

(introductory music)

DISCLAIMER: Welcome to *Taking Back Birth*, a podcast for women who know the truth about birth and those who want to explore the path of radical birth love. I'm your host, Maryn Green. *Taking Back Birth* celebrates the power you have to make decisions in alignment with your own truth. Decisions not subject to anyone else's authority. Decisions that create experiences that will change your life. *Taking Back Birth* is a production of the Indie Birth Private Contract Association and indiebirth.org. No material on this podcast should be considered medical advice. Birth is not a medical event.

(music)

MARYN: Welcome. It's podcast Friday. And this is the Q&A week of the month. So taking a breath and sharing a couple of seconds of a beautiful mantra by artist, Alexia Chellun. You can find it on iTunes or—I don't know. Spotify. Really, really beautiful music and was my hike this morning. So I just set it on repeat. I was listening to her whole album the last couple of weeks which is called *Jap Hari*. But that song, the one I played for you—or the couple of seconds that I played—is called *Guru Ram Das Chant*. And I think that is just so beautiful. I love how her voice is the only thing on the track. And I just set it on repeat and hike. And it just keeps going around and around. And that's meditation some days, right? Meditation is just living life, and music can be really helpful. So I would totally check that out, if you're into music, or maybe you're already into mantras. But even if you're not, you could give it a try. I find that kind of music is really meditative, as I said, and just settling to the brain. And it is a prayer, of course, even if it's not the language that I speak. And even if I don't know what the translation is word for word, you can look up, of course, what the translations are. And this is essentially—the one I played—a mantra of humility and miracles supposedly reconnecting the experience of the finite to infinity. So one of my favorites. Thought I'd share. And you can give that artist some love and maybe incorporate mantras into your own daily practice, if you are so called.

So quick update before we get into the Ask Maryn Q&A Friday. Doing Midwife Mondays on Monday, duh. And I'd love to see you there. So if you want to watch this live video on Mondays, then join our Social because that's free and all of the info is there. The Midwife Monday is also free so social.indiebirth.org. We're trying really hard, if you couldn't tell, to just get everybody over there. We have so many platforms. We're on Telegram now. Instagram. And that's all good. We're not ultimately looking to cut those off at this moment. But the Social is really the hub. Like things are posted there that aren't anywhere else. The discussion is really awesome. You can private message people, and then something like this Midwife Monday is an event over there. So go check it out. I've only done one so far. And honestly, it was kind of a disaster

because it was snowing in Sedona, and my Internet went out which makes for a really poor live video. So I'm hoping for better times going forward. And I think it will be great. And it's really the place for me to be less structured. These podcasts, aside from today which might feel really random because it's questions—I have a topic. So the Midwife Monday I've been thinking about it, but then I want to just do at the moment whatever comes out. So it's kind of my feminine version, and this is sort of feeling like the more masculine version sometimes. Both of which, I think, are cool and balanced.

So I'm going to be talking over there about just whatever comes out, if you're curious about my life or more as a midwife. I'm really in learning mode right now. I think it's just coming to the end of the fourth trimester. Rumi will be three months in—I don't know. A week or so. So I think that's why. I'm just really enjoying digging into new subject matter, taking things I knew even further and deeper, working with clients in a different way. I got a whole new pile of books in the mail yesterday. I'm in some online courses. So I'll share more about that over on Midwife Monday. But that is kind of what I've been up to. I also recorded a podcast with my good buddy, Nathan, who many of you know. He's an OB, and he's been on my podcast a couple of times. And I've actually been on his already. He has the OB Gyno Wino podcast. And you have to know him to think that's funny maybe. But that's how we met. We met through his podcast. And I've been on it already just an interview about home birth or something. And then he wanted to interview me about Rumi's birth story, so that's what we talked about last week. And I'm sure he'll get that out at some point when he has time. And many of you have heard that story, but it's always different in a way when I tell it to different people. And just knowing his audience, I feel like I told it in a different way than maybe I've shared here just because his audience is—well, probably a lot of doctors.

