

(introductory music)

DISCLAIMER: “*Well, Actually...*” is a podcast about reimagining the way we approach the entirety of the birthing year. Margo’s goal is to combine her radical imagination with her knack for strategizing to bolster the birth revolution and a larger global revolution of feminine consciousness. “*Well, Actually...*” is a production of the Indie Birth Association and indiebirth.org. No material on this podcast should be considered medical advice. Birth is not a medical event. Now here’s your host, midwife, and teacher, Margo Blackstone.

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MARGO: All right. So today is going to be kind of an interesting episode here on the “*Well, Actually...*” podcast. I’m trying something new. And I have a lovely guest, Genesis. Welcome.

GENESIS: Hello. Thank you for having me.

MARGO: So we are going to do a little bit of birth work business coaching, which I think is going to be really fun. It’s something that I have found really enjoyable over the last year especially. It was something I was dabbling in before that as well. But it’s become pretty clear that people have a lot of similar things come up as they’re trying to make birth work into a business. So thanks for being here and being open to talk about this stuff and share it with others who probably are experiencing similar things.

GENESIS: Yeah. I’m excited to be able to have your actual real live input on things. Very exciting.

MARGO: So fun. I guess sidebar I feel like the last year and a half has really brought home to me how valuable the one on one thing can be. I also am such a self started and a self learned, but I’ve had some really cool coaches in the last few years that have helped me kind of—I don’t know. Step into that role more. So yeah.

GENESIS: That’s awesome.

MARGO: Yeah. So why don’t we just start with a little bit of background? Tell us a little bit about how you came to birth work.

GENESIS: Okay. So I am a pelvic health physical therapist. I have specialized in women’s health, pelvic health for the past about three and a half years now. And I’ve worked in, actually, several different clinics over the past few years. And I love that role. I love helping women through whatever things they’re experiencing. Pelvic pain or urinary incontinence or all these things. But a couple of years ago I started working with a lot more pregnant women and treating them through their pregnancy pain, pubic

symphysis pain, and SI joint things, and low back pain, and abdominal pain. And we kind of started going more into labor prep and stuff as well as it got closer to their due date, right? Making sure they know how to engage their core if they need to or know how to relax their pelvic floor and be in a relaxed state of mind as they need to and help prepare a little bit mentally but mostly biomechanically for birth. And then the 39, 40-week mark would come. And I would stop seeing them because they're about to go have their baby. And they would just disappear and be gone for six or more weeks, if they even came back at all. I may get to see them again at six or eight weeks to help with recovery or I may not ever see them again. And the thing I was seeing was that we got so attached to each other through that whole treatment process that I was really, really wanted to be able to continue my support as they went into labor. And they would all say to me, "Oh, I wish you could come with me. I wish you could be the person that came with me." And I just was like, "Yes. This is what I want." That's the most exciting part. We've done all this work to help get you ready. And now the payoff like—and then the recovery is so important, right? Being able to tune back into your body in even the smallest of ways in those early postpartum weeks. And I feel like our culture just is really just lacking health care wise because I come from a health care and clinical background, right? In that realm, it's just really lacking what women need. And the more I got into birth and all that stuff, the more I just was like, "No. I want to be a birth worker who has PT skills rather than a PT who occasionally takes on a birth client," right?

MARGO: Totally.

GENESIS: Definitely where my path lies. And like painful intercourse too because that's part of getting pregnant. So it still all goes together.

MARGO: It all goes—it's all connected. That's really cool. I have a new apprentice, who—she's not a PT. But she's a—I think she's been doing massage for 20 years and specializes in abdominal massage. And she did Katie Bowman's course a bunch of years ago on biomechanics and was super interested in alignment. So she's like that person. And now she's going to be a midwife. So a similar sort of shift. Like you said, you were a PT, who did some birth stuff. But you want to be a birth person who does PT stuff and has those skills.

GENESIS: Right. Yeah.

MARGO: Cool. So you did a training. We don't have to say which training. People can probably (cross talk). You did a training, a virtual one, in August. Is that right? Or when was it?

GENESIS: Yes. I did a virtual—it was August. Beginning of August. And it was a four day weekend, Thursday through Sunday, workshop essentially. Yeah.

MARGO: Okay. And it was not (inaudible)?

GENESIS: No. Not at all. It was actually—it was not at all what I expected, and that's okay. Hindsight, after the fact, and kind of diving into the Indie Birth world especially because I've been following you all for—since before I took that training. But I think after the training kind of more your information clicked. Like, “Oh, I understand now what I'm missing,” kind of thing. I tried to get this training. And it was definitely not what I expected. It was really more about, I think—and I appreciate this aspect. Building your community of other potential doulas in your area, so that you have a network of people, right? That's what they really emphasized. That you need a network. And I definitely understand that. We do need a network. It is kind of critical to maintain any kind of business. You can't just float alone solo forever. So I appreciate that. But it definitely did not give me any—I mean I think we talked about maybe two comfort measures, right? It just was mostly like, “Hey, let's share our stories and connect to each other.” And that was it.

