

(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 to Podcast Sunday. It is indeed Sunday, and it's been a very busy weekend personally and with birth stuff. Let's see. Where to start? Well, we had a free workshop here in Berea, Kentucky, yesterday. The free Indie Birth workshop that I've been teaching, Margo's been teaching—Margo wasn't here. But we've been teaching it in our respective locations for about six years. And I'm definitely going to talk more about that because I kind of inspired myself yesterday by the videos and the amazingness that I've had the honor of witnessing over the last bunch of years. And every time I get the opportunity to teach this I really, really love it, and I think that's so unusual, right? Especially because I don't get paid to do that. And you'd think—you'd think I'd get bored after awhile. I have changed the workshop over the years, but it was so inspiring. It was just so inspiring to sit with this group, and I want to talk more about my call into birth as a result.

Other happenings, there is a mama circle here today, and I'm super excited to offer this for the first time here. So this will be for Indie Birth community women, so many clients of mine and then some other cool women that totally align. And they're either pregnant or have had babies recently. And I'm going to kind of poll the group today, I think, and see if people are wanting to extend it out to people that have birthed but maybe not super recently or for themselves as they go further into their postpartum. Are they wanting to keep coming to this mama circle? I think there is something so beautiful about putting pregnant women, especially those that have never birthed before, in a room with postpartum moms and just having that relationship develop naturally. That continuum is actually something that can be seen and felt, and I love that.

I do think we're going to keep it to nursing babies only. It was a little crazy yesterday at the workshop, to be honest. Some people brought toddlers, which technically is not allowed. I'm not kind of sure how that slipped by. But it was slightly disruptive. So I love children. I have many. But there is a time and place. So I think for the mama

circle it will be nursing babies. And then once your kid is old enough, you can leave the kid home for two hours and come hang out at the mama circle, or maybe you'll be done. I don't know. We'll see. But it's really a creation of the community here. I am happy to host it. I am happy to have it here at my office. I'll probably be present most of the time. But my idea is that this circle is really going to run itself. And if I'm not here, for whatever reason, if I'm at a birth or something, it's still going to go on, and these women are going to make their own connections with each other that are going to feel so valuable. So I'll report back. But it's been awhile since I've hosted that kind of thing, and I'm looking forward to just seeing what is needed really. I don't have a grand plan. I think creating a circle, a sacred space, always feels important in these instances. A place where women know they can speak openly, and it will not be shared and then just seeing if people want to pick topics per month. This is a monthly thing and/or I have some journals for everybody. I found a really cool one that I liked online and just kind of went for it and got everybody one. And we'll see. We'll see if that's resonant and if that feels helpful.

But I definitely have learned a lot over the years of hosting these with my clients in Sedona. Sometimes I felt it to be a little bit draining, to be honest. So I'm going to try my best to not make this my production personally. This is just my space and what happens, happens. And I think it's just going to happen organically. And I'm just really, again, honored and excited to help grow the community here. It seems like the women here, and there's a lot of new people too just like us which is very cool. It seems like the people here are really wanting community, and they don't just want it because I felt like in Sedona people would say they wanted it. But the proof is in the action. And here people show up. They literally and figuratively show up. So they're creating the community. Happy to be a part of it and just so—yeah. So thrilled to see where it goes and how it develops and what a real community really looks like.

I was texting with a friend this morning who used to live in Sedona as well and doesn't anymore. And just kind of had an exchange about her wanting to move back there and me not relating at all. Of course. Do what you will. Do what you want. But my two cents is, "Oh my gosh. No." I don't miss anything about that place except the land, except the sacredness of the land which might sound strange. But it just was game over for us. So everybody doesn't need to feel that way. They certainly don't. But in the text exchange, I was kind of saying that I feel like I finally have a glimpse of what community actually looks like. And I don't know that any of us—I mean very few of us really know what that is. I don't. I think most of us wish we had community, and we have ideas. Anyway, it was just a contrast to thinking of our own—not own. Our old community and lots of great things happened there. But now, in comparison, I'm like, "Oh, that really wasn't community. It was a just a bunch of people living separately who

sometimes got together maybe.” And here, it just more feels like, oh, people have your back. If I need something, there are people I could ask. And I think that is the start of a community. So I am excited.