So not to say I wasn't being honest, but the spirituality and such I didn't go into as much there. And I also talked more about my late miscarriage with Sable there. And I haven't really talked about that on many podcasts other than my own before. And Nathan is a palliative care doctor, so I can't believe we've never talked about that publically. And it was really nice actually to have him hold space for that story. And I don't even remember how it came up. I mean maybe he just asked. But it wasn't really a plan to talk about it. So anyway, when that is released, you can go check that out, if you'd like, and hear us talk. Oh, one more story that I thought of sharing this morning that I thought was really cute just from my own life here. We have these three little girls kind of at the end with Rumi. And they're just all really cute together, and they play together. And they're just silly. And one of my sons had his friend over last night for dinner, and then the kid slept over. So this other boy was hanging around. He's about 12, I think. And the little girls are just are in total flirt mode. They just think he is so fun, and they really like him. And they just like to tease him and kind of hang on him. You know how little kids do that sometimes when they just find someone.

Anyway, I just thought that was cute because Deva was very flirtatious this morning saying goodbye to him as he left. And I forget what she even called him, but we were all laughing so hard. Just like a little pet name she has for this boy. And I guess I also wanted to share that this kid, in particular, who is 12, I was at his birth. And I just marvel because he's like this big, tall kid now, and he's so cute. And my little girls are running after him. And this is the kid I saw emerge from his mother. And that just sort of blows my mind. Maybe even more so than my own kids in a way. And I was thinking back on his birth, which was interesting, because he was the first for his mom. And I was still a student. And I remember his mom was just having a hard time like a lot of people do, right? Just in labor. And getting to that end point. And we kind of left them alone for a little while, went outside, and then we kind of heard her yelling. So we ran back in. And the baby was on his way.

But, and this is the clinical thing I guess I wanted to share here that this kid doesn't even know, but I'll leave his name out of it. So whatever. But the midwife I worked with had told me that my job was to facilitate the delivery better, and I don't ever use the word delivery. So I'm merely quoting her. So she meant kind of what you're taught in OB school really which is you kind of flex the head manually upon crowing. And then you get the shoulders and all that. Well, thank god, I couldn't really do that because the mom was in the birth pool, and I also just didn't want to touch her in that way. But I do remember attempting to flex this baby's head. So anyway, not like the best memory on the midwife student side of things, but it was a beautiful birth. And he's a beautiful—was a beautiful baby and is just a really great kid. And I also feel so grateful that that's the relationship we have a lot of people in this community.

One of my other sons has a friend that's new to the area. And while we welcome new people, it's strange. And I don't have the same trust obviously with someone that just shows up here in Sedona which a ton of people are doing because we really have this amazing thing where we've known people for more than a decade. And like I said, I've been present with a lot of them at this super intimate point in their lives. So anyway, just a fun story to share before we get into the Q&A.

So the way this works so far, and this is the first time I'm doing this, is Julie, our amazing coworker, assistant, whatever you want to call her, is asking on Instagram for questions the week that I'm about to do this podcast. So my plan is to do this the last Friday of the month, so she asked this week. Point being if you really have a question you want to ask then I supposed submitting it there on Instagram would be the way to go because Julie is really organized and great. And she compiles them all for me in one place, so that is really nice. And shout out to Meagan, one of our amazing midwifery students, who actually had this idea when I asked earlier in January how to structure my podcast. She said, "Do it like Dr. Stu. He does a Q&A." And I think I said there, and I'm going to say it here. Uh, yeah. It's a great idea. And I feel like maybe I'm just

insecure, but I feel like Dr. Stu has—I don't know. Not better questions. But I don't know. They just come more naturally to him, and people probably contact him about 100 times more than they contact me with things. So I don't know. We'll see how this goes. And if it's not good, then maybe I won't keep doing it. And if people enjoy it, then I will. And if I enjoy it, I will. And I guess my final word on that is I'm going to set my timer. So I don't make an hour podcast about one of these questions because that's not really the point. Otherwise, I would have just done a podcast on the question.

I want to cover the questions that were asked. But because there's so many, I'm going to set my timer for four minutes. So I'm going to give each question four minutes or less. And I don't know what's going to come out because I just printed this out. Julie got them to me yesterday. I haven't really even read them. And so if you hear a question that you want me to elaborate on and possibly make a full podcast about, then please email me because otherwise then we're just going to do the four minute version. And that might work too. I don't know that a lot of these really warrant more than that. And it's really going to force me to think on my feet and not sit here and stutter for the first 30 seconds, which I could do. So maryn@indiebirth.org is my email. Always. At least right now always. And I want to hear from you if you have any thoughts or questions or, like I said, hear anything that you want to know more about.