MARGO: Yeah. Totally. And we hear this a lot. I'm always sharing the things that people send us saying, “I went to X, Y, Z training, and I left feeling like oh, this was fun. And birth is exciting. But feeling like completely unprepared to actually do anything.” So you had mentioned—because we talked a little bit by email before this. You had mentioned specifically comfort measures you felt like you needed more of. But you didn't feel super prepared to do any kind of childbirth education with clients and then hands on stuff since it was a virtual training. Are those the three big—

GENESIS: Exactly. Yeah. Those are the major things. Yeah. There was no hands on. And we really—I mean we did a couple of little exercises on the video, but they were very brief. And so yeah. Again, coming from a healthcare clinical background and the way I go—we move through grad school, there are just tons of labs. Every PT course you take has a lab component so that you can practice your hands on skills and get really used to all that stuff. So for me, I'm really trying to balance my personality and move away from that super clinical aspect. I know it's valuable, but it also doesn't resonate so deeply. But still because I'm conditioned to learn this way not having that hands on aspect was really challenging. I still feel like—I'm used to touching women. I touch women' bodies all the time in the most intimate of places as well. And that's fine. But I'm still hesitant and nervous about going into a birthing room and being supportive, right? I'm not treating something anymore. This is a different world. I just want to be able to apply different techniques, different skills, or whatever is needed to help her feel more at ease or more comfortable or whatever she needs or recognize when not to touch at all.

MARGO: Yeah. (cross talk). We talked about that last night a little bit—or yesterday, I guess. Afternoon I hosted our *Birth Warrior Project* weekly call. That's a big topic for

sure. So kind of share just where you're feeling stuck then at the moment. We kind of have the background. In what places are you feeling like not sure how to move forward? Because you haven't had a client yet, correct?

GENESIS: Correct. I have not taken an actual birth client yet. I think one thing that keeps me feeling stuck is definitely that lack of confidence, right? Even though I know intellectually that it would be okay. That sometimes you just have to dive in and fake it until you make it, and it would be fine. I trust that I wouldn't harm anybody that I worked with.

MARGO: Totally.

GENESIS: I still feel very hesitant working with someone when they—I'm a perfectionist by nature. Again, I'm trying to not be so perfectionist by nature, but it's hard. To just—yeah. Be confident in taking on a client and giving them kind of what they want, right? And not leaving that experience going, "Oh, man. I worked with Genesis, and she was okay. But she wasn't that good."

MARGO: Totally. And—

GENESIS: Yeah. (cross talk) for sure. Yeah. Go ahead.

MARGO: Oh, I was just going to say there's a quote. I think it's Anne Lamott that says, "Perfection is the,"—or what is it? Now I'm going to lose it. It's a (cross talk) or something. Like yeah. We totally have to let go of that. But I totally also hear that you want to have kind of a system in place to work with people and feel confident that it's going to be powerful and that it's going to be effective and not just show up.

GENESIS: Yes. Nail on the head.

MARGO: Okay. Yeah. It's (cross talk), but you want to actually help people. So okay. So—

GENESIS: I think system is a perfect word because it's not only about during the process but having systems set up in place for taking a client and working through their prenats in an organized fashion. And then—instead of it just being totally by the seat of your pants making stuff up as you go along the whole time kind of thing. So perfect word. Systems. Yeah.

MARGO: Excellent. Okay. So let me just think for a second where to take us next. So I guess I'll just say in terms of the system piece that very much is what we do in the *Birth Warrior Project*. We have kind of a cheat sheet of what we recommend that people go over with clients depending on what gestation they're at as far as educational pieces, testing options that might be coming up, emotional stuff to kind of go through. So that

does exist. And maybe I can send you a version of that after we talk and share that with people who might be listening to the podcast. But I guess taking a step back in order to be able to have those conversations, you really have to get into some of the meat around the childbirth education stuff. So it's like one thing to know what to talk about, and then, of course, you'll have to decide if you're feeling ready to talk about those things that are on the list. So yeah. So that might just look like some continuing ed for you based on any holes or gaps that you feel like you might have. Does that make sense?

GENESIS: Yeah. And to that point, as far as childbirth education, I've taken, again, physical therapy (inaudible) course that it is. That focus on pregnancy and birth and all that stuff, and that's great. I can definitely go back and relook at all those things and outline it. But again, I feel like it's so clinical that I have hard time knowing which pieces to communicate to a client. What does a client want and need to learn about? And how in depth do we really need to go, right? Because from a PT, it's a health care background. It's very clinical. It's more anatomy and dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. And these are the steps of the hormones, but it's very—I don't know another word besides clinical. And I don't know that that's the right thing to take forward. So yeah. I feel like I'm super drawn to the *Birth Warrior Project*. I haven't done it yet, but I'm dying to. Because I feel like it gives you that balance of maybe knowing to speak to a client better in more of that—not necessarily layman's terms but the way that they resonate with better.