Another big happening this weekend before I get on to the bulk of this and before the mama circle begins is that my daughter, Amelia, has headed off back to Arizona for about two months. And I might cry, and I might not cry. I’m trying not to be sad. This is a great thing. This is a young woman who is confident and beautiful and smart and capable, and I am so proud of her. So to see your teenagers go off—and yes. I’m totally going to cry. It is sad in this poignant way. It’s not said like anything bad has happened, right? Because only good things have happened. There is no negative reason that she is exploring the world. It’s not like she even is sick of us or wants to get away from us. We all had a very teary goodbye this morning, but she wants to explore and live her life. And how could we not support that? That’s what all of us should do, or maybe would have done if we hadn’t been in the confines—and I’ll speak for myself. Of college for four years. So she doesn’t have that. She doesn’t have that restraint. She has kind of an open door and open map. And she has decided to go back to Sedona for a couple of months and hoping to get some photography work. She is familiar with the place. All of the things like that. Makes sense in the ways that they do.

As the mom, of course, I think there’s things that don’t make sense, but that’s okay. She’ll figure them out. But saying goodbye to her this morning was sad in the ways that it is when you’re the mom and your daughter is one of your best friends. And I have a close relationship with all of the kids and particularly my daughters. My oldest daughters just because, I guess. They’re girls and the ages that they are. We go to the gym together. We hang out together. We get coffee together. We do all sorts of things. And so Amelia not being here, it really is going to be weird and will kind of leave a hold in my life. So sniff, sniff. Funny story though just to make some kind of comedy out of it. She very lovingly and sweetly bought me a gift that she waited to give me until today. And that’s very Amelia. It’s very thoughtful and sweet and also, if you’ve ever read the books *Amelia Bedelia*, she’s also that. It’s also a little bit unhinged or just sort of messy. That’s just the way she is. She’s an artist. And she—yeah. She’s just not a type A sort of person. Things are just what they are to her.

So she went to this effort to buy this gift. And, of course, was so excited to give it to me. And last night realized that the gift was gone. And the little bag that the gift was in was shredded on the floor in her room which she shares with her sisters and a puppy. So it became clear at some point that the puppy had probably eaten the gift, which sounds ridiculous. But he is a giant lab puppy, and there is nothing that he won’t eat. There is nothing. I have seen him eat bouncy balls. I have seen him ingest absolutely anything

and everything he can get his giant mouth on. So she was annoyed for sure. She was upset and angry that this dog had eaten this gift. I thought it was a little bit funny but, of course, was sad and wanted this gift.

So it turns out that the gift was these, I guess, identical or close to identical little hedgehog figurines made from fluorite, which is a really cool stone. And she had gotten them recently at a witchy kind of store, right? Where they sell all the gemstones and just thought it would be sweet for she and I to have the same little thing which yes. Would have been so sweet. So long story short, the one hedgehog did show up this morning. It was headless. So I guess Ollie, the puppy, thought it was a chew toy, this tiny little thing. And so I have a headless hedgehog now, but it's very dear to me. And it is still very sweet, and fluorite is still a very cool thing to have. And so it's on my little altar with all of my gemstones. So she is out a hedgehog. We're not quite sure what happened to the other one. I do know where to get them, and maybe I'll do that while she is away and send her one as a funny gift. But it definitely added some laughs this morning to what could have been, I guess, more sad and really that's our house. That's our house in a nutshell, so I actually think it's kind of perfect. It's really perfect for Amelia. Not that she doesn't give wonderful gifts all the time that are totally 100% together and intact. This just wasn't one of those times, and this puppy really is so puppyish. He is really sweet and smart and also just totally terrible.

