

(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: Hello. Welcome. Welcome to my podcast. It is Sunday. And I have chosen the correct microphone today. I did not last week. I think my head was just not in my body or something. But today I'm all set up. And it goes right along with the podcast topic of topic, which I'm calling the physicality of birth and life. I don't know if physicality is actually a word, but that's what I'm using. Seeing if I can talk my way through what I'm trying to put together right now, so as I often do using this podcast as a way of gathering my own thoughts about my own process and sharing it in the spirit of community and wondering who else is thinking or feeling similar things. It's so nice when I hear from you all about whatever you've heard, and you share your experience. It really makes it fun to put this out every week.

So I am feeling very in a physical process right now. And no, it's not pregnancy although that has come to mind as a comparable physical process. I don't know about you, but my pregnancies, especially the last couple that are more fresh in my mind, were just so heavily physical in those first couple of months, right? Do you know what I'm talking about? Can't get out of bed, or just so tired or nauseous. And it's like you can't access some of the other pieces of yourself very well. And there's so many other pieces. So I talk often about the spiritual process and the emotional process. But for me, again, yeah. That early pregnancy is just physical. It is just being stuck in the physicality of that experience. So no. Not pregnant. But feeling in my physical body in a very similar way.

I did mention last time on the podcast that I am experimenting and confronting and diving in to the issue of vision and seeing in my life. And I just kind of mentioned it. I think I referenced the book that I'm reading which is really, really excellent. I think you will all enjoy it. And it's called *Take Off Your Glasses and See* by Jacob Somebody. But I'm sure you'll find it. This book is really life changing. And it's not telling me things I didn't already know which is the kind of wisdom I really love. It is challenging me

though to make it real in a sense. So I'm reading this. And oh yeah. I feel like I know that. But it's like this knowing at a really deep level that hasn't really been expressed yet in this physical life.

So ideas like seeing out of your eyes being different than vision and how so many people in the population all around the world where some kind of corrective lenses. So glasses, contacts, and I do. I have for many years. And just really taking a deep dive into what it means to be in your physical body when you take those things away. And like any great process, I think, that promotes growth and self awareness lots of things come up. So lots of feelings comes up. So it's definitely this physicality, but, of course, you can't separate that. I don't think you can. From the emotional experience from the spiritual experience. So I guess what I'm really talking about today—and even as far as birth work goes is talking about the physical experience more front and center. And then yes. Acknowledging that there are other parts, and those are also important. And that's a contrast, I feel, to the last however many years of really talking about the spiritual process first and foremost.

So why is this coming up for me? I don't know. I don't know, but I trust that it's time. Vision seeing is something I've considered for awhile now. But I trust the timing and the when. So if I'm going to work on this, okay. It's not just getting rid of glasses and contracts. It's really an emotional dive into why did I ever need them in the first place. And what feelings come up around wearing them and not wearing them? Because those feelings are always there. And I've had so many insights, which is a pun. But not a bad one, right? I've had so many insights. And it's been less than a week of being glasses free, contacts in, glasses free. And I won't lie. It's only been five days, I think. Six days. And it's been an emotional roller coaster. So I'm feeling everything. I'm feeling the—sometimes pain and discomfort that my eyes, my head, my face are going through. And the emotional discomfort of what's arising there when I'm not wearing these things. And then just this physical realness of seeing things more blurry and feeling that but also, again, with these other elements of life. Putting the pieces together. What does it mean? So so many questions, I think, come up when we talk about vision and how we're seeing the world really because we all see the world the way we see it. And it's not just through our eyes. We're seeing. We're feeling through all parts of our body.

So really it's a fascinating book. I don't want to try and sum it up here. I think the author did a really, really awesome job but sharing my part of the process here. So that has been what's happening. And like I said, I won't lie. It's been frustrating at times. It's been really confronting, and I've had very negative moments and times when I just think, "Oh, this is insane." I just need to put on my glasses or whatever. I can't see.