Otherwise, I'm going to go full steam ahead. And this shouldn't be terribly long, if I really do keep it to four minutes. And I hope it doesn't feel spastic. I'm hoping that for me too. Just like here, there, everywhere, all the things. All right. I'm going to get my timer up. Hmm. Do I want a timer? No. I don't want it to buzz on us. Do I? I don't think I want it to buzz. I'll just put the stop watch on. Okay. Okay. So I'm just going to go through these and see what comes out. And then we'll be done.

All right. Here we go. What kind of things do you do postpartum to gain back strength? Timer started. Well, I'm assuming the person who asked meant physical strength. I think there's all kinds of ways to talk about our recovery in postpartum. Physical strength is a favorite of mine as I've shared. Maybe I'm a weirdo. I don't know. I really like using my body. And on the flip side, it really bugs me that I'm weak. That ten babies is not nothing. And I have work to do. Luckily, I have the desire to do that and the time. So yay. So the things I actually do, many of you know I hike every single day. And I'm up to—I usually do two or three miles. Whatever an hour is. I'm usually out for an hour. And that feels like enough. And today, the trails were so muddy and gross that I probably went pretty slow. But just hiking, just walking, just getting out there and breathing, and all that I feel like is an amazing way to slowly get stronger without anything fancy. So you don't need fancy equipment.

I'm also doing yoga quite a bit. And I used to hate yoga. I'll be honest. It's just like boring. But it's been not boring. And some days by the time I get to it, which typically I

hike in the morning, and then I'll either work out or do yoga in the afternoon, I'm tired. Sometimes I'm too tired to work out, and yoga is the ticket. So I like the Down Dog app, and it's free. I don't pay for it right now. I have in the past. But I'm not paying right now. And it's great. You can set the timer. You can pick what kind of yoga you want. And they lead you through the whole thing. So I think being intentional with that and not doing—I'm not doing crazy athletic yoga where you move really fast or anything. It's like intentional breathing, engaging that core, which is the main part that needs recovery, and just general muscle building in a really slow way. So that.

And I do work out. I've started a six-week program with Nike Training Center, which I do pay for that one. And I would totally recommend it if you're into this sort of thing. They have amazing work outs. And you can set your music, and the trainers are really great. And this is a beginning program. Before I got pregnant, I was more fit. But I'm starting with the beginner one for the same reason. Like my arms may be able to do certain things or lift weights, but my core is, sadly, a little behind. So those sorts of things. And let's see. Is there anything else? Other ways to gain back strength. Just food, nutrition, really good food, good hydration, supplements that I know work for me. Chiropractic, so many things. And more of emotional strength is just time. Time to digest the birth experience still, time to reflect on who I am because I'm new again, and I think that really is another display of strength, and a different kind of awareness. So I make plenty of time for meditation, like I said. Breathing, doing nothing, sitting here in my room reading a book, I'm all about me right now with some time off from births. So I would highly recommend that. Don't give it away. Don't get back too soon. Don't not ask for help. Do all of those things because strengths is not just a one-word answer.

Cool. Well, I kept that to under four minutes. Yay. Okay. How do you make time for ten children? Hmm. I mean I want to answer the question, but part of me sometimes picks questions apart, if you didn't notice and wants to make a different question out of them because I often feel like—especially in birth. Sometimes questions are asked where people miss the point. So no offence if this was you asking. But I don't really feel like I have to make time. I have time. I have time because I have ten kids. And I wanted all ten of them, and I love all ten of them. And that doesn't mean we live this perfect fairy tale life. As I'm thinking about it, there are a couple of them—and it's mainly the older ones—where lately we haven't done a whole lot together. Probably since Rumi's birth. So I think I said this in another podcast. It's a good reminder for me to be like, "Oh yeah. I should check in with one of them. So-and-so. And see if they want to go for a walk or go out to lunch or something." So some of that feels more intentional like I have to make the time to use your phrase, whoever it was.

