

A Conversation about The New Return to the Great Mother: Birth, Initiation, and the Sacred Feminine with author Isa Gucciardi

Actually is a podcast about re-imagining 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. Actually is a production of the Indie Birth association at 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. Hello everybody. And welcome to this episode of well, actually a podcast by me. Margo Blackstone as a part of my work here at the Indie Birth association.

And today I have a special guest and author Isa Gucciardi PhD, who is here to talk about her book, the new return to the great mother. Birth initiation and the sacred of feminine. And I'm just very excited to have this conversation and see how it flows. And I'll turn it over to you Isa to just tell us a little bit more about yourself, what we need to know about you before we dive into this conversation today.

Thank you so much for having me here at Margo. I. I've been reading about your work and really appreciate all that you're doing to help educate mothers and birth professionals. It's it's such important work. So thank you. And thank you for the podcast, getting the word out. It's it's. It's really, I think very important educational set of tools that you're providing.

So I'm so happy to be part of it. I've been an educator most of my life as well. And I I was, giving birth and having children and interested in all of the issues around birthing in the late seventies, early 80. And I was living in a a community alternative community.

Actually, it was an alternative healing community. And we were, loosely modeling ourselves on the farm, which was very active at that time. And , I ma was. All of our heroes and and we were really trying to offer an alternative idea of home birthing, which at the time was absolutely not.

Available. And it was very radical and it was something that just was not on the table. And of course I May's work really helped with that. Put that on the table in a way. I think that people today don't fully understand how, how radical it was at the beginning to even talk about.

Something other than a medicalized birth. When we started, when we all started trying to, bring some balance, of course, medicalized birth is a wonderful thing when you need it, but if you don't need it there and it can be a. Interrupting to people who are trying to have a different kind of experience.

We fought the good fight, a lot of us had home births, and excuse me. We we really had. I thought we had done it, I thought, okay, we're done. , good. And then of course, my children grew and, I returned to the workforce and, and I, it was, I was still focused on working with people and doing healing work.

And I was an interpreter for many years and I worked as a medical interpreter and and A language interpreter and and then. I began, I went back to school and I got my, I was getting my degree in transpersonal psychology and working in the spiritual counseling model called depth, D E P T H depth, not death depth, hypnosis, depth hypnosis.

And this is a model that I created out of my hypnotherapy practice, as I was studying transpersonal psychology. And, it came out of. My many years of Buddhist studies and shamonic studies and working with energy medicine principles, which I had begun doing back in the seventies and the eighties as I was doing all this work with birthing at the time.

And as I started teaching everything that I had developed, I started realizing that my students were having all of the same problems. I had, and we had as a community in terms of advocating for alternative ways of birthing and, I saw how dis-empowered they felt and I realized that it really wasn't a an issue of kind of.

Confronting the medical establishment, we had been, of course, I think all, all rebels are in their youth are confrontational. So I, I'd been a little bit more confrontational in my youth and I was like, realized that, we can't really win this battle in a confrontation, like that's not gonna work.

What we have to do is really focus. and really empower women from the inside out. And I think that one of the things that happens for women when they're coming into. And it's, this is not, this is true of other situations as well, but we're looking at I'm just talking about birth because that's your area of expertise and it's what the book is focused on.

In some ways it's not entirely focused on birth, but birth is a central theme in the book. And so a lot of women coming into the birthing experience. Don't understand how they may have been out of touch with the rhythm of their bodies or with the rhythm of their lives until the birthing process begins.

Because as you will read in my book, I talk about the different Inor and moments in a woman's biology where she, if she has a these in initiatory moments are moments of transition. And they are biological moments of transition that all of us undergo our own birth puberty menses, the sexual encounter with the other childbirth or the decision not to have a child menopause and death.

And each of these transitions or initiations. Is biological in nature, but opens a path of spiritual understanding to us if we know how it will, it does it anyway. And if we know how to look for it and understand it, then we have an opportunity to really understand more about what the lessons that we have to learn in this lifetime are.

And. Our body is showing us about our spiritual path. And when a woman comes into the birthing environment, having had very little awareness of what her body has been showing her or what her life lessons have been up until that time. And how the birthing experience might illuminate those themes.