This is crazy. But that commentary is also something to observe. So why do I think I can't see? I'm clearly seeing. I'm not seeing as clearly, but I am seeing. So the self chatter, the self talk, around what our bodies are capable of and how, in many cases, we may have given up on ourselves in a sense, right? It's like, "Oh, I just wear glasses. That's always the way it's going to be." And that's pretty much what I have always thought. I have never put a—excuse me. I've never put my conscious attention on that. So until now, it was just, "Oh, yeah. I wear glasses, contacts. That's the way it's going to be." But, again, picking it apart and noticing the emotions and thinking how having that, being able to see through those lenses, really does alter your vision of the world whether you like it or not. And I have decided I want a more expansive vision, and I need to take the steps to get out of this little tunnel I have created with these lenses.

And I know that it will affect my whole life. It already has. So many things have come up this week. It's almost insane. It's just ridiculous. So once you take a step in these kind of directions, the Universe really responds because the intention is, "I am ready. I want to see the world clearly from this perspective," which is a huge thing to say. I'm ready to see, right? So I've had many thoughts about, "What am I not willing to see? What have been I trying to cover up with these corrective lenses?" So this is not just a physical process even though that's kind of the topic, but we're in physical bodies. So when we're experiencing it, that's the first and foremost way. So I'll muddle my way through here. Probably share little bits as the weeks go by. I have full faith in my body. And that isn't something I've always had.

So to backtrack a little bit, I won't share the entire story but just because it is relevant here. It's not something I don't think I've shared before on this podcast. But I was someone that was labeled an asthmatic, so someone with asthma for my whole life pretty much. From the time I was 4. And I'm 44 now. So for 40 years, this was a label I lived with and dealt with. And I wouldn't say it was super severe as an adult. But certainly as a child, it had its moments. In and out of the hospital. Lots of medications. As an adult, I learned how to quote on quote manage it but really from the medical perspective. And this is total honesty here. Again, I don't think I've shared this. And you might be surprised that here I was living my truth for the most part as best as I could do in birth, trusting my body to birth, and all of these things but having this piece in my medical history that wasn't trust.

So that got blown apart in the last two years. And I've been reluctant to share only from the perspective of maybe having doubt at some moments. Just random doubts. I think I'm feeling very confident at this point. It's been—I don't know. A year, year and a half, or something like that where daily medication became nothing. And it's the first time in my life I feel free. Free and clear of this label and confident in my body and knowing

how to handle this breathing issue when it comes up is probably ten more podcasts that I don't know anybody is super interested in. Although many of you out there, I'm sure, have different kinds of chronic conditions. I'm sure you've been told, right? So many of us do I'm sure. So I don't know. We could name so many. The corrective lenses is probably across the board the most common that people don't consider.

But anything. Really anything that we've been labeled with, we've accepted the label. I don't know. You could really take anything. Diabetes, thyroid disorder, hypertension, all of these kind of things that many of us just normal—we're pretty normal, healthy people. But are we? Yeah. Normal, healthy people kind of deal with. And I'm really, really amazed at the healing that has taken place in the last year or two. I didn't think it was possible. I really didn't in some places of me. But because this has been conquered, now I have the confidence to address this vision issue for so long. Again, all these 40 years, I tried everything. I tried everything related to healing as from a more physical and often energetic perspective. I had shamans. And I had energy work. And I tried all the things. Essential oils, chiropractic, herbal stuff. I mean absolutely everything over the years.

And it never worked. So I really had resigned myself to living this way until my dying day. Oh, well. This is just my lot in life. Maybe it's from a past life. Whatever was this breathing issue. And so through the many years or couple years, I guess, here of working on it, going really, really deep in a way I never, ever had before obviously. And with the help of my mentor, I really—I mean I hate to say I couldn't have done it without her. I'm sure I could have. But her support and her insights were absolutely invaluable and kept me on track and kept me accountable and all of the things. So I couldn't have done it without her. I really don't think so. But here I am. Having conquered that because our emotions run so deep in our physical body. And sometimes we just don't know where to look. We don't know where our blind spots are. And, again, we get resigned to whatever it is. Wearing glasses, taking medication, or maybe it's even natural treatment. Being reliant essentially on something. Something for our health when we're already complete. We're already absolutely perfect.