But I really do have the time. And I don't know. I don't really feel like it's that big of a struggle, and I don't mean to blow it off. I know people do struggle sometimes just with one kid or two. But we all have our different paths and our different strengths. And I'll

never forget a long time ago someone reading my astrology chart. And I'm not an astrology expert. I do appreciate it. But anyway, in my house—whatever house has children and family, I have a lot of good energy and whatever. Planetary this or that. So I don't know. It's just been my karma, I think, in this life to be a mom to that many and to, frankly, not struggle too much. And I think that sort of goes without saying because I really wouldn't have ten kids if I didn't feel like I had time for another one. So I feel very grateful. I feel very lucky. They're amazing. And to the question of making time, again, I think we all have time for what we want to have time for. And that doesn't mean, like I said, every day I hit all the checkboxes of all ten of them. But little kids, for example, I think I shared somewhere else. We just read books a lot. They love that. They want to sit on my lap. They want to cuddle. They want to pick books, and that's really special and bonding and easy. And it's something I enjoy. So I don't know. I think I'm done with that one.

What do you struggle with as a midwife, parent, or woman in general? Let's see. Well, I think the struggles I'm feeling right now—I don't even know if that's the word, again, that I would use. But where I'm feeling like I'm putting my attention right now is on a deep self growth process. And I haven't really shared too much about that in podcast form because it's so out there, in a way, and it's so personal. And it's so neither here or there. And if you're working on your internal growth, it feels like you can be a different person, if you get to a certain point, and that's how I'm often feeling. And then also you look back, and it's not a linear journey. This thing of being human and moving forward. So you can look back and think, "What have I actually done? What is there to talk about," right? So that's where I am right now. But I wouldn't call it a struggle. I really think it's a gift to be alive during this time and to have had the life I've had and the experiences I've had and want to grow from that because there is always things that I want to be better at. And I don't like even saying that. So maybe that's where the struggle is. I'm someone that has this idea of perfection in their head. I think a lot of people are like this.

But if I tie it back to my childhood, I can see why that's so. I was a really good student. I was the kid that always did whatever the parents wanted. And so getting away from that is what I'm feeling as an adult. Who am I really? Kind of the big essential questions of being alive. And how can I be more gentle of myself? So the struggle is that. How do I accept where I am? How can I do better without over criticizing myself? How, ultimately, can I have as much compassion for myself as I am able to have for other women really? I can hear all kinds of stuff come out of people's mouth. And I don't have judgment on it. Honestly. It's like whoa. That's a lot. Hmm. That's intense. Wow. That was hard. But I don't do that for myself. So those of you that resonate with being really hard on yourself, that's something I am really wanting to be done with because it's really not productive. And it's just not nice. It's not being nice to yourself to

look in the mirror and always want to see some other version. Self love. Self worth. That's what I'm on. That's where I'm at. And it is a struggle in the sense of returning to old patterning can be really enticing because it's more comfortable. So getting out of the comfortable into the uncomfortable is my struggle, but I love it. And I'm happy to be doing it. And ultimately, as midwife, as a parent, as a woman as this person asked, it is benefitting me. And I think probably benefitting the people around me.

I'm doing so well with this time speaking of being perfect. Okay. Is a cord wrapped around a baby's neck something to be concerned about? Why or why not? Short answer, no. I'm sure there are situations—there have been. There will be where a cord is just so tight that a baby cannot get out for some reason. I've never seen it. I don't even know that I've heard about it because often if you hear that kind of thing it's usually after some kind of major intervention like a cesarean. And often, in that situation when they do the cesarean, they just need a reason. And they are like, "Oh, the baby was wrapped around the neck." So the poor cord, the poor neck, they both have gotten a bad reputation when it's really not a problem. I always think of Dr. Stu actually because I remember hearing him explain this. And I forget the word he used. But it's essentially whatever word means we are taking the way something would be for us in our adult bodies and we're using that interpretation or how that makes us feel or how terrible it would be to, for example, have a cord around our neck and we're putting it on a baby's physiology, which is not the same especially in utero, right?

So they're not breathing out of their lungs, so certainly—yeah. You don't want to cut off circulation. But it's not the same thing. And as an adult, if you imagine something around your neck, it sort of makes you feel panicky or fearful or upset. And we're also perhaps putting those emotional states of that experience onto a baby, who has a cord around the neck when there is no reason to think that a baby feels anything emotionally like scary about it. It could and probably is just normal and physiological for many babies in utero because they only have so much room in there, right? So when a baby tangles himself up in his cord and Egan, my second had three wraps of cord around his neck and one under his armpit—yes. He did. He was fine. But his cord was so long. And as a kid, a little kid, he would wrap rope all around the house. It was really cool to see him reenact that.