So bon voyage, Amelia. May you return soon. May you be held in protection and health and happiness and joy. She and I are totally soul connected. Just little side story here, one last thing before I start—and this totally goes along with my witchery class, which I plan to teach in March. So I don't know. Maybe the link will be somewhere. But Amelia and I are soul connected as I think we are or can be with our children, with our partners, with our friends, with anybody in our close circle, and just how that shows up, of course, can be different. And sometimes it feels like we're not as much, maybe, with a person, but lately, I think anticipating Amelia's departure, I've had dream after dream after dream with she and I. And it's funny because right before that started happening in the last week she had said to me something like, "Do you ever dream of me?" Because I often do dream of Rumi, for example, or Ever. And at that time, I said, "I don't know. I mean really haven't had a dream with you in it in awhile." Well, then I started having dreams every night, and they've been all over the place in different locations. So it's just sweet for my mama heart to know that we are connected. And that even when our kids or whoever is away from us physically, we can make the effort to stay soul connected to them and feel them, and they can feel us. And that's how we stay close. That's how we don't drift apart even when we're not in the same house. Oh,

and of course, there's a million phone calls too, I'm sure, that Amelia will give while she is away. That's kind of a thing for her. And that's fine. I love it.

Okay. So mama circle coming up here. I just wanted to give this quickish story to which there are pieces already probably all over the Internet from our book to other podcasts I've done. I realize that. But I was struck yesterday, again, in teaching this free workshop. It's three hours. We show birth videos. It's great. I was struck by how inspired I felt. Again, not by myself. But by the experiences I've had and my passion that really doesn't seem to die ever for this work. And so it got me more to thinking. How has that evolved for me? How did I get this call into birth? And then I remembered that Margo had asked me awhile ago to write a blog post about how I got into midwifery as something to put on the school site. So for me, this is probably a lot easier anyway, so here it goes. Here is my story and my reasons for how birth work called me.

When we're teaching in our workshop, but more importantly to this topic, in our doula program, *The Birth Warrior Project*, and the midwifery school, the way we start both of those trainings, for lack of a better word, is with the investigation for our students into, we call it, the why. You have to know why you're in birth work. You have to know. Because I've said and I still believe this, probably every woman—nearly every woman out there has a connection to this topic even if she hasn't birthed before in this life. I really do think that deep, deep down we're all connected to the knowledge, and we won't all be midwives. We won't all be doulas in this lifetime. But, again, there is just something that feels familiar. That's not enough of a why, in my opinion. In this lifetime where we are really being called, I think, to find our individual reasons for being here. It's not enough to just be like, "Oh, I'm a woman. That's the reason." I mean you can go with that. But if you're one of our students, we ask you to dig a little bit deeper.

So many examples out there, maybe you are one, maybe you have one of women that are in birth work for a very specific personal reason, and that's not wrong. But that's the beginning of the journey. That's the beginning of the why. So I'm thinking just of stories I've heard lately. And it's not about anyone in particular. These are just stories that a lot of people share. And they can be on either sides of the birth coin. So on one side, it's like, "I had a great birth. I want to be a birth worker." Cool. That's the beginning. That's the beginning of the way. And then on the other side, of course—and I think this does happen a lot and maybe more perhaps women that have had a horrible birth experience, right? All kinds of trauma in whatever way. Maybe they've had a cesarean. And that becomes their why.

So I'm not going to over comment on that. I think that scenario is really common, and it's not wrong. That's a wakeup call for someone to have a hard experience and to say,

“You know what? I don’t want any woman to go through this.” I think there is sense in that, at least initially. And at least in the initial emotions, right? It feels right to a lot of women to say, “I want to save women from the experience I have.” So, again, it’s not bad. That’s just the first step. And I guess I’ve seen a lot of that. I’ve heard a lot of that with people in our courses. And the encouragement there, of course, it’s a long process. It’s not an overnight thing. But the encouragement is to, “Hey, let’s go a little bit deeper than that and/or let’s help you kind of unpack your trauma,” because until you release that trauma in whatever way, no matter how long it takes, you’re not really fit for serving women from a clear place. You’re serving from a place of trauma. So, again, there is nothing wrong with having that story, but I think when it comes back to this question of why that’s not good enough.

