making that decision and then when I parallel that with a lot of the women and families that we've spoken to as they have made the decision, kind of in that deliberation process or when they first make the decision, is just how much misunderstanding there is around home birth.

MARYN: Yeah. I was going to say that.

SARAH: Yeah. I kind of had an idea of that going in. But then these women coming out in droves wanting to share their stories and the overall, of course, message is empowerment and love and all that great stuff. But then there's these little thorns in part—in it that include a lot of just the fear, the judgment from people closest to them who know them, who know their character, who know that they wouldn't do anything blatantly selfish or unsafe or whatever but yet still that misunderstanding can just create that disconnect. And so that was a big thing for me was just right off the bat seeing how much misunderstanding that—there is. And I take that, and I turn that into—I transmute that energy into being really excited about the show then and feeling more passionate in the purpose of the show. I don't look at that as a deterrent because we can't because otherwise we're not going to move forward.

MARYN: Sure.

SARAH: So that's a big thing. The other has been—I mean just how beautiful each birth story is. I didn't have far great appreciation for that as I do now. One being a mom and going through birth but then hearing these stories week after week. And it's kind of a joke. Sometimes people will ask, "Don't you just kind of get sick and tired of hearing the same old, "Oh, I went into—I started dilating"? No. They're all so different. They're so different.

MARYN: Mm-hmm.

SARAH: So that's been a huge thing as well. And seeing from feedback from listeners and kind of gauging that—we have this spectrum, I would say, of our listenership. And on one hand, you have women who aren't mothers yet. Women who are not pregnant and women who are exploring their options beforehand. And I think that is just so cool. I'm so inspired by that. And I just think that if more—through these conversations if more women are considering this and just thinking about motherhood, thinking about birth before they're there, setting those intentions I just—I'm so excited for this next wave of mothers and this next ushering in of motherhood, what it's going to be, and look like. So then there's that group. Then there's also the women who are pregnant and who are in that journey and wanting to hear what birth is like in a real, honest, raw way. And so they come to the show for that. And then there's just these seasoned, beautiful mamas, who describe themselves as #birthjunkies, which I just love. Didn't even know

that was a term before getting into this show. And just seeing those main groups. I'm sure there's some scattered all throughout. And then ones that dip in and out of those. But just seeing the faces of birth, the many faces, personalities, stories of birth has really opened my eyes. so that's been a big thing from doing the show.

MARYN: Yeah. I can see what the variety of topics too that you guys have that the demographic is probably pretty wide which is really cool. I mean I know for me that's also a very exciting thing to think that change is being created through things like this.

SARAH: Right.

MARYN: Younger women even—and I think of girls—there's so many groups of people that we can reach just with a simple story, and that can just change someone's whole future, which is just incredible.

SARAH: Yes.

MARYN: So what's been the most challenging part? Have you had any more negative home birth feedback in more of this mainstream circle? How is it feeling out there in the world where we're all the one person anyway?

SARAH: Yeah. Yes. How does it feel? So we, personally, haven't received any negative feedback. We really haven't. In our own journey, we did a little bit from friends and family who, again, that misunderstanding piece. But then once the show has launched, as it relates to the show, all we receive is just thanks yous and ideas and feedback in terms of, "We'd like to hear more of this or more of that." But there hasn't been a, "What are you doing? You're completely irresponsible for having these sorts of conversations and promoting this sort of life choice." We haven't gotten any of that. And that might be just because those type of people aren't going to listen to the show or aren't going to care to look for it.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: When we share with people in conversation what we do in our life and we share, "Oh, we have a podcast," "Oh, what's it's about," you kind of see the eyes get big because we talked about podcasting is very exciting right now. So I think a lot of people are into podcasts.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: And when we say it's about home birth, there is a—you see the wheels turning. And you see the, "Mmm. Okay." It could be a number of things. It could be, "You don't look like what my idea is of a homebirth couple or a home birth family."

MARYN: Right. Right.

SARAH: It could be, “Oh my gosh. Weirdos.” It could be a number of things that are going on, but I get excited about that because I think here’s a person that if they are open and willing I’m open and willing to shed some light on what they maybe didn’t know five minutes ago. And so they can walk away now from this conversation a little bit more open minded, a little bit more loving as it relates to that choice. But overall, it’s just been amazing feedback. And I’m okay with the less than awesome feedback if, when it comes—or if it’s out there and just hasn’t reached us yet because we understand that homebirth is not for everyone. And we’re not saying it’s for everyone.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: What I feel very strongly about is through having these conversations it can be presented as a possibility, as an option for women who may not have thought it was. And then through this, maybe they still have whatever plan they started out with, but they just have a little bit more understanding or they have a little bit better idea of what kind of birth they want to experience. Then cool. Then I’m happy with that.