She really doesn't have all the tools and resources that she needs in order to be able to be powerful, as powerful as she might want to be in the birthing experience. And so one of the things that I was seeing is that women are really. Dealing with a, it's not exactly a powerlessness, but it's a lack of power in terms of understanding what they need.

It's a lack of power that comes out of understanding what their spiritual needs are and what their biological needs are as they're coming into the birthing environment. And this. This is a difficult education to receive because we are living in an environment that has. Very little education in terms of spiritual, one spiritual path through the world.

Nobody told us in kindergarten you have a spiritual path that you need to follow in the world. Maybe some people do, but not in public school, and that path is yours uniquely and that your body will reveal it to you if you allow it. And your task is to. Make friends with your body, not try to make your body look like, somebody else's idea of what a body's supposed to look like.

And so people immediately, especially entering puberty, girls have real disruption in their relationship to their bodies as they as they step into adulthood. And that disruption often is mimicked and mirrored in their relationship to their period. And then that affects the way that they interact with others sexually.

And then by the time they come into birth, they have all these different moments, biological transition that they haven't fully been able to navigate with all of the power and awareness that they might have wanted to, or not even known that they needed to. And now they're entering into this major initiation of birth, which is.

Life death and everything in between. And it takes a lot to. Be able to maintain awareness of your body and its needs and of your spirit and its needs. And this is one of the reasons I started. So when I started realizing how I was educating a lot of doulas, a lot of midwives, a lot of nurse practitioners in the depth hypnosis model that I've mentioned.

And I started realizing. Oh, man, these people need more resources to help the women that they're helping give birth, who are helping give birth. So I created this meditation called the return to the great mother which is, which was the name of my first book. This book, the new return to the great mother is a further elucidation of that book, but I was at the beginning.

I was just making copies of this meditation so that birth professionals could take it into the birth environments. I would go to birth conferences. I would have 500

of these meditations. Wow. I'd just be passing them out, please use these. And and I think that, and I, that first book that I wrote on the return to the great mother was really just.

A, a way for people to step into a connection with the great mother through that meditation and through hearing the stories of other people many of my students gave their stories about how it had being in connection with the great mother had completely changed their birth experience and how, how empower.

They felt. And since then, that was in 2013, I've had thousands and thousands of people write to me and tell me, I don't know what I would've done if I hadn't had this connection with the great mother. And of course the great mother is the principle of the sacred feminine that has guided women through birth since time immemorial.

And we really don't have this concept in this culture. It's becoming more common now. But it's it's, in the last 10 years, the idea of the sacred feminine has become a little bit more forefront, but it's not something that was. Really again, our culture is not geared toward the feminine, and or in any kind of positive way that would help a birthing mother. It's not, again, it's not like we have a culture, like for instance, like when, like I like ancient Egypt where ISIS is at the center, The mother goddess is at the center of the culture and that all of the spiritual and educational and ministerial processes revolve around around a female deity.

We just, we don't have that. So the idea that there is this power that lies deeply. Within all of us and is expressed all around us in the power of the natural world. That it's something that can guide us as we're moving through birth. I really felt was I thought this was really important message to get out into the world and and to assist in modern women that are trying to navigate really the complex, very complex environments and trying to become a mother and learn how to mother and be a mother.

Yeah. Yeah. So that's a long, that's a long story. sorry. It was, that was one question. Sorry. no, that's great. I really enjoyed hearing all of that and giving that context and having that background and yeah, just thank you again. That was such a really great. Just piece of context, I think in general, around birth and the difficulties that women are facing today.

And also, I love the historical piece of, your experience in the seventies and eighties. And I feel like maybe I have some more questions around that too, but since we're not here to talk about the history of birth, maybe I'll skip ahead to it is an interesting history. It is an interesting history.

It's so interesting. Chased out of birthing midwives were not chased out of birthing until the early 19 hundreds by the AMA right in the west, in the states. Yeah. Yeah. I guess I will ask you then, like, how do you feel like the situation and climate and environment that women are birthing in right now compares to back then?

Have we made progress? What do you think? Oh, I think, I think we have made progress at least here in the bay area there in the San Francisco bay area, I. For sure there are so many options, you can choose a birthing center. You can be at home, you can have, you can be in the hospital.