MARGO: So I think that you're getting to a really good point, which I think is important to talk about. And this is something I feel like I talk about with anyone who is moving into the birth worker kind of role whether it's as a doula or midwife but especially doulas lately. And that is you have a really specific niche, which is cool. A lot of doulas don't. And so they have to work a little harder to figure out what is it that makes me different from other doulas. You have a very clear—I mean you might also have other things that make you different. But you already have a built in thing that makes you different. You have this really strong PT background that you're able to then give that as—it's a total bonus. You also have all that knowledge. And so for you, I think sitting with—it's not a matter of how do you mold into what people want. But what kind of doula do you want to be? And if you're someone who is really excited to talk about those things and the anatomy and the biomechanics and alignment and all of that and you want to bring that to your birth work, then I would just say do it. And then the clients who appreciate that and want that will choose you. Does that make sense? So instead of being like, "Oh, well, how do I make sure I'm not overdoing it," because just to relate it back to my work, I'm obviously in the midwife role. But there's five or six other local midwives. And I definitely am the midwife who is kind of a lot. Like I spend an hour and a half to two hours with my clients at prenats. I offer workshops. I offer them our *13 Moons* course, which is 50 hours of content. I expect my clients to be very educated and

knowledgeable by the time birth rolls around because I've seen that just work out better. And it matches my style of midwifery. So if somebody came to me, and I've had this happen, where they're not that interested in learning or maybe they're—it's three visits in and they still haven't watched the video I recommended that they watch in the course that I gave them access to—and it's happened maybe once. And I've maybe brought it up more times. A couple more times than that. But one time I had a client like that. And I had to be like, "This isn't going to work for me. You're not the kind of client I want to work with. There are plenty of midwives who won't care what you eat. There are plenty of midwives who won't care what you know or don't know. But that's not the kind of midwife I am. That's not the kind of birth work I do. And there's other people who are a better fit for you." so that might be kind of an extreme example. But if you're someone who wants to be spending time on those things and you have someone show up and they're like, "Oh, I don't want to talk about that at all," that's when you have to then decide what is it that makes me light up in this work? Do I want to work with somebody who doesn't care about their pelvic floor health, for example?

GENESIS: Totally.

MARGO: Does that make sense?

GENESIS: Yeah. And that's so nice to hear too that that's happened for you before. Like it helps to know, "Oh, it's okay. Not every person is going to be the best fit," because yeah. I definitely—I think you said it. I do try to mold myself. I'm really good at that, but I don't necessarily need to do that.

MARGO: Totally. Yeah. And it's about you being comfortable and excited about your work too. So that also is a big part of our *Birth Warrior Project* is kind of undoing that piece. And I don't know if you got this from your doula training. I'd be curious your thoughts. But so many of them focus on how to be a good doula for whoever walks in your door and how to accommodate any type of client. So there's a lot of work to undo around that. And I mean so many people whether they've just done sessions with me or have done our *Birth Warrior Project* or come on one of our webinars or whatever will leave and just think that's the best golden piece of advice. Like, "Oh, I don't have to take everybody. That doesn't make me a bad doula or a bad feminist or bad mom to be like I actually don't want to do planned epidural births or I don't want to do,"—it's okay to have preferences in what you want to do. You have permission.

GENESIS: That's so good to hear. Yeah. Yeah. And I agree. My training was like that. Yeah.

MARGO: Oh really?

GENESIS: Very much like—yeah. You’re going to—obviously, you want to take anyone because you’re trying to stay busy here.

MARGO: Right. When in reality, people who want a specific kind of doula and a specific kind of birth are going to pick someone who is specialized in that over someone who is generalized in my experience.

GENESIS: That’s good to know. Yeah.

(music)

FEMALE VOICE: Hello, everyone. If you’re enjoying this podcast, you’d probably really enjoy our other more in depth offerings. We have a comprehensive course for mamas called *13 Moons*, epic education for the birthing year. And an everything you need to know course for aspiring doulas who want to change the world called *The Birth Warrior Project: 120 Day Doula Training and Transformation*. And for the real birth nerds who want to become home birth midwives, we have the Indie Birth Midwifery School, and you can find out about all of these options and more at indiebirth.org. That’s indiebirth.org.

(music)

MARGO: So are you still working with a lot of pregnant women?

GENESIS: Not right now because of COVID. So everything had kind of quieted down. I kind of just have about a handful of people that I’m working with right now, and none of them are pregnant. It’s all just pelvic floor PT, not pregnancy related. So yeah. It’s kind of quiet right now.

MARGO: Sure. Yeah. I guess that was my one thought just as a natural flow into maybe some of your first clients because you had mentioned that when you have worked with pregnant women a lot of them have said, “Oh, I wish you could come to the birth.” So I guess I would just plant that seed. If you do start working with some pregnant women again, if that comes up, being open to that since you’ve already established a relationship. And sometimes it does help to have the first couple feel more like a—not a test run but a practice.