MARYN: Yeah. Totally. And I think not being an expert, so to speak, not that I love that word, but I mean, honestly—and I’ve been saying this for years. That’s where the true power is. It’s with the women. It’s with the families. It is people like you that make more of a difference from—than hearing it from someone that maybe has something financial to gain or whatever people think experts have to gain from things like this. But yeah. I just think that’s really awesome and refreshing. And you’re doing it because you love it. You don’t have any other reason for doing it.

SARAH: Right. Mm-hmm.

MARYN: That’s amazing. So let’s transition into talking about you. I want to hear about you as a woman and a mother and the projects you’re creating because I think they also sound really awesome.

SARAH: Great.

MARYN: So yeah. Just what are you up to since your daughter has been born besides this podcast? What’s going on in your work home life?

SARAH: Yeah. That’s a great question. There’s so many tasty elements to it in that Matthew, my husband, and I—we are self employed. So we live that entrepreneur life, which I don’t think any option you choose is better or worse. You make your reality work for you. You make your choices work for you. And we—it took us a couple of months to find our flow, to find our balance. Here we are new parents. Me as a new mom. And just figuring out how are we going to schedule our time. And what is time? Time is a joke.

MARYN: How old is your daughter now?

SARAH: She's now 14 months. Yeah. So those first couple of months, it was just a lot of finding our stride, I guess, and figuring out what—who we were, what we were going to do, and then also be responsible for this new human.

MARYN: Just a few things.

SARAH: Yeah. Just a couple of things. But over time, you—the new normal sets in. And we found the flow, so to speak. And so over the past year, a lot of—I was a lifestyle coach before I was pregnant. And pregnancy and then now motherhood, not to sound cliché, but it just changes everything. It changes everything. Physically, your body is never the same. I don't think your mind is ever the same. Your spirit. It's just changed. And from that, I just—I gained such a huge appreciation for women. The power that is the divine feminine and that whole thing and how it's really what sets everything in motion. It's really what moves things forward. It's really that center for healing and expansion and expression. So really riding off of that because I think pregnancy is such this beautiful, magnificent time to really take full advantage of what it has to offer. One thing I like to say about it is it doesn't give you anything that you didn't already have. I think it just makes it easier to see all of the things within you that you maybe not—you weren't recognizing before or you weren't fully expressing before. And so I think the veil gets lifted in a way when you are pregnant and then become a mom. And so you're like, "Oh, wow." It's kind of like coming out of the matrix or something. Like, "This is really who I am. I'm really about being this. I'm a goddess." That whole thing.

MARYN: Yeah. For sure.

SARAH: And so I took all of that experience, and it really changed who I was as a coach. And it really changed what I wanted to do as a coach. And in those first couple months, again with time management and sleep and all those great things, I found for myself these little moments, these little intentional conscious choices to do something for myself, to fuel myself, to put on my oxygen mask first before assisting someone else with theirs, and not feeling sorry about that, not feeling guilty about that but understanding that I have—my tank needs to be full otherwise I'm no good for anyone around me.

MARYN: Mm-hmm.

SARAH: And through that process and talking with other women, just seeing that we're all in this together, that was really comforting and helpful that we're all on our own levels and in our own time, of course, grappling with that. That how do I love on myself? What does that even—what is that? And I know you heard—I heard you, excuse me, in your last episode talking about self care. And not even really loving that term but that's what we're working with right now. So sure. Let's call it that.

MARYN: Yeah.

SARAH: But through that process, I kind of identified these little moments as balanced mama moments. It's that intentional choice to love on yourself, give back to yourself. And if you make those moments throughout the day, kind of make them your little pillars that which everything else is strung along you add them up. You get consistent with them. Over time, they make these deposits into your personal emotional bank account. And then you can give more. You can do more. You can be more. You have more energy. You're more joyful in the things that you do day in and day out. And that's what I experienced. And I thought, "Well, if I'm experiencing this, then I know it's possible for someone else. And so why not share it?" And I created this audio experience, this audio series called the *Balance Mama Moments* album. And 21 tracks that just go through all kinds of things that I experienced through motherhood and how to experience and create balance through practice instead of this thing that you think you have to get to and it's this destination. Once you're there, you've got it. It's ebb and flow. It's daily practice and surrender. And it's the understanding that you will probably get off balance more so than not. But it's how do you get back to it. It's the relationship to the things that are happening to you and around you, not what's happening to you and around you.