You can have a combination and there are so many birthing resources and there are so many midwives that are practicing. , it was very difficult to find a midwife that would practice outside of any kind of midwife at all. And I think that there really it's a huge thing to, we have to see how many resources are here.

Like I, and people with alternative views, even in the more mainstream areas of birthing, and I remember. , I'm I, as I mentioned, I'm an educator and I teach many classes. I teach many forms of natural healing and depth hypnosis is just one of them. And I also teach classes in shamonic practice and Buddhist practice and.

Energy medicine. And I, I had to create this foundation called the foundation of the sacred stream to hold all the teachings that were coming through to be taught. And part of the shamanic program, the applied shamanism program. Is there's a really interesting thing. I just, this is a long intro to this thing that I wanna tell you.

But the applied shamanism program is a very complete program on all the different shamonic practices and including something called space clearing. And this is a process where you clear the imprints of previous experience in a space. And also there may be from a shamonic perspective what things and fields of energy that are often called spirits that are in a space that have not left a space

because they, got confused or they came into the space because they weren't confused because they were confus.

So space clearing is a very big part of shamonic practice. And I created something called the space clearing society, because I was getting called to clear spaces everywhere as an individual. And I just realized, individuals can't do this on their own. We'd really need a group. So I started gathering all my.

More advanced students. And now we have this space clearing society. That's been offering space clearings to, the SPCA, the Oakland city hall, all these, big, open, big public facing institutions, including a major hospital here in the bay area, which has asked us multiple times to come and clear the OB GYN wards.

because interesting. They find that their outcomes, their birthing outcomes are really improved when we do that. So that's a very alternative kind of thinking. That's the example I wanted to give you in terms of an alternative thinking mainstream organization here in the bay area. You would never see this 30 years ago.

Yeah. So yeah. There's definitely a change. awesome. My other question, was around, how we as midwives or perhaps doulas or. Friends sisters, whatever role we're filling in the life of a pregnant woman, how we might be able to introduce this concept. I'm really excited to just have your book to be able to hand somebody.

So I just wanted to say thank you for that, first of all. In my own work as a midwife as somebody who does really appreciate and try to work within these space spaces of not just being clinical, but also incorporating the sacred. sometimes it's tricky. Especially the initial introduction of these concepts with clients.

So I guess I was curious what tips and tricks and thoughts you have to share about that. Yeah. How do, how to introduce the concept of the great mother for instance, or the concept of the initiatory process or what which aspect in particular, I guess yes, both of those things and, even.

weaving spirituality and sacredness into the process in general. But yeah, I think specifically if I wanted to do this meditation with one of my clients, for example,

how do you suggest like approaching that and bringing that up with someone? Because sometimes it seems like that first step is in many ways, the hardest.

I think that, one of the things that is always, that always emerges when you're sitting down with someone to ask how you can help them, is they will tell you what they know about what kind of help they need. Or they will tell you about some of the concerns that they have. And so then with that starting point, you can say we have this meditation that might help you gather some me gather some resources internally that might help you with that issue.

And this is a meditation that will help you connect with the powerful part of yourself that has a connection. the forces that are going to help you birth. And we call this aspect of the self, the great mother. And if you start with the idea that this could be an aspect of the self, rather than some external spiritual experience, that generally allows for a sort of opening.

And the truth is it doesn't matter if people perceive or conceive of this great regenerative creative force as part of themselves or something external to themselves it doesn't matter how they conceive of it because ultimately, as we all know, anyone who's given birth inside and outside dissolves very fast.

right. So however they're conceiving. Is IM is completely fine, acceptable, wonderful. Not it's up to us to accept someone else's spirituality but I think if we approach it in this kind of, not almost, it's not exactly secular, but it's not. spiritual and a dogmatic kind of way.

And the other thing is that immediately, when you're offering this meditation to someone you say you may conceive of this great feminine force that we call the great mother and any way that has meaning to you, it may be, you may. Perceive it through any of your senses, it may be something that you see, or it may be something that you hear might even be something that you smell.