But anyway, cord around the neck is something that happens in utero early on. So a full term baby probably isn't able to do that. So when a baby is small—a fetus is smaller, whatever, who knows, right? 16 weeks, 20 weeks, maybe earlier, maybe a little bit later, that's when they're doing all the gymnastics, and they're getting wrapped up in their cords probably. So it happens. Nothing to do about it. And more active babies may do more crazy things. But ultimately, it's self protective. So I love explaining it like that because I think that's a very optimistic way of talking about something that people think is so scary, again, for the reasons mentioned. But a full term baby that's going to

be born who has a really long cord was super smart to wrap it around its neck honestly because cords can be pinched. And when a cord is pinched, the blood supply is pinched. So having a cord caught, let's say, between a mom's pelvis and a baby's head is bad. Can be bad with contractions especially. So a baby that has either just had the good luck or whatever, who knows? The thinking ahead perhaps to wrap or whatever has that cord safe around the neck where it can't be pinched. So it's really fine. And I'm not good at statistics. But it's a pretty high statistic, I think. Like 30% maybe babies have cord around the neck. It's nothing to fear. It's nothing to really blame for anything at all honestly. And oh my gosh, I'm almost at four minutes. Obviously, I liked this one. I'll guess I'll stop.

Okay. I'm not going to let myself blab on. That was a good one. Maybe I should do a podcast on that. Okay. This is an intense one. Does intuition always lead to a live baby? No. That's my two cents. No. And I get the question. I really do because I think that's something very prevalent in natural birth land. And if I should be so bold, especially among free birthers that they think if they just trust themselves everything will be fine. And sadly, there are totally women out there who have lost babies through no fault of their own because sometimes babies die. And they have had this guilt trip happening within them. And I've talked to several of them. And it's a really hard conversation. And I'm not telling anyone else how to think about it especially if you have lost a baby. But that's the question. I trusted myself. I followed my intuition. How could my baby have died? Whew, right? Big question.

So my interpretation is as often more spiritual in a sense because intuition—let's define that. Is staying on the path. That's kind of what I made up. I've made that up. That's listening. You're saying on your path of truth. You are listening to what comes in. And you are following that guidance. So case in point, when I had my late miscarriage, I was following my intuition, right? And when I had some bleeding, it flashed through my brain, "Is this baby alive?" And he was at that moment. He wasn't a day later. But it challenged my intuition because when I first saw the bleeding I thought, "He's dead." and then he wasn't. So I was confused. But then he did. So the timing was maybe not what I thought, right? I mean time is this weird thing we've made up as well. And then here is what I think is the take home point, at least for me, was even when I thought he was alive, and I was like, "Oh, I was just being crazy. He's fine," that's what I kept saying to myself. My intuition said, "Everything is fine." And I remember writing it in a journal.

And to me, that meant, "Oh, my baby is going to live." Well, it did not mean that. But ultimately, everything was fine. So I think you have to think about what level you're asking for guidance on. You know it's like if you consult divination cards or tarot cards or whatever. I mean whatever. Looking for a sign. It's really easy to get into more simplistic questions because we want an answer as humans. We want a yes or no. So

if you have worked at all with cards, it's a good practice to not ask a yes or no question because really what good is that. What wisdom is that? You just want someone else to say, "Is it going to be okay," essentially which yeah. We all want. But we can't really get that from anyone else. So anyway, I don't know how I got off on cards, and I'm almost out of time. But sadly, no. I don't think following your trust and intuition always leads to a live baby. Not to mention, there's also just soul contracts and karma and our agreement to be here on earth for as long as we're here. That really has nothing to do with anyone else even our parents sort of sadly.