MARYN: Mm-hmm.

SARAH: So it's a very long winded thing to say. That's some of the stuff I've been working on, and I am actually going to be doing my own podcast separate from *Doing It At Home*.

MARYN: Awesome.

SARAH: Yeah. I'm really excited about that. It's going to be centered around balance and motherhood so kind of an extension and expansion of what inspired the audio album and just talk about some of those real things about taking care of yourself.

MARYN: Mm-hmm.

SARAH: Because I know there's a ton of great resources on how to be a great mom and how to parent better. I am not the expert in that by any means. And I'm not looking to be. I'm more interested right now in the conversation of how to take care of myself better, how other moms can take care of themselves better, and leave the parenting stuff to the experts. And that's the stuff I Google. That's not the stuff I'm looking to talk about.

MARYN: Yeah. No. I totally agree. And I have enough children that I'm no parenting expert. But I've always said that. It's really about what's going on with you because your kids will reflect it back to you. So if you're in a really not balanced state, unfortunately,

your children are probably just going to show you that. So it's—I think that's kind of saying the same thing. I did want to ask you though. When you became a mother or when your daughter was born, how did it look for you when you found yourself kind of slipping out of balance? Just because I think women need to hear these sort of really normal stories.

SARAH: Mm-hmm.

MARYN: Of how that begins because it can snowball out of your control before you realize it.

SARAH: Oh yeah. Yeah. I agree with you that women need to hear these types of things, if for nothing else for that, “Oh my gosh. Me too.” That moment, that little piece of connection and clarity, can feel so great and can make all the difference from feeling like you're a total failure to, “Oh, I'm normal or whatever normal is.”

MARYN: Totally. Totally.

SARAH: Yeah. So for me, one thing that I can say is when my daughter was born the—in her birth, in her actual birth as she—I was sitting on a birthing stool. My midwife catches her and brings her up to my chest. And I see her. I know who she is. I've been talking to her for 10 months. I've thought about her before that. But I was just stunned. I felt—the way I wrote it in my birth story when I wrote it down and then we talked about it on the show. Oh my gosh. It can make me cry just thinking about it. I felt like a star that had exploded. And that I had no idea how to collect all the pieces back and to integrate into a human again because I think birth took me so out into the ethers that once she came out and was placed on my chest I didn't know how to come back down. I had no idea what was happening. And I think even though I—total oxytocin rush and love for her, those first couple of days I felt weird. I felt very disconnected. I didn't really—I just didn't know who I was really for a second there. And it—once we found our groove with breastfeeding, I think that really helped, and that created that bond and being needed and understanding what my role now was moving forward. That was very helpful. But then over the course of the next few months and then even still, there are moments of what am I doing. What am I doing? I don't know what I'm doing. Did I make the biggest mistake of my life? Just all of those things pop up, and you go down into that deep, dark hole. And it gets real easier to make up all kinds of other stuff about yourself, to just create this story. And I think it's important to acknowledge that and then move out of it.

And by that, I mean put yourself in places with people in environments where they are going to support you in you—in who you are, in who the true essence of who you are is, and not keep you down there in the doldrums. And Matthew has been an incredible source of patience and love and all of that. And then I think really another big thing that's helped me personally—and this might sound silly. But I created a personal

mission statement for my life awhile back before being pregnant. And it's tweaked and evolved over time. But having that, having something that I've made a stand, I've put my stake in the ground, and I say, "This is who I am. This is what I'm about." And then that's what's up. Has been really helpful because it's something that I created—I manifested, and it's about what I say I'm about in this life in this iteration of me and this iteration of Sarah. And so to have that to look back to has been very helpful in those moments to just remind myself of what I'm up to and what I value and what I'm passionate about. And it just—it can pull me back into feeling like me when we know there are moments where you don't feel like you.

MARYN: Yeah. And I mean I think that happens when you've had a bunch of babies too. I feel like that every time in a way. I know how to come back to me at this point. But there is a very real element of self death really with birth.

SARAH: I get that. Yeah.

MARYN: And I find that it's so refreshing to hear people talking about it especially people like you that are younger and having babies now because even having a beautiful birth—and that's pretty much all I see too. These women are still feeling so unprepared for this role of mother, and it's like a really hard thing to prepare someone for.

SARAH: I agree. I agree with that. And then also something I talked about in the album I put together because it impacted me a lot is kind of the feedback you can get unsolicited. Most of it is unsolicited, of course.