Especially in birthing, of course, the sense of smell is so heightened, and of course you want to be able to. Offer them this resource before they give birth and say, you may perceive this through any of your senses and you may perceive it as a light or as a sound or as an animal or as a plant or as a person or as a mythic or angelic being, there, there are many ways to perceive this and to conceive of this and.

It will be really unique to you. However you perceive that. And I think that when you introduce the meditation. And that concept of connecting with this creative regenerative power in this way, people. And especially when you introduce it to them, when they've talked about some place where they need help already, where they're feeling like they might feel uncertain or and you can say these tools and resources might help.

What do you think? You ask the question, you don't say this will help you, you'll say even, I know I do say that when I'm talking in this way, but if I'm one on one with someone, I wouldn't even make that assertion. Even now, this will help you. This may well help you, it's and do you think that might be possible?

You ask the question, you invite the person to participate rather than tell them what to do, . Yeah, absolutely. I would love to hear your thoughts too, on introducing these concepts and ideas to younger people. I know that's something a lot of our midwifery school students talk about as they and something I'm interested in too, as a midwife is I obviously work with pregnant women, but I also want to be a midwife to my community and would love to Yeah, just set women up for a better pregnancy and birth experience by starting, earlier on of course with their own birth, like our own birth.

But then also in the puberty menses for sexual experiences. So I'm just curious if you have thoughts you wanna share about that. I know this is the birth podcast, but it is definitely something that our listeners are curious about. You can't separate it. That's why I, that's why I expanded the book.

Yeah. Because you really can't separate birthing from all the other in initiatory moments that we go through as a biological being, because it's all part of a spiritual path. And often we only become aware of the path as we enter into the birthing process. Or, it's, it's, if we're lucky, right.

But in terms of educating younger women, I think that, of course I really feel like some kind of spiritual education that is non-dogmatic in nature is really important. And and it's hard to find that and you can, but however, you can take any of the in moments and make it into a spiritual opening without even calling it that it's just make it into a celebration of.

You can call it that. And as as. As young women, as young girls are stepping into adulthood, to have the celebration of the onset of the period, and to, as mothers, we need to educate ourselves so that we can help our young girls step into young.

And, that's that the celebr you can have, of course you can have some kind of a ceremony. And you can also, I think as a mother, it's really important to filter the messages that come through the dominant culture. I, for myself, as a mother, I've always felt that was my primary duty and and certainly the messages that young women get.

Now, especially with the social media and all the hyper media exposure that they get. There's just so much, so many messages that are counter toward a woman, valuing her body for its capacity to support her and to create life. There's just, it's not about that. And in, in the media, in the social general social Dominant social experience.

And so to really offer alternative views, alternative ideas, alternative thoughts and I think also, as girls enter into their, into the rhythm of their periods is, to be able to. Talk to them about the importance of the period as a moment for inner reflection and to really offer a different alternative to, just powering through and, thinking that there's something wrong with you.

If they, if you don't feel well, like this, just having this openness, this this idea that, again, which is an historical idea in many. Traditional cultures, women would take that time to be with one another, to speak about their internal experience that become so much more evident as the period sets in.

And when we can recognize that, one of the reasons we have all of these difficulties around our periods is because. There's something that we need to look at. There's something that we need to understand. And when we try to push it away, we have trouble so to create, to create this space and all of this is a valuing of the body, which so when you would enter into the sexual experience, you're going to be less likely to feel like you have to enter into some kind of an experience that is.

It that sexualizes you in a way that you may not wanna be sexualized that takes away your own experience, because it's all focused on, on, fulfilling some kind

of socially dominant idea about what sex should be, and to really give women this opportunity to reclaim their bodies.

From the moment they begin understanding what their bodies are and what the creative force that they are harboring is, and you know how they must learn to protect it and curate it and and keep safe. Themselves and ultimately their children from these forces that would take them away from being in authentic relationship with their deepest ways of knowing themselves.

And I think that, a woman's relationship with her body is even though the body is right there, sitting there every, for her to see it is the most intimate relationship that anyone. And and there is and most women's relationships with your body is very disrupted.

And you can begin at any time when you become aware of that disruption to begin to do the work. Of understanding what kinds of traumas might have created that, that disruption to understand what kinds of experience of power loss. You've been exposed to over time, through negative messaging and to begin to repair that.