Are there any herbs you use for helping keep calm during labor? The only herb I've ever used—and it's not an herb. It's a flower essence is Rescue Remedy. I love flower essences. They're really gentle. They don't have a alcohol taste. They don't have a taste at all. And they work energetically. So it might be fun to do a podcast on flower essences, but I'm not going to today. So yeah. That's all I've ever used. I personally wouldn't really use tinctures during a labor of my own and, very rarely, have I ever suggested them with anyone else. As a midwife though, if someone has been up for three nights and they can't get any sleep and the choice is some midwives use alcohol—I mean and people can do whatever they want. But some midwives might use a shot of whatever, whiskey, to help a mom relax during a long labor. I've not really don't that because I don't know. It doesn't resonate with me. But yeah. I've used herbs in that way. So motherwort, lemon balm, catnip. There's all kinds of good relaxation herbs. You could kind of make a little cocktail of. And sometimes it's just enough to help a mom relax. But in a normal labor, things moving ahead I wouldn't really suggest any of that. And I'm not an herbalist. I don't—I like plants. And I respect them. But western herbalism is not my—it's not always my medicine of choice. Let's put it that way. So other ways to keep calm during labor, music is really great. That's been a favorite of mine. Oils, essential oils in a diffuser or even on you if it's not too strong. Breathing, feeling relaxed, having people around you love, so those would be my ideas.

Any info or advice for a first time mom who ended up with a low upright T incision and desires a VBAC? I think you mean an inverted T. That's what I would call it. But you're right too. So yeah. That's considered a special scar, right? And those options are usually far and few between for moms who have had a special scar and want a VBAC. What advice? Well, we do have a podcast somewhere out there with a past client of mine. Her name is Jackie. And she had a home VBAC after a similar incision, and then went on to have another one. And we recorded a podcast—I don't remember when in her journey. But that's very inspirational. And many other women have done it as well. So checking with the Special Scars group. I also did a podcast with Jessica Tideman, who runs Special Scars. I don't know if she still does honestly. But we did a podcast a long time ago, so you could listen to that. Other than that, I would say do all your emotional homework, all your spiritual homework. A cesarean is not the kiss of death

for having a vaginal birth obviously. But I think the tendency to have another one, frankly, is possible when people don't look at what pattern perhaps got them there in the first place.

So I don't know who you are, but it's a great question. You should take our *13 Moons*, which is still donation only because there's all kinds of information about physiological birth and creating the experience you want and looking at your own birth when you were a baby. There's all kinds of things to look at because I have no idea, of course, what created the cesarean in the first place. So it could be anything, right? Maybe you had a breech baby. I don't know. So I'd look more specifically at that. And finally, for anybody not just the person that asked this question, we do do virtual prenats. And I love working with people one on one that way because, obviously, that gives us a whole hour to focus on you and multiple hours if you want to do multiple sessions because question and answer like this can't really help someone personally. And it really is so personal. So if anybody is interested in that, it's on our home page on the website. indiebirth.org. Look at virtual—I don't know what it says. Virtual prenats or something. Virtual appointments at the top. And you can book one with Margo or I. So I would do that in addition to the suggestions.

How did you find the power to leave the system? yeah. Well, read our book, *Indie Birth: A Story of Radical Birth Love*. That's on Amazon for the full story. But how did I? Well, I think when people make huge life changes, which was what that was, I think it's typically because they hit their limit. They hit their limit, right? And in some circumstances, there's all kinds of connotations there. Oh, she went crazy. Or whatever. In other words, who knows how it looks from the outside when you hit your limit? But I had hit my limit in so many ways with the system. From a very young woman and I'll share about this more some other time. But I had cervical surgery. And I think experienced some degree of medical trauma and abuse through my first birth, which was a hospital birth which was actually really tied to that other experience because I really was made to believe I needed them. I just eventually got tired of it. I was angry. And even though I had been told to not trust my body and to trust them, to trust the system, I did know that I was inherently more capable.

So it was just timing really. And I think that's a good way of describing that decision. It was timing. It was the culmination of a part in my life that I was ready to move on with. It was anger. And then I think it's also on a more positive note to leave any system, not just the medical system. And I don't know actually what this person meant. Maybe they meant the big system because we pretty much aren't in that either. I think it's just recognizing that we are free. We are free beings. We don't need to ask for that. We don't need to work at that. We are inherently free by birth. But yeah. These systems that largely our parents had agreed to—have agreed to engaged us in a way where we became slaves in all the ways. So I mean I appreciate the question although I'm not

sure that I utilized my power, per se. It was more determination and an awareness of this freedom and wanting to be that, wanting to stand in that light, and not keep complaining about all the things I hate or hated about a system I agreed to. So yeah. I think if you're in a system, you've agreed to it. It doesn't mean it's fun. It doesn't mean it's hard to find your way out of. But once you realize you are free, it's like you have to work backwards. Once you realize you are free, then you take the steps to undo what you've done.