GENESIS: Mm-hmm.

MARGO: Yeah. So that’s also part of *The Birth Warrior Project*. One of the final projects is to actually do a practice prenatal. So if you have a relative or a friend who is pregnant, I would put that out there as a nice challenge to yourself. And that’s where you can just totally wing it to see what happens. I mean do your best to prepare for it. But often that breaks the ice in a way that is really helpful. The feedback we’ve gotten from that assignment has been overwhelmingly positive, and people have said, “Wow. I

knew so much more than I thought I knew.” And then maybe they did identify some places where they were like, “Yeah. I didn’t really know how to talk about this or what to do when this happened. Someone was—partner was watching TV the whole time. And I was really uncomfortable. What do you do?” Weird, funny logistical things sometimes came up too. And then create topics to discuss. So I guess that would be a recommendation of mine is to—if you haven’t had—anyone who hasn’t had a client yet because we get a ton of those people. They did a doula training. I haven’t had a client yet. Rip the band aid off and just do a practice one and put it out there to your community or local crunchy mom group or whatever. Like, “Hey, I’m a new doula, and I need to do a practice prenatal. Anyone up for it?” And just kind of see what happens. So that’s—

GENESIS: That’s a really good idea. That’s a really good idea. And I hadn’t really thought of it that way before because I do have a friends that are pregnant right now. And I’ve thought—I’ve only thought about it in the context of if they actually would like to work with me then maybe we will do that. And not even necessarily for pay or whatever. But I’m always waiting for someone to approach me. but that’s not necessarily the best way to go about starting, right? Just put it out there. Do a practice one without a lot of pressure on myself with somebody that I already know well.

MARGO: Yeah.

GENESIS: Better ice breaker.

MARGO: An ice breaker and it just gets the energy flowing in that direction, which I think could be really powerful, and especially if you have multiple people. Sometimes it’s a really cool way to just let them test you out in this funny kind of circular way. You’re putting it out there as they’d be doing you a favor. And then they likely will get so much out of it. And then maybe they’ll be like, “Hey, I should really think about hiring a doula,” because that probably will come up in your time with them. Which brings me to another topic that I think is really important, and this is a huge component of *The Birth Warrior Project* as well and our approach to doula work in general. And that is that we really believe all doulas and all midwives should be or should be able to be a childbirth educator as well. And that teaching our communities is one of the best ways for us to grow our businesses. It’s another mutually beneficial kind of loop. Maryn and I both found that where we live, and we have people who have done our *Birth Warrior Project* teach some of our childbirth ed materials all over the world. It’s been translated into many languages at this point.

GENESIS: That’s cool.

MARGO: And almost unanimously, people are like, “Yep. I do a class, and it attracts really cool, interested people. And it’s a great way to then get clients as a doula.” And

it's a great for just getting pregnant women in a community together which right now is kind of weird and hard in some ways. But—and then back to your niche in terms of the PT stuff, and I guess I haven't asked you yet. I'll save that a question for a moment. You could totally do some very specific birth education topics. Something that we recommend doing is doing kind of one signature workshop that you do a couple times a year and having it be free and that being a way to pull in people. I also think charging is great too especially if you're teaching something longer or kind of even more specialized. And that then attracts people who are willing to pay for things which is also good when the ultimate goal is to be building your business as well.

GENESIS: Right.

MARGO: So I think a mix of the two, like a healthy mix of something free every two or three months and something paid as you are able and want to can really help bring in different groups. And what I've found is even some of the people who come to a free workshop, a lot of them have no intention of hiring a midwife. If I was a doula, I'd be booking (inaudible). But even the people that come without an intention a hiring me will tell other people in their community then about my work. So it's a really great way to kind of spread good will throughout the (inaudible).

GENESIS: I think that's a really great idea. I think I need to--I think my hang up with that is that I want to--my gut reaction is, "Okay. Now I need to plan a class and have it completely all lined out. Every single bullet point in place. Dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. Before I can even think about doing something like that." But I also realize that that might be a little too perfectionist thinking, right? So I need to just maybe go back to my materials and make sure I feel refreshed on the childbirth education and then just go for it. Set up--I mean I guess I wonder what's the best way to go about setting up a childbirth education class or something like that, even a small group one, right now with all of the restrictions and all of that stuff going on.

MARGO: For sure. I guess another thought before I answer that is just that I guess I didn't say. What I found the most success with is doing one off events whether they're free or paid. There are people who do series, childbirth ed series, where you get people to actually come six weeks in a row once a week. And we originally, when we built our *How to Have an Indie Birth* course which is now retired, it was a five-week class that Maryn and I had put together for her clients when I was a student which was really fun. And I think has so many benefits to getting people together week after week going deeper with the same group of people over a longer period of time. But it's really hard to get people to commit to anything more than one day. So if you were going to offer something that was a multiple week thing--I don't know if that's what you meant. But for anyone who is listening to who might have been thinking of doing something like that, I would still recommend doing the one off free and/or paid classes to get people

interested. And then from that pool of people, then at the end of the class or something say, “I offer a six-week more intensive experience. And if you are interested, make sure you write your name on this sheet on the way out,” or whatever. Or pass it around. That’s always better to actually make them (inaudible) decide if they’re going to put their name and email down. And where was I going with that? Small group things. What’s that?