MARYN: Of course.

SARAH: That nothing is ever going to prepare you and that, "Oh just wait," that sort of mentality.

MARYN: Right. Right.

SARAH: That didn't help me. And so that's not what I want to talk about whether it's on the *Doing It At Home* podcast or my upcoming podcast because I think that kind of sets you up. And you start thinking about these things you're inevitably going to fail in that you haven't even entered yet.

MARYN: Yeah. Totally.

SARAH: So instead kind of switching that dialogue to a, "Yes. There's a lot of unexpected. Yes. There's a lot of surrender that comes with this whole experience, but all you can do is really prepare to be the best you you can possibly be and whoever that's going to evolve into. Because what I've found through some of the judgment that

come in the world of motherhood is that you'll never understand until blank. You'll never get it until you actually have a baby. You'll never get it until you have a toddler. Oh, you really don't know anything until you have a teenager.

MARYN: Right. Right. Right.

SARAH: That sort of thing. It's like how am I—well, you're kind of left feeling it's a no win scenario. So supporting that woman who feels like she isn't prepared and being like I get it. Yeah. To an extent, it's very difficult to prepare for because there are all these things that are going to come up, but it's beautiful and it's magical and it's transcendent and it's transformative. And you're still going to be you. It's going to be hard at times to feel that way, but you're still you. That's been helpful for me.

MARYN: Mm-hmm. Yeah. For sure. And I mean we have what we need just like we do in birth. It's all there.

SARAH: Yeah.

MARYN: So feeling the support and, like I'm saying with the resources that you're working on, I think they're really important for especially young mothers to feel like they're not alone in any of that. So how about a little self care chat? What kind of things—yeah. What kind of things are you doing or enjoying for yourself? What's feeling good? I'd love to hear them too.

SARAH: Cool. Yes. So one way that I keep it simple when I—it's really funny. When you get pockets of windows of time, the baby goes down for a nap or there's a sitter or husband takes the baby and you have a window of time, sometimes I feel this complete panic.

MARYN: Totally.

SARAH: And I just feel paralyzed to not do anything because there's so many things that I want to do with that time that I end up doing nothing.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: So to help me when I can't think of anything to do but I know I want to be putting something back into myself, I look at balance—the word balance—as an acronym actually. And I can't take credit for it. It comes from my coach and mentor, who created this amazing platform of health and fitness called *The (Inaudible) Balance Game*. And if you'd like, I'd be happy to share a link to how people could access this information.

MARYN: Yeah.

SARAH: But balance, for me, stands for breath, aqua, lengthening, anaerobic, nutrition, cleansing, and energizing. And so what I do is—there's actually an app that you can use with this structure to put into place habits that you want to do in each of those areas on a weekly basis. And what's cool about it is you pick it. It's autonomous. But it also has some structure to it which I think is great because I know me, as a mom, and sometimes when I don't have my own brain power I want structure. I want something laid out for me—what I can do. And so that's what this is. And examples of that would look like breath. I make it a point, at least once a day, to just stop and take ten deep breaths. I mean—and it makes a huge difference, as simple as it is. So that's something. Aqua. I'm making sure I'm drinking a ton of water. More than enough water especially in those early days of nursing.

MARYN: Yeah. That's a great tip.

SARAH: Yeah. Lengthening. Just do some stretching. Some freestyle stretching or a yoga class or yoga video. Something like that. Anaerobic. Some sort of exercise. And I mean it doesn't have to be hours in the gym. That, honestly, sounds kind of ridiculous and isn't something I'm even interested in. And I actually am a personal trainer as well. I have clients. But I am not interested in spending hours in the gym.

MARYN: Oh my gosh. No.

SARAH: So doing a couple squats while you brush your teeth. Or something like that. Just ways to incorporate a little bit of anaerobic exercise. And then nutrition. For me, it's been moving into more of a space of intuitive eating and learning my body and learning what I need and when I need it.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: But I put habits in there like eating a salad once a day.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: Or having a green smoothie, things like that. And cleansing and energizing are probably my favorite because, as a mom, I feel like they give the most to me right now where I'm at in my journey. And cleansing is just about releasing things that maybe don't serve me so well or just aren't some of my healthiest habits. So shutting off the phones at a certain time or being off social media or releasing processed sugar for a couple of days a week. Something like that. And then energizing are those things like journaling, meditating, prayer, reading empowering material, listening to empowering podcasts, things like that. And so my self care regimen of sorts is looking at that balance and seeing what am I doing throughout the week. Not putting on the pressure of having to do everything in one day or trying to carve out hours to do certain things.