So thanks for listening. It's been quite a bunch of months and years here trusting that journey and feeling the physicality both in the case of the glasses and the asthma issue. Having very many physical moments of pain and discomfort and just wondering how on earth I could ever get past this, how I could ever heal this truly for myself. So I know that that is part of it. And as I kind of blab on today about birth and midwifery, I feel in a similar process there. That it's like in my body that I'm being tested to go to the next level. And yes. There's the spiritual emotional part. But there's just the raw truth that we're in bodies and that we feel things. And sometimes the issues that are right in front

of us and, in birth right now too for me, are just of the body. It doesn't mean there isn't more. But they are just of the body, and that is not always the case. That's the not the way we want to talk about things. But I guess that's what I'm wanting to talk about. And that's what I'm feeling.

So this last full moon was pretty intense given a lot of that I've shared today. I did this intense physical experience of—it's hard to even explain. Kind of like a ritual bath but of a very intense nature. And that brought up a lot in my physical body. So being in a very hot bath is difficult for some people. I think I'm one of them. It was very challenging just in my body to feel that. I'm somebody that if given the chance to go in a sauna or sauna, as Margo would say—she loves it. But I was at her house last month. And I hated it. I can't make myself stay in a heated environment. So anyway, challenges like that come up for each of us, if we allow them and they can be seen as ceremonial. This kind of was. But, also again, just so physical. To be so uncomfortable in your physical body. And then to take the emotions and the lessons that come is really intense. And that's something we're always ready for. It's not something that's always being given to us, like it is right now.

So the message for me feeling very much right now like, "Get your head out of the clouds. You're not in Sedona anymore. Plant your feet on the earth here. Dig them deep. Feel the soil. Feel the moisture. Feel the fire. Feel the air. Feel. Feel it all in your body because there are lessons." And that's kind of what I'm sharing today. So speaking of Sedona, it's true. It's a beautiful place, and I have so many podcasts that were made there. Almost all of them. But I reached this point of feeling done as many of you know right before we moved which was perfect. Just feeling done with the culture. And that's not anything personal. I hope if you're listening and you were one of my lovely friends or clients there, I love you. I love you. But you'll admit, right? You'll agree with me, I'm sure, that the place is unique. And there is something really ungrounded about it.

Many people say when they hear Sedona, they know whether it's intuitively or from their experience that people go there—people live there to engage in a spiritual process, in a sense. And what that looks like for each of us is so different. And lest you think that that means something really elevated, I just want to correct that misconception in a way. Not that it's mine to judge someone else's physical or spiritual experience there. But I don't know what other word to use. Yes. Spiritual, but not always expansive growth like challenges and, again, whatever lessons are there for the person that's invited to this sacred place because I do think you have to be invited.

So during my time there, so much that was conquered and experienced spiritually from my whole midwifery adventure with the state of Arizona and persecution and all of this stuff down to Rumi's birth, which funny enough was kind of the time the tides began to change. And not living there anymore became something I knew we needed to do. Rumi's birth was so highly physical. Yes. It was spiritual. I have so many—I have a blog post. I have a podcast. Yes. Ultimately, the message was spiritual. But the experience was purely physical, and I've shared this before. I have never been, hardly, in any of my births that much in my body. And it was experienced as absolute pain. It was honestly the hardest thing I have ever done in my physical body. And as I've shared, I thought I was going to die. I thought this body was going to break.

So now looking back, right? Almost a year later, it's like, "Oh, yeah. That was the moment. That was the experience when the pendulum swung or whatever you want to say. The scales tipped." His birth was the experience to bring me in to my physical body in a new way and prepare me—I really do think now—for this adventure here in Kentucky which is feeling so much more grounded. And, again, feet on the earth and working with an entirely different culture and putting these pieces together. That yes. Birth is spiritual. And yes. There's so much fun, and I really have so much passion still for supporting women in that way. But I'm being reminded that we're in bodies and that the physical experience of a pregnancy and birth is also worthy of midwifing. And it's humbling. It's humbling to be given that opportunity and that perspective and to see things different. I feel so grateful. And I am. I'm so grateful to be working with different kinds of people, different sorts of people. And the energy is completely different.