GENESIS: Getting people together during COVID.

MARGO: Yeah. So I don’t know. I just kind of have not tried to because I get really anxious having those conversations with people about what their comfort levels are. Maryn has done some where she was like, “I don’t wear a mask. If you want to come, you have to be cool with that in order to come.” And we had a packed room honestly. It was when I was there in November. So I think it depends where you live. It depends what your beliefs are. It depends what you’re comfortable with. I’m planning, in the next month or two, to do some in person things. And I don’t have the perfect answer. But I know how I want to approach it, and I’ll just put it out there. “Here’s how I’m doing this. And if you want to come, that’s how it’s going to be. And if that’s not cool, don’t come.”

GENESIS: Where do you put it out there when you’re advertising something like that?

MARGO: Oh, what a good question. Yeah. Maybe I should do a whole podcast sometime on this. It depends where you live. So you’re in Oregon, right?

GENESIS: Mm-hmm. Yep.

MARGO: What part?

GENESIS: Portland. I’m actually on the Washington side of the Columbia River. So it’s a suburb of Portland.

MARGO: Okay. So I guess there is a couple ways to go about this. And there’s layers to it. There’s really the low hanging fruit kind of approach. Like just letting—making it a Facebook event or some kind of online—some people use EventBrite, I guess, is another one I see that I don’t usually use. But I usually do a Facebook event and then just sharing that everywhere online that makes sense to share it. For me, I’m in a smaller place than you are, so there’s only about 100,000 people in this area. And what I do is I do that. But then I also do Facebook advertising. So it’s really easy and something that I definitely could do a whole podcast on, I suppose, sometime. But essentially targeting women aged—depending on how you want to do it. I usually do 20 to 40 and then who match specific criteria. So specific interests. And I don’t remember exactly what that tab is called as you’re setting up the audience. But it’s super easy to do. When I set it up that way where I live, it ends up showing it to about—I think 18,000

people or something like that. Or 16,000 people. That's the total audience. It doesn't show it to that many. But if I kept paying for it, it would. But it shows people within that audience the event, and I've definitely had a lot of success with that.

You can also just run it simultaneously on Instagram. So that is one idea. And then fliers, of course. Good, old-fashioned fliers. And then you had said the word earlier that I think is important which is networking and community. And so I guess I'll get to that in a second. But flying is great especially flying places where, again, low hanging fruit if there is a place that does prenatal yoga, if there is a place like—this is where it gets into who is your ideal client and where do they shop, where do they go, where do they hang out. And really spending some time getting to the heart of that can then help you figure out your advertising strategy more clearly. But a lot of people that we work with who want to be doulas have a similar ideal client who probably shops at the co-op and maybe the farmer's market. So there's definitely that.

And then when I say layered, I've done a lot of that in the last—I've lived—where I live for four years. And I just recently decided I really want to get out beyond kind of that bubble. And I don't know that it's necessarily going to get me more clients. But it's an experiment. And so I've been doing just even general visibility campaigns where I'm promoting to anybody who could possibly be pregnant just to let them know that home birth exists and, I, as a midwife, exist. That would be really smart for doulas. Not to just promote events. But events are great because—especially free ones because they draw in people to come to a thing. But doing visibility campaigns online also can be really helpful because a lot of people just don't even know it exists. They don't know that there are doulas where they live and connecting with people in that way. Yeah. They often are really grateful to be advertised to by someone who actually wants to be supportive and helpful.

So I guess two other thoughts, and then I should stop talking. The networking piece. So connecting, again, with the people who are already in that crunchy, natural birth bubble. But then also I'm not doing it, but I was invited to a business networking group. So looking into that where you live. It was really interesting. A friend of mine—a dear friend of mine, Dana, invited me to this business group, which if I had more time maybe I would do. But it had people who do carpeting and realtors and—who else was in there? I don't know. Just people in all these other—who I would never talk to. I would never talk to these people who run their business and who are out there players in the community who are interacting with tons of people, right? And just them knowing that a doula exists or them knowing a midwife exists and then depending on the business group kind of the rule is in that group if someone is at a party and there's a pregnant person, they're going to recommend you because you're in their business group, right? So there's a lot of—

GENESIS: That's such a—that's—I wouldn't have thought of that either because, again, as you get sucked into the birth world it's like you go down and down and down into this tighter and tighter bubble. And your vision is just one homogenous thing. But that's such a good idea. Of course. And especially if you really want to actually spread the word to as many people as possible so that as many people as possible are educated on what other birth can look like and all this other stuff. Yeah. Duh. Of course, that's such a good idea.