And the epidemic really of traumatized women serving other women is something that we all need to be aware of. And it’s just like a hamster wheel. Women that are traumatized in whatever way—and sometimes it’s not through birth. They’re just—have had trauma in their lives. Maybe it’s been sexual trauma. Maybe it’s something women related, and they also are the ones that are like, “I’m going to be a midwife because I don’t think any woman should ever have to go to a male doctor,” or whatever it is. But still it’s from a place of trauma. So aside from that, there’s lots of other possibilities, I’m sure. Lots of reasons why people get into it. Maybe it’s their family history. Maybe they have midwifery in their past, in their ancestry. I met someone a couple weeks ago who said her dad was an OB. And I think she was a doula. So there is all kinds of ways that birth might have played into our childhood. Lots of women have experienced births of their siblings. I feel like I’ve worked with a lot of clients, who have been present. Not necessarily home births but been present for the births of their siblings. So that’s another way that women come in. And so I’m not going to continue to comment or speculate on other paths in but just giving you some background.

My path to birth was mine and mine alone. And I’ve heard it be said that to be a midwife, to want to be a midwife, it’s because you care—maybe overly care—about one of three things. Either mothers, babies, or birth. And I don’t remember where I heard that, and I don’t know who to give credit to. But it was years ago, and it’s always given me that to think about. And so in thinking about this podcast, I was like wow. That’s changed for me over the years. It really has. So I’ll get right into it. My first birth was a hospital birth that happened. My second birth was a home birth at the last minute with an unlicensed kind of underground, radical midwife, and it was after that that I wanted other women to have the same experience I had. So it was fairly positive. It wasn’t after my hospital birth. It wasn’t saying, “Oh, the hospital sucks. I don’t ever want women to do that.” But there was a little bit of that because after the home birth, obviously, I could draw the comparison. And I thought, “No. I want women to know how

amazing they are.” And I want babies to not be taken from their mothers. So I kind of had both things going on.

And that is negative in a sense because it wasn't my perspective to say, “I want babies to be born peacefully and at home.” No. My perspective, at that time because I had the contrast was, I don't want babies to be taken from their mothers. So initially, it was kind of two reasons that overlapped. And that's how I started my apprenticeship is just feeling like babies deserve better. I didn't want them taken from their moms. I had experienced both. My first was taken from me for a couple of hours after birth. And then, of course, the home birth wasn't. My son. And then also just the amazing way I felt on top of the world after my home birth. I couldn't ignore the draw to midwifery. And so I didn't concretely think about it. I mean I didn't have a course at that time. I wasn't really being mentored or guided by anybody. I didn't have anybody say to me, “So why are you doing this?” I was just kind of following my heart.

And that's also a way in. I think at some point it is still great to ask yourself the questions and see what's hiding behind, but many of us do just kind of get in because we feel called. We don't really know where it came from exactly. It's not something we planned. I was a musician still at the time. And I certainly didn't plan this. And actually, I didn't even love the idea in my brain, if that makes sense. My heart wanted to do it, but my brain was like, “Oh, man. Really? What if you don't like this thing because you just spent ten years in music or more? And now you're quitting that.” So putting in more effort, more time, more money to a new profession, how do you know? But it really, really was a calling. And when I think back just on the synchronicity of things, of course, it was perfectly aligned. I've talked about apprenticeship before. I know people work really hard to find one. I didn't. It just fell in my lap. Absolutely fell in my lap. In fact, I was asked to do an apprenticeship by the woman I ended up starting with. I went to visit her. I didn't even know her, but she was a friend of my midwife.

And while I was interviewing her for a project, she asked me if I wanted to apprentice. So how cool is that? And then one thing led to another, and I met other midwives. And some of them are still in my life, and some are not. But it was all just perfectly timed. And to me, that is a calling to just have things unfold in front of you. And, of course, now with the benefit of hindsight even more so. Looking back and not only the apprenticeship, the license, the giving it back to the state, everything that has unfolded for me in birth, in birth work, has been divine. It has been absolutely protected and really mostly sacred experiences. So, again to me, that's a calling. And I know many people feel that way getting into birth work. Some maybe they don't. It's more practical.