So without comparing for the sake of one being better because it's not—it's just—it's like apples and oranges. I feel like I was midwifing for the last couple of years in a way that felt really right for the time and for what I was doing. And so much that I've shared here, right? The communication with babies and the ancestry and the lineage and the cellular memory. All good stuff. All good stuff. And still that's a piece. But not grounding in as much because—I don't know why. I mean I guess I think the culture there didn't require it in the same way. And, again, it's not a judgment. It was just people eating and living and conducting their physical lives in a way where they weren't wanting that. They weren't wanting that attention necessarily. So many people there who—yes. We'd work on nutrition but were really, really tied, for better or for worse, to their way of eating, right? So not really looking for that physical support. So I did what was needed, I think. And it felt good. And this spiritual support was mainly what I was doing.

And as result—well, I don't know if it's a result. But the way that ended up looking just at births and relationships was also really cool. It was a really cool thing to experience that I don't know that a lot of midwives do. Just really deep connections with women

and holding space for them in processing birth experiences. They weren't all perfect, by any means. But it's just different. That wasn't what I was ever shown as a student, and it was something that I feel I was able to develop kind of as a skill or a calling to hold that space. And, again, in my own pregnancies and births to have experienced that as well. But being here in Kentucky is different. The culture is different. The land is different. The energy is different. The air is different. It is all different.

And it's not unfamiliar entirely. And this is where I think it gets kind of interesting, at least for me in my own story. This is where I was trained as a midwife. Not in Kentucky but in the Midwest. This is familiar territory. And that is so interesting. So it has this feeling. And, again, to compare it to some of the other physical processes that I've been through, this breathing thing, this eye thing—that it spiralized, right? It's not linear. We don't put down our glasses—I mean this hasn't happened for me. Put down the glasses one day and just linear journey three days later to being able to see clearly. Oh no. It is a spiral. And you do the spiral once. And you think it's done. And surprise. You get to go around again because that's life. And that's being a woman, and that's the layers that we have with every experience.

So back to the birth thing, that's what it's feeling like here is I went around the spiral once here in the Midwest. And that was so great. I really have such great memories of my first apprenticeship in the Chicago area, Indiana. I think I did attend a couple births in Kentucky actually. Ohio. And that was really formative and so much of what I carry as a midwife is also from that time even though it wasn't this grand spiritual experience in a sense. That wasn't how we talked to people. That wasn't how the midwife I worked with worked. It was this more physical support. This on the ground, a salt of the earth kind of feeling. We're going to talk with people about food. We're going to support them and teach them in what healthy eating means to us. We are going to educate them about normal things like how to breastfeed a baby and why breastfeeding is important. So these are the topics I grew up with. And I guess—silly me—silly me being a human—has thought in past years that like, "Oh, I'm kind of past that. I must be more conscious. I must be elevated now because those weren't the kind of things I was really talking about with people."

But here I am back at the beginning of the spiral in a deeper way with 15 years of experience of my own behind me now. And let's see. How many babies did I have at that time? Probably 3. So 7 to 8 more births of my own behind me at this time. And all of the things, right? All of the experience that life brings. And I'm confronting similar issues with the people here and remaining as nonjudgmental as I can because this is not linear. This is another go around the spiral. And the excitement that comes with teaching and finding new ways and new tools and feeling myself like I'm back in

midwifery school. Honest to goodness, it does. I have been so challenged since I've been here which is so humbling because, again, I think 15 years in a thing—whatever—20 years in a thing you could—you could, if you let it, allow this tendency to develop where you feel like, “Oh, been there, done that, right? I'm at this new level where I don't have to deal with those things, right? I'm so fantastic, and I've done my work. And so birth is just always this blissful thing.” And I do think that's possible. And I won't lie. I had had those thoughts.