MARGO: Yeah. And a lot of people who are starting out as doulas are like, "Well, I took all—I took my business cards to every chiropractor. I took my business cards to the hospital." And it's like okay. They're not going to hand out your business card though unless you make an actual connection with them. And that's where maybe taking them to coffee comes in or if you're teaching classes and you need a space. I was teaching classes out of a chiropractor's office. And I don't know that she was recommending me to people, but it developed rapport with her. And she's a dear friend of mine. And I was able to leave my cards out. And also it was good for her business, right? Because I was bringing pregnant women into her office. So there's all these really cool, kind of synergistic things we can do within the bubble. And then there's things we can do outside of the bubble too. And it depends—yeah. I guess what I see a lot is new doulas get kind of burned out doing a lot of things that are high investment energy wise or high investment cost wise that don't end up actually producing clients. And sometimes I think it's because they don't actually want clients because they're scared. And other times, I think they're just spinning their wheels and maybe doing what someone told them to do at their training, but it's not really that effective.

So I've given you tons of ideas. But I would really start with ones that are free. Free networking, offering a free class, if you can find a cheaper, free location. Also something people have been doing is, of course, online teaching. So setting up social media pages for your business and offering a free class either live on Facebook or live on Instagram or an event on Facebook where you could use a Zoom link to then go teach or Google Meet link. Takes them off the platform to actually do the teaching. So that's something you could do in the immediate, if you felt like you needed something that wasn't in person. And you could also do that at any point, even post COVID, right?

GENESIS: Yeah.

MARGO: I do a lot of lives on my midwifery account just me kind of talking about whatever has come up in recent weeks with the community. Like last week, I heard that someone was turned away from a home birth midwife because of her BMI. And so I'm going to do a live soon on what does the evidence actually say and where does the BMI come from. Just doing some education where only—maybe only a couple people will actually watch it. But those people that actually watch it are people who are going to

really appreciate it and share it with their friends, and it doesn't take—it's free for me other than my time. So focus on the free things and don't feel like you need to do a bunch of really fancy branding and—I don't know. Printing out rack cards and that kind of stuff.

GENESIS: Got it. Got it. That makes so much sense. All of those, I think, are such good ideas that I never would have thought about on my own.

MARGO: Well, wonderful. Do you have—okay. So you have a website, but you haven't published it yet.

GENESIS: Correct.

MARGO: Let's talk about that. Why not? It's beautiful. I look at the back end or peek at it.

GENESIS: I think it's really gorgeous as well. I have a friend who is a designer, and she has put it together for me. And I love it. But my hang up is that I still have to come up with a lot of copy. So I really, really struggle with writing especially about myself. It's extremely hard, right? I have to come up witty copy on what is my mission, my about me section, and all of that stuff.

MARGO: Well, let's talk about that real quick. What sections do you actually need? You need the—you need your about me.

GENESIS: Yep.

MARGO: You need. I'm going to open it again.

GENESIS: Basically, everything. Describing services, that's easy, right? I can describe my services. That's a piece of cake.

MARGO: You have a section that says physical therapy and then one that says doula care.

GENESIS: Yep.

MARGO: So you need an about—you need the PT, the doula like little blurb.

GENESIS: Yes. Yes.

MARGO: (inaudible). You need—okay. Question, do you have some testimonials from women you've worked with in the PT world?

GENESIS: I have not actually collected any, but I think I could. I have people that I could reach out to and say, “Hey, would you mind writing one for me?” But I haven’t asked them that.

MARGO: Your first homework assignment—

GENESIS: Okay.

MARGO: - is to reach out to those people like today or tomorrow. Maybe Saturday since today is Christmas Eve. Either way, next few days just send those people a quick email. Like, “Hey, I’m about to launch my website. I really need some testimonials. And I would so, so, so appreciate one from you.” Okay. So you need—you have an about section, I thought. No? Okay. No. Your mission. You have—okay. “Hi, I’m Genesis.” Yes. Okay. You’ve got your credential section.

GENESIS: (inaudible).

MARGO: Yeah.

GENESIS: I have like no copy on the website.

MARGO: There’s some copy. I mean—yeah. Okay. And then there’s also sections you could totally just delete. You’re on Squarespace, right?

GENESIS: Yep.

MARGO: Which anyone who is listening, I definitely recommend Squarespace if you’re building it yourself or if you are wanting someone else to build it for you for lower cost because it’s just so much faster whether it’s for you or someone else.

GENESIS: Yep. And side note on that, I did start on Wix for anybody who is curious about all this stuff. It took me a long time to decided to go to Squarespace. I don’t know why. But I started out on Wix. It was okay. But Squarespace is—yes. One, so much faster, and two, has a much more fluid, mobile experience. And when you update something on the laptop, it automatically updates also on the mobile version. Other platforms does not automatically do that. You have to update both separately. So FYI.