And often, the reason we are focused on birth is because birth is when it all becomes evident when all of the ways in. We haven't been able to care for ourselves, become evident because we have to learn how to care for our child. And if we don't care for our ourselves, we can't care for our children.

Yeah. Oh my gosh. Yes. All of that is so revolutionary and beautiful. And yeah, my seven year old daughter. Is really excited about eventually having a moon party and a moon celebration for her first bleeding time. So it's also a really nice reminder that it doesn't have to be anything, really complicated or huge, just that intention to bring awareness to and that celebration and that celebratory spirit to those.

Rights of passage can be revolutionary. So thank you. But the fact that she even knows about a moon party is such a big deal, it's and the fact that there's even that even there's that expression, right? That's not an expression previous generations have heard of, so in English anyway, in the west, maybe another. Traditions, maybe. Yeah. The fact that she even knows about that, things are so different. Oh, wow. Yeah. That's awesome. Yeah. And I think like you spoke to

just reiterating that childbirth often is the time where it becomes so apparent to all these disconnections and disruptions that we maybe have experienced earlier in life.

And as a midwife, I often see like the first birth being that time of really that being brought to light. And then subsequent births are often like, oh, those are their chances to see how making those repairs can change the experience. I know such a wonderful opportunity to re pattern. I teach a class called initiations of the sacred feminine, and that class is a class where we look at each of these in initiatory moments and we spend a lot of time rep patterning the experiences that we've had that have not been, supportive.

And and it is, that's a really important point that you make. And it's very important to emphasize that for women that are listening to this and realizing, oh my gosh, I had, I had a, I had my brother who was making fun of me when I had my period, I had, I couldn't, Couldn't get the, sanitary napkins I needed because I was too embarrassed to go to the store and my mother wouldn't get them for me.

And then, I was molested, my first sexual experience by my neighbor. Too many people had that experience. And so then they're listening to this and they go. Oh, no, like what do I do, how I'm gonna give birth and I've had all of this happen. What, how do I fix it?

What do I do? That, that class, the initiations of the sacred, feminine is a time. Where we look at all the ways in which those initiations might have been less than ideal, that proceed birth. And we rep pattern it rep pattern them with the help of the great mother. And so we are working in an altered state, connecting with the power of the great mother and asking what needs to be addressed within me in order to help me heal and help my body prepare.

For the next initiation. And that, I know that's a big ask for someone who hasn't worked a lot in an altered state or, worked internally on their own, but that is something that you can develop the capacity to do. And even just connecting with the great mother and saying, just connecting with the great mother in your own way through the meditation.

That meditation, by the way, is on the sacred stream.org website. It's in the book, but I speak it out on the website and we'll put that as one of the links in the notes. And you can listen to that. That meditation again and again, and just the process of connecting with your way of understanding the great mother and allowing that connection to move into the places where you feel the disconnection due to your experience and other in the previous initiations is going to help you.

It's going to empower you. And if you can take it further and ask. What else do I need to address specifically? You can get some help. Of course I've trained many depth hypnosis practitioners at this time, and you can, again, at the sacred stream.org website, you'll find the link to the depth hypnosis practitioners website, or you can go there directly and find help with, from, with women and men who are.

Ready to help with these kinds of issues. The level of trauma that people have, from their own birthing experience and just from living is really high and depth hypnosis is all about healing trauma, so that the birthing experience, and you're stepping into their birthing experience with a better understanding of the lessons of healed trauma rather than going into the birthing experience and having that trauma just be plunged out into the open without any kind of container. And and that again, if that were to happen and you had connected with the great mother, it would be a moment to just SIM if that were to happen in the birthing environment and you realize.

Oh my God, this is, this is way more than I can handle right now when you just call the great mother and you stay connected with the great mother. And in my book, I talk about all the different ways in which women have worked with the power of the great mother. In birthing in exactly that way where they've just, I remember there was one woman who just said that the great mother was taking her down a series of stairs again.

And again, just, they were just coming down these stone steps and she just kept following the great mother's footsteps as they were going down these stone steps. And that was how she stayed close during the whole birth. And so everyone has a different way of connecting, but it will be something that will help them in the birthing experience.