It's more like, "Hey, I like this thing. I might be good at it. And maybe I could make some money," or something like that. But for me, it was just a pure calling.

So I got into it initially for the reasons I have stated. And then as I got further into it, I got further into my own trauma, of course, because that's what happens as I've kind of recommended. Recommend happens even though I don't know that you can completely control it. But as I got deeper into it, of course, I had memories surface or other experiences that made me even more defiant of the medical system really. And I think that is also a theme for many of us when we first get into birth work. It's a, "Oh, we don't want that. And women shouldn't have that." And by that, I mean the medical system. So it's a defiance. It's a rejection. I really feel like that's mellowed out now. Years and years down the road. But initially, that is the fire. That's the fire that gets us in. It's the us against them thing. And, again, I don't think there's anything wrong with that because most of us were raised or maybe grew up in a completely medicalized mainstream culture, society, and so this kind of hits us in the face when we're older. And we're met with what feels like passion and fire. It's a rejection. And I think that's just sort of how history goes, in a sense, too for some people.

So I started to encounter that as I was in birth work more. So for example, before I even had children, I had a really big experience in the medical world with pap smears and cervical health and ended up with a surgery on my cervix when I was—I want to say 20 years old which is crazy because that's pretty much what Amelia is. And it was horrifying. And I was just uneducated. Really, at that time, the Internet was not a thing. So gosh. I mean there were just so few places to learn anything or get resources. And I remember just feeling so confused. And it was such a great learning experience in hindsight. It was incredibly hard to be in. There were so many ways that I was tested without knowing it, of course, to trust my body or to not trust my body or to trust them or any of it. And thankfully, it worked out. I mean I did have this surgery, which is very horrific. And, of course, I wish I could go back in time and undo, but I can't although I think the body is amazing at healing. And I never bought into it in a sense. I knew deeply that nothing was wrong with me which, of course, doesn't explain why I got the surgery. But I was bamboozled. I was bamboozled by this female OB, who was very new in practice and probably 30 years old at the time. I never sought a second opinion. There were so many things that my young, naïve, immature self didn't know to do. And so it was really hard, and it was a couple years of just kind of working through that.

But I see now that it was so vital. It was so vital on my path to midwifery. And not long ago—and I think I shared this somewhere—not long ago, I feel like I was still uncovering some of that trauma in my body. So to be put under, right? To be put under for a surgery and have your cervix and uterus messed with, that's kind of a big deal. And I



didn't realize that for a long time. And my body did a great job of getting pregnant and birthing my kids, so I think on some level I had just stuffed it somewhere. It became this subconscious memory. And, again, I had thought of it, but it's really been pretty recently that I feel like I was able to move the energy in my body around that—those parts of my body and sort of remember all of this in more detail and think about it and cry about it and release more trauma. So that definitely was a major player in me getting into women's health in general. It was absolutely a horrible way to be treated. And I think it's easy to say—and I've said it. I've said it for sure. Well, we can only lose our power when we give it away. And that's so true. But I was so young, and I didn't even know that's what I was doing. I didn't even know that this was about my power. I didn't even know how to keep it or how to listen to myself or to talk to my body. So there were so many pieces that I didn't have that I now have and I wouldn't if it wasn't for that.

So that was a traumatic thing that, again, I think does play a piece in my work. And I don't feel shadowed by it. So I feel like I'm not traumatized anymore. I've released that. But it's still super important to me to respect people's bodies, right? And we all have that belief probably. Many of us. Many of you listening. But how do we come to it? How do we come to actually live that? And I think we only come to living it in a lot of ways when we've experienced it. And not from a place of trauma. We've experienced it. Maybe it was traumatic. We clear it. And we move on. And now it's this powerful thing where it's like, "Oh, my gosh. That's your body." And if someone comes to me and they're like, "Oh, my doctor said A, B, C about my cervix," because of what I've been through I would share that. And also say, "You absolutely know. You absolutely have options. Also don't rush into anything." Why on earth did I rush? Why was I rushed into the surgery? I was not dying. I did not have cancer. Nothing—now in hindsight, nothing was actually wrong is horrifying.