MARGO: I am definitely a Squarespace component—or proponent. Sorry. And okay. So as far as writing copy goes, I think part of it is just doing it. And part of it is really hard, right? So I—something I have done with people who are struggling—and this is something I used to do in college even, if I was struggling to write a paper or get started on writing something. Okay. There’s two tracks. One is do you have somebody who would sit with you for 30 minutes and work on this with you?

GENESIS: Yeah. Yeah. I think I could come up—yeah.

MARGO: Who maybe be like transcriber?

GENESIS: Oh, that's a good idea. Yeah. Mm-hmm.

MARGO: So they would say, "Okay. We need to do your about section. Tell me about you. Just tell me what you would tell a client." And then you could also—depending on what you have working on your laptop or whatever, you could certainly just turn on the voice function too and just blab as if you're at an interview with somebody. And it, obviously, would need to be edited. But it might give you the bones of what you'd want to say.

GENESIS: That's a really good idea. Because yeah. I feel like I can speak things, but I can't write things. So somebody maybe interpret what I'm saying in a more concise way.

MARGO: So yes. Those are—you could even do both. You can do one where you just like hit the record on your phone on a note like a voice—why am I blanking? What is that called? Voice—

GENESIS: Voice recorder?

MARGO: Well, yeah. You could also voice record it. But in a note, if you hit the—

GENESIS: Oh, like Siri or whatever.

MARGO: Yeah. Like it'll write it for you. Why can't I figure out what that's called? I'm doing it right now. Anyway, so you can just turn that on, and act as if you are telling somebody, a potential client specifically—because that—you always, on your website, want to be thinking about who is reading this. Who do I want to be reading this? And it's your ideal client. So you need to speak directly to your ideal client. So if you haven't really gotten clear on that, that's step one. But once you are clear on that—and you can always revise this too in a year if you're like, "Okay. I've refined who my ideal client is." But once you've got that—yeah. Just get your notes out. Hit the little microphone button, which I still can't figure out what to call it. And just talk into your phone. And it will write it for you, at least a rough draft. So do that for your about. Do it for the PT blurb. Do it for the doula blurb. And you might just get on a roll and be like, "Actually, I can just type this out," once you kind of break that writer's block.

GENESIS: Okay.

MARGO: And just know that all of this changeable, especially if you're okay at getting into Squarespace and fiddling with it. I've fiddle with my website 500 times. It's a work in progress and probably the first year I went in every other week to change something. So it doesn't have to be perfect.

GENESIS: Okay.

MARGO: For the FAQs, that could be a fun thing to even crowd source, if you do have a social media platform already. And if you don't, for your business, you could just ask your friends, right? Say, "Hey, I'm launching my doula website soon. What kind of questions do you have that I should cover in my FAQ?" You could make it a fun story on Instagram where they could put in the question, if you have that function.

GENESIS: That's a good idea.

MARGO: And then my other suggestion when people are having a really hard time writing stuff is, one, set a goal. When am I going to have this done by? Obviously, having accountability can be helpful, so maybe I'll send you an email in a week and see how it's going. But also there's—okay. There's actually—I love resources. Sorry. So I have so many. But there's this ridiculous thing called Focused. It's a business where you can pay them \$30, and they will babysit you for 90 minutes while you do (inaudible).

GENESIS: Oh my gosh. I need that.

MARGO: I'm trying to remember what it was that I didn't want to do recently. Like two months ago. Anyways, you book a session. They start the session, and I don't get any money saying this. So I'm not an affiliate. Maybe I should be. But you can book a session, and they do a little meditation at the beginning. They ask you to clear your space of anything that's going to distract you. Put your phone away. I think this lady had even been, "Oh, if you want to light a candle—what's your intention for the next 90 minutes?" And then they—she checked on me two or three times. And I was so productive because I knew this lady—and I was screen sharing. You had the option to do it or not. So I was like, "I can't be over on YouTube watching cat videos because this lady can see me." So Focused is a resource. I think it's focused.space is their email. Or not their email. Sorry. Their website. And then the other free resource is called Cold Turkey Writer. And it's this really fun, free thing, as far as I know. And maybe there's a pro version. And you—when you open it, you say how many words you want to write or how many minutes you want to write for. And it locks your whole computer until you've accomplished whichever you've said. So if you're like, "I need 200 words about myself," it will not let you do anything else until you've done it.

GENESIS: I love both of these ideas. Oh my gosh. Yes. Problem.

MARGO: (inaudible) myself. And I'm totally with you that it can be so hard to do a thing especially if it's been awhile, and you're like, "I still haven't done the thing." Like oh no.

GENESIS: Yes. And especially right now because I'm not working much. My kid isn't in school. My husband (inaudible) from home because of all the COVID things. It's just we have all this time just floating around. And never end up getting anything done.