But instead, kind of like those balance mama moments, just picking little things here and there when you can, and they really add up to create this sustainable way of lifestyle really. For me, self care is lifestyle rather than to dos.

MARYN: Right. Yeah. That's awesome. I love that. I will remember that. So thank you for that.

SARAH: Yeah.

MARYN: It's like all of those things are floating around in your head. Or at least, that's how I feel. I think I agree with you. The structure is nice because—yeah. It is so imperative. I mean people ask me all the time—and I'm going to ask you too the same question. They say how do you do all of these things. And I think my answer is sort of like your balance. So what do you want to say about that? How do you get your work done, so to speak?

SARAH: Yeah. I would definitely say I would—if you have time for a one word answer, I would say balance. And if this person wanted to talk a little bit more, I would say I don't do it actually. It's a village. That's been my experience since being pregnant. And I'm so ridiculously blessed and grateful for that that it's not just me doing it. The way that I'm able to get stuff done, the way that I'm able to work with clients, the way that I'm able to record podcasts episodes is through our amazing sitter who comes a few times a week. It's through Matthew, who he's super involved and has been since the beginning. And he spends a lot more time with Mia than anyone I've ever known personally in my family or extended friends—fathers to spend time with their kids especially in the beginning. It's him. It's our extended friends and family, community, who will come hang out with Mia so we can have a date night, so we can keep our intimacy and connection where we want it so that the rest of the house can kind of flow from that. So I'm doing it, yes. But it's not me alone. And it never really has been. And I don't plan for it to be just me.

MARYN: Yeah. Yeah. No. I totally hear you, and that's how I feel too obviously. I couldn't do it without the help that I have. And yeah. I think that's another cool tidbit to put out there for people that want to receive it that we don't do these things alone. And that it's not about being super woman. That's not the point.

SARAH: Right. Oh my gosh.

MARYN: And that's not—yeah. That's not—it's not really a compliment in some sense. You know what I mean? It's diminishing the efforts of people working together to make these things work.

SARAH: Sure. And I can definitely relate to thinking, at times, that I need to do everything myself, that there's some sort of medal involved, that there's—but one big

realization I had is I need to be a powerful mother, not a martyr. I know—because if that's who I am, if that's how I show up, that's the example I'm setting for my daughter.

MARYN: Right.

SARAH: And I could go into a whole thing about how I felt about having a daughter beforehand. And then once I realized I had a daughter, but now it's this incredible gift and opportunity that I see. And I am not going to go that route with it. I am not going to show her what that looks like because that's not the experience I'm interested in having for myself nor do I want that for her.

MARYN: Yeah. We have to start to shift things with the future generations. That's for sure. So I think taking responsibility in the way that you are and putting awesome passion and work into the world as you are and taking care of yourself—you are—you're really an amazing, amazing mother and an amazing person. And it's been really fun chatting with you. So thank you.

SARAH: Oh, thank you so much. I am so grateful to you for what you do in this network, in this culture that you've created and this concept. It's really awesome. And I'm just grateful to you. Every powerful woman that I'm able to connect with in this way I just know that I'm here because of you. And I'm able to be here and speak the way I do and express my truth because you are. And it's like we're all playing off each other, so I just think it's awesome.

MARYN: Yeah. Likewise. I agree. The more the merrier. And I think there is so much overlap and messages, and we need all the powerful voices in the world that we can get. So I am thrilled about that. One last thing, just share with the listeners where they can reach, where they can find your Balanced Mama Moments, whatever you want to leave us with.

SARAH: Absolutely. So the podcast, *Doing It At Home*, you can find it on iTunes. We also have a website that is diahpodcast.com. And then I have a website where you can learn more about the Balanced Mama Moments. That's sarahbivens.com. Or you can check me out on Instagram. I'm pretty active there, and that's [@sarahmbivens](https://www.instagram.com/sarahmbivens).

MARYN: Awesome. Thank you so much, Sarah. Have a beautiful rest of your day. And I hope we get to work on some other stuff together soon.

SARAH: Oh yes, ma'am. I'm planning on it.

MARYN: Awesome. Me too. Thanks for listening, everybody. Be sure to check out the Indie Birth website for new blog posts and podcasts. The Indie Birth Midwifery School is enrolling for another year in July 2018. So you'd want to apply now to get in on that

class. It's indiebirthmidwiferyschool.com. Thanks so much, everybody. Have a great night.

(closing music)