Yeah, I think that's so helpful. And I love that internal more feminine, maybe gentle is the word that comes to my approach. To that realization like, oh, I have a lot of stuff that I need to probably work through before going through this next right. Of passage and next initiation in comparison or juxtaposition with a more masculine approach of I just need to learn every single detail that I need to know about how birth works.

And here at Indie Birth, we definitely try to balance those two things because yes, there are things that are options to be aware of. But I do see a lot of women. Really just be one sided in, in that, like just trying to collect all the information and statistics and details and sometimes neglect that inner work and that spiritual component.

So I really love that you've created this structure and a container to do that work as well for people who, this might be the first time in their life that they are embarking upon this sort of path. And so I think sometimes. Can be daunting when you're not sure where to start. So I'm really grateful that you gave a little bit of a blueprint there for people.

Great. Oh, I hope it's helpful. That's my that's. My goal is try to be helpful.

Is there anything else that you would like to share with our listeners? I feel like this has been really great in illuminating and that story you mentioned just a few minutes ago was one of my favorite parts of the book. I loved all the stories you shared in there and how all the different ways that it can look.

So yeah, just any last, thoughts or words that you want to share or. Links or anything. Yeah. Maybe I'll read I'll read a few more of the stories of the encounter with the great mother from the book. Maybe that would be helpful, right? So these are three different ways in which three different women experience the great mother.

They one says the great mother shines a light on me. It is a window into my baby. The baby is bigger squirmy and moving around, exploring its home. The great mother says the hurt is necessary and we will both get through it. I am to remember whatever happens that I am moving toward the feeling of holding my baby in my arms.

So that's one of the teachings that the great mother gave an expectant mother. Here's another one. The great mother wraps me in a love blanket. She wants me to feel love from the heart towards myself. It feels green, new living. I can be the source of that. I have felt cold and dead. I do have the strength to do these things.

I can be powerful and strong and shine. This light it's worth it. Even if it's just for me, you see the empowering quality there. Here's another one. The great mother is the son. She is shining rays of light and there are nutrients pouring into me. She has let, she has laid a bed in my. I feel full and supple and maternal.

I am told I am part of this field of life. I am not outside looking in. I feel many flickers around me. There are spirits wanting to come in and be born. So these are not, these are part of the connection, the initial connection with the great mother that women had through that meditation that you'll find@sacredstream.org and which is in the book, the new return to the great mother.

And let me see I also tell longer stories in the book And this is I can tell a story about when I was working as a medical interpreter. Would you want me to do that one? Yeah. Or was there one that you liked in particular? I have the book here. I can read it. Was it the woman from Haiti?

Oh, the one from Haiti? Yeah. Let me see if I can find it. Yeah, let me see if I can find it. I may have to tell you that one. I may not be able to find it right away. Let me see. I think that one made me cry. Actually. It was so beautiful. Yeah, it was pretty amazing. It makes me cry all the time, too. I was crying like crazy at the time.

Let me tell you I had to hold it together cuz I was supposed to be professional. Right? Here it is. I have it here. So a young Haitian woman, Esther had come to the hospital with several women from her community. And again, I was working as a medical interpreter and just to give you some context. so I was working in a poverty law clinic in a major east coast city.

So we were serving immigrants from primarily Haiti, Dominican Republic. The Caribbean the whole Caribbean area. Area, but I was a French and Spanish interpreter. That was how, that was my training. And so that's why I was here.

So a young Haitian woman, Esther had come to the hospital with several women from her community.

She wanted them to be in the delivery room with her, but the admitting staff would not allow so many people into the room where she was to give birth as it was against hospital policy. When she realized that she could not have her community members by her side, Esther became tense and agitated. Her labor stopped progressing at about five centimeters.

She became very upset as the nurses tried to hook up a Pitocin drip in an effort to bring the labor on again. Esther spoke French and Creole. And I was called to interpret at the birth in French and English as her labor became more complicated. Esther could only speak in Creole. I was able to understand about 80% of what she was saying as Creole and French are quite similar.

At one point she began crying out, pleading for her friends who were in the waiting room. She kept saying they will know what to do. They have the songs. I kept interpreting as best I could, although I was probably misinterpreting the word song as it did not seem to make any sense.