MARGO: Yeah. Totally. And that I guess would be—and especially right now with the way the world is and the way people’s lives are structured. But really any time. I guess that’s my other take home for people who are like, “I want to build my doula business, and I’m not sure how.” Even if you set aside one hour a week to start, being like, “Even if I don’t know what I’ll do with that hour,” to make space for it in your life, again, to send the energy that way. So even if you sit there Googling how to start my doula business or spend that hour listening to—I’m going to record a couple more of these—be like, “I guess I’ll just listen to Margo talk for awhile,” or whatever. Even if it’s just listening to something not business related but birth related being like, “I have one hour a week,” or maybe it’s more than that but starting small and dedicating some real energy to it, I think is all you really need.

GENESIS: Good. Good. Yeah.

MARGO: So I’ve blabbed so much at you and given you about five million ideas.

GENESIS: Yes. (inaudible) Thank you so much.

MARGO: I’m going to stop talking for a minute. Do you have questions or things we didn’t get to or—

GENESIS: No. I think every single point is so valuable and my mind is just reeling right now with ideas flowing that I just want to—after this, I think I’m just going to go in my notebook and expand on each point to try and kind of help carry the energy forward because that was all just so incredibly helpful.

MARGO: Cool. Do you have—as you’re glancing at your notes, are there one, two, or three things that stand out as actionable next steps?

GENESIS: For sure gather testimonials. I know that that’s something that I need to do, and I know it will be helpful getting that stuff on my website. So for sure that. The Cold Turkey Writer. I will be doing that probably sometime this weekend, right? Today is Christmas Eve, so I’m not going to do it today. Let’s be honest. But this weekend I’m definitely going to do that because I think getting copy has been one of my biggest goals for the past probably two months. I’ve been sitting on this website without any copy and maybe get it on there, and I think that will help me feel a little bit more accomplished. So testimonials, the Cold Turkey Writer to get my copy. And then I want to maybe try and figure out the workshop thing a little bit more. I don’t know which direction I want to take with marketing it yet. But that’s why I want to expand on all of those points to flesh out a little bit more which I’m going to go with that. Just a little (inaudible) workshop would be, I think, really good for me or even—actually, I think more actionable than the workshop will be doing a practice prenatal with one of my friends. That will be even easier. Yeah.

MARGO: Yeah. That would be awesome. And I guess just another tip with—if you do book a workshop, I would put it on the calendar even if you don't have what you're going to say and have that be the thing. You know what I mean? If you keep waiting to make the perfect thing, you probably won't do it is my guess.

GENESIS: Right. That's true. That's true. Okay. Calling me out. It's all right. It's all right. It's what I need.

MARGO: It's good. I do the same thing. Sometimes I'm like I'm going to do a workshop about the postpartum. And I tell everybody because then I have to do it, and then I make it up. Sometimes the day before, and it's totally fine. Yeah. I guess we didn't really get too much to the imposter syndrome piece, but I guess my suggestion is to do all this stuff, practice prenatal, and if you're still feeling like, "Oh, I don't know. Who am I to be talking about this," we could talk more about it. But I think getting those testimonials and hearing from other people about how valuable working with you was, doing the practice prenatal—what else did I say? Getting your copy on the website, all those things, I think are going to build your confidence, and hopefully that will just kind of all away as you just keep walking forward.

GENESIS: I agree. I think all those things will be really helpful too. Yeah.

MARGO: That's awesome. Well, any final concluding thoughts?

GENESIS: I mean I just want to say thank you so much for giving me your time. You have no idea how helpful it is. It really is. I think the work you guys do is so amazing and inspirational, and I really just want to carry that forward and pass it along to everyone else as much as I can.

MARGO: Yeah. That's what we want to. And that's where, like I said, kind of at the start of this, I'm so excited to do this work. I never—I have a women's studies degree, and I thought I was going to be a lawyer maybe when I was younger. And then I was an activist. And if I had told 20-year-old myself that I'd like to talk about business and Facebook advertising and websites, I would have been like, "That makes absolutely no sense." But I really love doing this work. So if you're listening to this and you are someone who wants to be a birth worker and you're struggling, whatever the case may be, I've been told I have some good ideas. And I would love to support people in that. We're going to be releasing some package options for people who want to do business coaching with me and Maryn possibly both of us. And so I would be kind of doing more of this stuff and the logistical and the accountability and checking in on you like did you do your homework, that kind of stuff. And Maryn is going to be doing more of like the inner work and the emotional and spiritual development and if that imposter syndrome keeps popping up, that kind of thing, she can help deal with that on the more

metaphysical level as well. So we're a cool team in that respect. And we're super excited about that in 2021. So thank you for doing this.

GENESIS: (inaudible)

MARGO: Sweet. Yeah. And we've had a lot of people who are like, "Oh, I don't really want to do the full Birth Warrior Project. I just want to do the business piece." So this kind of came out of some of that. But even some of our—yeah. So anyways, thank you for being willing to kind of be vulnerable and share where you're at and where you've had struggles and let me dump a bunch of ideas on you.

GENESIS: Thank you so much. I appreciate it.

MARGO: You are so welcome. Well, don't be a stranger. Let's talk again soon.

GENESIS: Okay. Thank you.

MARGO: Yeah.

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(closing music)