I also think those are thoughts that come with early studenthood. So there is a lot of similarities in a way between an early student and having been at this for awhile. You can take on this level of confidence that is helpful, and confidence does come with experience as someone that's done this awhile. But also humility and being humble now to know oh no. That is not how this works. That is not how life works. That is not how birth works. And really, do we want our lives to work that way? Do we ever want to be at a point where we're like, “Yep. Done that”? And maybe if we do, it's time to quit, right? It's time to just get out and say, “Okay. Next challenge. Let's learn about a new thing.” But gratefully, birth work has remained this place for me. And I am so humbled.

So this week alone or this month alone, I guess—this week has been very chock full of learning. But all kinds of cool new things and investigations into the detail of certain scenarios or pathologies or lab work, right? Pick one. Because we learn these things as students. I sure did. Many years ago. And they kind of fall away if you're not running into them very much which, again, with certain populations, certain places you're not going to. And then the knowledge kind of gets a little soggy in there, and, again, you might think, “Oh, I don't even need to know that.” Then wow. It's really cool and fun.

This week alone it's been a dive into iron building. So for many of you, even if you're a doula or maybe you've had your own babies and needed to build your iron up, it's not rocket science. So it's not like oh, there's one way. Or there's some magical supplement but just diving into that world of learning again in a healthy way. And coming up with a new way to maybe explain that to people that I'm working with rather than, “Oh, here's a list of supplements,” we're starting at the beginning. We are needing to talk about blood building from the perspective of protein and calories and whole foods and then layering on top of that—yes. If we're talking about blood building, what does that mean? And why is it important? So, again, it's probably really obvious. But back when I was a student, this information that I was able to pass or that I was learning was so one dimensional because that's where I was. That's where I was on the learning curve. And now it's feeling really rich and full and a chance for me to learn so much more. Learning about timing of iron supplements and things that I didn't know before

because, again, wasn't something I've really had to dig deep into in the last couple of years.

Another example—and I think some of these topics will be shared with our Indie Birth Midwifery School students on some upcoming calls as case studies—has been the Rh factor and incompatibilities and sensitization, which is a very big word. I had never met anyone until this week who with Rh- blood has been sensitized to a pregnancy. So that was really interesting. I realized how much I love to learn. I don't really have a desire to be a doctor at any point, but I do think there is something fun about it all. And being refreshed with that information—God bless you, Nathan, if you're listening and God bless Nathan anyway. But he has been so helpful. Such a friend. Getting back to me so super fast, keeping a really great conversation going, being very patient because midwives—I don't. I guess I'll speak for myself. I don't carry around that knowledge all the time. I just haven't had need for it. So it's having to learn. It's having to go back to the beginning and say, "Oh, yes. Let's go from here." And having it in real life as any good student knows is the best way to learn because it's not just an excerpt in a textbook. It is actual people and how it might be affecting their pregnancy and what the next steps could be and looking at lab values and deciding, "Does it mean this? Or does it mean that?"

So yeah. Hats off to Nathan for being an awesome collaborator. I do want to give you all a discount code actually for his collaborator program at the end of this podcast. I'm not getting anything for it. I don't want anything for it. I'm simply doing it because he's been really helpful, and so yeah. If you're out there kind of knee deep in learning birth or relearning birth, in many ways, as I am—you're a doula, whatever—he's really awesome to have at your fingertips and just as a colleague and friend because, truly, I would have spent a lot longer on the Internet with some of this stuff and not gotten as clear as to what was next for some of these women that I'm helping. So I'm super, super grateful for that.

Other topics, hmm. Yeah. Nutrition in a big way. Culture is just different here around food, and I'm needing to come up with just new ways of introducing what I think a really awesome way to eat is. And again, so different. So different than being in Sedona where people often were really set in their ways. They were really—what's the word? Really certain that what they were doing was right for them which is great. And, again, a reason that I often didn't touch it. It just was like, "Oh, cool. Okay. You do you. And as long as you're healthy and everything is good, I'm just going to be over here," because my support wasn't needed for that. And here, it doesn't feel that way. It feels like people are open to learning and being receptive and taking suggestions for the most part. But it is having to start at the very beginning. So I think I kind of alluded to

that last time, and lots of fun projects, I feel, coming up for this year for women in this area because eating well, taking care of your body physically is, again, what I'm also knee deep in. I'm not past that point, or I would be seeing perfectly clear right now without my glasses on. So isn't it funny? But not funny how our own growth processes are reflected in the work we do. And so I was thinking about how my intention right now with women especially is to not just hold space for their power, for their spiritual growth, for their initiation. But, again, in this very real grounded way of I want to show people and reflect back to them what true health is, right? That's a big task.