There was one nurse who was a bit more open than the others. And I stepped outta my professional role as an interpreter and begged her to allow the friends to come in. She had just begun her shift and she could see that she was going to have a lot on her hands with this birth, if she didn't allow the friends into the room.

So she got permission for them to attend the. The nurse asked me to invite Esther's friends in. I found the members of her community in the waiting room, sitting quietly, focusing deeply and humming softly together. It seemed as though they had been waiting for me as they simply got up and walked toward the room before I could say anything, they hummed softly as they entered the delivery room.

Esther relaxed immediately. As I closed the door, they began clapping softly and started singing in rounds. The energy in the room became very alive. Esther sang with them and soon her labor picked back up. She gave birth within several

hours and her support network was singing around her. After the birth, I asked the woman what songs they had been singing.

I asked the women, what songs they had been singing. Adele, a tall bright-eyed woman told me that they were songs that all the women in their village sing for each other during labor. These are the songs our grandmother sang at our own births and they are the songs we sing for the new generations. She said, she also told me these songs were often sung at special ceremonies, such as those held to commemorate a girl.

When she first gets her period. That's a pretty amazing story. That was amazing. Amazing time. I had so many experiences, many more experiences in terms of helping women with birth as an interpreter than I would've expected, that I mainly because I. Did a little more than interpret in which you're not supposed to do.

In that kind of situation, I remember I tell another story in the book where this woman was giving birth. I didn't quite tell it like this, but she was. she was it was a teaching hospital and she, she hadn't realized that she had signed away the right to privacy at entering into a teaching hospital.

And so the birth came on really fast and so she was screaming in French. She was screaming, the shot, she's and I'm like, There's no way I'm gonna interpret the shot here. I'm not gonna interpret this because we give her a shot. If she gets a shot, it's gonna mess everything up and this baby's gonna be here right now.

She doesn't need a shot, and I'm like, and of course you should not be thinking like that as an interpreter. So I'm taking my, I'm taking my time. I'm taking my time, I'm gonna interpret it. I'm gonna say it, but I'm just taking my time, thinking that baby will get here by the time I interpret that and right.

The baby was crowning. And right then this guy comes in with this doctor with this cadre of doc of young doctors. And he's talking in this loud voice, this woman, this, and just like looking at her as if she's an object, talk know they're just, they just come in talking like this.

And her, the baby is crowning and her legs are like wide open. The baby's crowning. Everything's moving way too fast. The nurse is not able to keep the drapes, in a, and all these men walk in and she like freaks out and I just stepped right in between them and the doc, the doctor in her.

I just totally block their view, you're not supposed to do that as an interpreter, but , there, it's I'm probably, it's a good thing. I don't work as interpreter anymore. Somebody can hear about this. make a complaint against me. I don't know.

But but It was, but, there's just so much that happens in the birthing environment that, that, that is unexpected even when you're prepared, this is why it's so important to do that work of. As soon as, you're pregnant, figure out what do I need to understand about myself?

I remember when I got pregnant the first time, I didn't know much, I was very young and I was. I didn't know much, but I knew that I needed therapy and I remember I had the little test strip in my hand and the phone in the other, and I was calling a therapist.

I was like, there is so much that we don't know that we need and we need to be very empowered, very connected, very much in tune with these. Creative forces that reside within us and that connect us to the creative forces of the universe. And we need to understand that it is our task to step into that so that we can mother so that we can be the person our child needs us to be, yeah. So wise, and I so appreciate you sharing all of this with me and our listeners and. That feels like a really nice place to, to tie the bow and complete our time together. Thank you very much. I really appreciate the opportunity to speak your community. It's wonderful. So one more time. The.

Sorry. Oh sorry. We must have a lag on our thing. We're going back, but I was just gonna say the title of the book for people again, is the new return to the great mother birth initiation and the sacred feminine. And you said sacred stream.org is where they can find you, correct? Yes, that's right. And thank you for all your work that you do in the world. I really appreciate it. You're so very welcome. Thank you. I am really excited to explore your work even more. Moving forward. If you enjoyed what you heard, please hit the subscribe button

and give this podcast a five star review for more enriching content and conversation.

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