Vaginal birth with bladder prolapsed. Yeah. Prolapse is a huge topic. And I feel like I am not the expert on such things. There are so many people out there right now with such great training around biomechanics and things like prolapse. And I don't feel like I'm one of them. And I'm interested, of course, as a midwife to the degree that I am. But I don't really have a desire, honestly, to be a specialist in one of those areas. I would say first and foremost find a specialist, if that resonates with you. Find a pelvic floor specialist. Find someone that works with women in this way even if you are pregnant and just get an assessment from them because my experience—and I'm not saying it's extensive by any means. My experience with prolapsed during pregnancy and other people and my own too—I mean I think everyone that's birthed a couple of babies has some even slight degree of prolapsed. And so you got to wonder if that's maybe even normal.

I digress. But I would maybe get an assessment from someone and just see. Because my experience has been that it doesn't cause any problems other than inconveniencing sort of things which I agree are not normal. But in pregnancy, there's only so much you can do to correct the problem. So full honest disclaimer here, I really do not have issues that I would attribute to prolapse when I'm not pregnant. But my last two pregnancies I definitely was having some bladder leakage, and it was only at certain times of the day like it was always when I first got up which was very odd. It like had something to do with—I don't know. Laying down and then maybe getting up and having all the pressure there. I'm not really sure. And that was really—it's not fun. It's disappointing in a sense. Something about just wanting your body to not do that. And it's sort of embarrassing and all the things. So I have experienced that. But, again, I haven't heard any stories. I don't know of anyone where these things are so bad that they can't have a normal birth. So that is what the person was asking. So vaginal birth.

On the other side as far as not making it worse, I would take our *13 Moons* and learn about physiological birth and learn about how to let your baby push itself out essentially. No coached pushing. No forced pushing. No on your back pushing. Just be really gentle with yourself during your birth. Let your body just do what it needs to do. And then after birth, definitely recover which is not the question. But vaginal steaming, for example, and even doing yoga. And there's all kinds of ways and a billion systems out there that people have for that kind of thing.

Okay. Toddlers and new babies. What does sleep look like for you daily? I might do a podcast on sleep with the whole family. I mean about the whole family. So we'll see. But that would be a mothering one coming up. It's possible because people ask this all the time. And I don't know if it'll be a podcast. I'm not sure how much I have to say because I haven't really struggled with sleep the way I know some people do with kids. So we have three little girls in our room right now across—I'm in my bed with Jason and Rumi. And then right here in the same room the three little girls are in their bed. And they sleep pretty well although Jason just said to me this morning—he said something like, "How many times did I get up last night?" And I don't think he actually did. And I said, "You know, some people have kids that sleep way worse." And I know I'm right about that.

But with the three of them, yeah. Maybe once a night there is something. There's plenty of nights where there is nothing. The typical complaint at the moment is that Cove is a wild animal sleeper, and she plops herself on poor little Deva. So Deva will wake up crying and say, "Mom, move Cove. Move Cove." And I'll have to get up and move her. But that's about the extent of our nights being interrupted. We all go to bed in this room. So the three little girls and Rumi and Jason and I, we all go to bed at 8:00 p.m. No joke. And I'm in bed until probably 7:00 the next morning with a baby and the girls. So yeah. It's really not that bad. And Rumi is a nursing a couple times a night. It's really not—I know it will probably get more when he starts getting teeth but right now it's manageable. So that's the sleep.

No one takes naps around here though except for Rumi obviously. Cove, nope. Stopped napping. Deva will be four. She's not interested in napping. She's really tired though by 7:00 or 8:00. And she falls asleep faster than anyone. She usually falls asleep on my bed with me when we watch a show or something. Cove is a trooper. She'd keep going. But as far as toddlers and new babies together, we used to have the toddler and the new baby in the bed together. But there's no need to right now because even though Cove is really young she'll be two next week. She's happy to sleep with her sisters, and it's literally a foot away. So it's kind of like we're still in the same bed. But we had never done that before. We'd always had the toddler and the baby and really I just think the toddler would be on the far side, probably near a wall, next to Jason. And then the baby near me. And it's always worked out fine. But I'm glad actually that Cove isn't because it really gives us more room obviously to move around and move him around and all that.