And so I have to also be in that place. I also have to actively be questioning what I'm doing and how my body is responding and what feels good and, again, all of the emotional, spiritual stuff that comes up when we really confront our physical bodies. So it all feels really aligned now that I say it out loud. Thank you so much for listening. If I didn't have this podcast, I'm not sure how I would work stuff out. Yeah. That's true actually. But it feels really good in that way. I'm being asked to be more grounded, to be more in my physical body, to feel the things, and to not just meditate them away. And I am being asked to do the same here, I think, with the woman that are coming my way. So it's a learning process. So it's a reacquainting. That work feels really right. I feel like I am reacquainting myself with some old and also integrating the new. I am being challenged in all the ways to do my own work, to be in my own body, and to allow that wisdom that I know will unfold in my own life to lead the way and inform the other ways that I do things and the way that I will show up as a midwife here which clearly is different and is being asked, I think. That's my interpretation. I really am being asked to do that. And I don't know why, but I don't know that I need to know why. This is just what is being required. It is being required that I show up in this way.

And my sense is if I do try and figure out the why which is sometimes not the best thing—I think it is just so that I can, again, make these changes within myself but to just serve the community here. It's really simple. I had asked many months before I even got here. I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I'm not sure. I don't know what the community needs. What will they need? What will they want? How can I show up, right? I said these things. And here it is. It's being laid out for me that this is what's needed. This is what's required. And maybe our retreat center that's in the near distant future will benefit from this as well. Benefit from whatever it is I'm picking up here about what I'm doing, about the culture, about the women, about the people. And it will be useful somehow. I don't know. That's what I think though. So all is well. All is well in the world, in all the ways, I think. Taking our intentions and, again, being in our physical bodies in a way that benefit our spiritual and our emotional growth, I think, is the way to go. We're not just in the physical body to be there and hang out and be miserable.

And I think that's when—and maybe I've done this too. Talking about the physical aspect of pregnancy seems so ho hum. It seems so not conscious. It's so boring. Who wants to talk about backaches in pregnancy? Let's talk about why the backache is there. But yeah. Really let's remember that we need to feel and we do that often mostly in this physical form. So one leads to the other. One is not better than the other. But, again, a very clear, clear direction from the Universe now that this is the path. This is the way.

All right. Well, that wasn't as long as I thought. I do want to share with you the code for Nathan's collaborator program. His website is belovedholistics.com. And the code that you'll put in to get 10% off the collaboration monthly fee—and I'm pretty sure he means this for life. Like 10% off forever. Is INDIE10. So indie as in Indie Birth. 10. All caps. INDIE10 at belovedholistics.com once you choose his collaborator program. I believe you can choose options within the collaborator program. He has levels. So choose what works for you. And my motivation is not money as it often isn't. It is really just to spread the good word that he is being very generous and helpful and also, if it is self serving in any way or self serving of this community that you're in—this Indie Birth community, it's so that we can grow his collaborator program to really meet our own needs. I think the more people here that show up there is great. It will enrich that community. It will give us all needed support and peer review and all of the things that we get in a group together as midwives or birth workers with his support.

So that is what the code is. That would be so fun if you would check it out. That offer is good until 2022. So you have another whatever. Two months here in the year to join that and see what you think. Again, I highly recommend it, and you can ask him any questions, if you have them.

All right, everybody. Thank you so much. I'd love to see you on my Midwife Monday. That's tomorrow. But it's any Monday. Any Monday at 3:00 p.m. Eastern time at indiebirth.org/live. Have a beautiful week.

(closing music)