All right. Last question. Look how great we've done. Have you ever nonsensically feared a certain part of the birth process like crowning after experiencing a really, really empowered birth? Yeah. Totally. Totally. I think fear is a normal part honestly of preparation. And I don't think it necessarily gets better when you've had babies. I think the first time you don't even know necessarily what to be scared of other than what

people have told you or what you've read. But once you've done it, for me, there has always been that part that is sort of imprinted that was intense or maybe painful. And when you know you have to do it again, it's like you don't care how great it wound up. You just are scared to pass through that. Pass through that fire again. So crowning, I can't say ever has scared me, but that doesn't mean I haven't been scared. I love that part. And I don't think it's painful at all.

But to kind of answer your question in a way that applies to me, it's been the part—and I've shared this in other podcasts. It's been the part where you're done opening, and the baby shoots down in your body but isn't coming out yet, if that makes sense to anyone out there. It's really an intense feeling. And I don't know. Maybe that's why Rumi didn't want to come out that way. It's interesting to ponder, isn't it? So how have I ever dealt with that? Well, I think the nonsensical part is just normal. It doesn't make sense. We know we can do it. We know we will do it even though, yes, weird things can happen. But yeah. We kind of fear what we know. So I guess my best advice would be to kind of rethink that and to ask yourself why you're scared. Like what is that that you're feeling? And what's the worst that can happen? And for me, it was like that one part is so intense that I was just afraid—let's see. What was I afraid of? Now when I have to remember—well, it's a feeling of completely being out of control. That was my actual fear is that I would be so out of control that—I don't know.

And then I had to ask myself. What? Then what? You'd be so out of control that what? That it would hurt so bad, that it would be so intense. Well, I knew I wouldn't actually break open, right? I knew I wasn't actually going to die or whatever it is. So what is that fear about? I think loss of control is a common fear. And ultimately, that's the deeper thing going on. And so for me, it was working with that. Okay. If my fear is being out of control and I fear that feeling of falling essentially, just falling into a black hole, that out of control, then how can I work with that prenatally? And for me, it was surrendering, right? So if you surrender, if you find a way to be in it, if you find a way to just let it happen, if you find a way to let it run you over, then you're not trying to force it. You're not trying to force control. And if control is where the problem is, right? I mean it makes logical sense.

So that has helped me in the past. And Rumi's birth aside—because that was kind of a crazy different story. Rumi's birth aside I worked on that before Cove's. And call me lucky. Maybe it was just luck. I don't know. She really just kind of fell out. And I think it really was the lack of resistance to holding on to controlling any of it. Just let it go. If it's crowning and you're afraid of that, just—I don't know. See it happening. And train your muscles and your body and your psychology to just watch it. Just let it happen. Just let it wash over you. And of course, with that crowning, there's other things, right? Like you could have your own hands down there. And I don't know. You could find a way to find the beauty in that moment, right? Because it's almost over. And your baby's head

is between worlds. And it's like so mind blowing and amazing. So anyway, maybe that will be a longer podcast because I am out of time, and I did spend more time on this last question only because it was the last. And I think that's a really powerful question talking about fear and how we go forward when we feel fear. So perhaps that will be continued, but I am going to stop now so that nobody gets too sick of the Q&A. I don't know. I don't know if they will, or you will, or I will. Somebody might.

Okay. Deep breath to end. That was a lot wrapped in that very short amount of time. Thanks for listening to me blab. Don't forget to check out the Indie Birth site. If you're interested in midwifery, we are enrolling again in July 2021. So stay tuned for what that looks like. You do need a prerequisite done with us, and that is the Birth Warrior project or—and this is new. So don't turn off your recording yet. Or our Intro to Autonomous Midwifery. And that is a really awesome course that is a prereq. Either/or. You can choose either one. But it's more midwifery based obviously. And you can find that on our Social platform. I can't remember the link on our own site offhand. But you could definitely find it on our Social, which, again, one more time—social.indiebirth.org. It should be kind of in the featured courses, and you can check that out. And we'd love to see you do that and take that if you're looking to go to midwifery school with us.

All right, everybody. Have a beautiful weekend. I'll see you again next week.

(closing music)