So yeah. Just full disclosure there that sometimes these are the experiences that really get us in and have us deeply, deeply care. And, again, for me deeply, deeply trust my body. Not that I didn't have work to do after that. And I think I still have work to do. But there was a deep trust in the end for my body through that whole experience and, again, knowing how capable our bodies are of healing, of being vital unless we choose to pathologize everything which, for me, is another foundational belief in midwifery care that absolutely I will focus on someone's health. And if other signs show themselves, then they can be addressed. But absolutely, always looking for the dark places is not helpful, and it does not make a person feel good. And it does not allow their vibration to be the full expression of themselves. So many cool things have happened to me in my life that have affected my work in birth.

So yeah. There was that. And then I'm kind of going backwards, but this is how it sort of went in my head. At some point, I needed to deal with the trauma I also felt from Amelia's birth. So I didn't start with that. I really did truly get into it because my home birth was so transformational. But at some point, I needed to deal with it. And I did. And that also has really shaped me to understand fully that we receive what we need at the time. And if we aren't specific about where we'll go or what we'll do, then we're going to get what they do there. So one of my favorite lines that I'm sure other people have also said in their own ways about the hospital and hospital birth after I kind of processed mine more and my anger around that experience and them taking my baby, et cetera, is you get what you get when you go there. And my husband say that to each other all the time. So that allowed me to take my power back because I had given it, but you get what you get when you go there. And I think there is just an honest truth to that. And looking back at life, when you're younger, when you're more naïve, you just got to accept that sometimes. You didn't know. And now you do.

And I find that to be useful even now in working with people. There is nothing wrong necessarily for people wanting the hospital or seeking medical care. But the truth is you will get what you get when you go there. And that's all there is to it. So kind of going back and healing from Amelia's birth and realizing that I was part of that. It didn't happen to me. I wasn't a victim to her story. I was a full participant. And, again, I can't speak for everyone. But I'd guess a fair amount of women in birth work that have birthed or maybe had other traumas it's the same for you. It's the same thing. We have to go back and realize where we're still holding on to being victims. And if we are, then that's the work because we can't fully show up and serve women if part of us is like, "Well, they did this to me," because then if this is the only reason and it's not, you're probably going to attract clients and women to work with that maybe want to do that to you and say, "Hey, you told me, and you didn't tell me. And now my life is miserable." No. To be powerful, you have to own your choices. And when you do and you clear the places where you were holding on to that victimhood so strongly, even subconsciously, then it changes your life, and you can move forward.

So let me think. I think there were some other things. So this is just this journey that I'm kind of pinpointing parts of my life that don't make any linear sense because they're not in order. But just taking you through how it's happened for me. So yeah. Egan's birth. Amelia's birth. All of this other health stuff. Certainly, my apprenticeships. And pathologizing in a sense my own pregnancies in a way when I was a student just because I had access to so much information. And I did work with women that were pretty trusting in the process. I really do think that about the people I apprentice with, for the most part. Not the one in Arizona but the ones earlier. The ones in the Midwest, Chicago. They really were birth trusting and all of that, but I was a student. And I had

to go through the motions of feeling what it felt like to worry about everything or to look things in textbooks. And, again, it was another stop on the journey to why I'm here, how I do this work. I've decided that's not ultimately helpful to me in my work as a midwife. I've mentioned that. And then also, even as a mother, so so many of these stops along the road of my midwifery journey have also mirrored my mothering journey where we don't go looking for stuff. We look for signs of health, and we support the immune system. And we support the full person and getting outside and getting sunshine and emotionally being well and all of that over let's look up on Google all the things that could go wrong. But I definitely went through that, and I think that was necessary as a pregnant woman. I think that was necessary as a midwifery student to process. Again, just trauma. Held trauma from maybe my childhood. I don't know. But just moving through that.

I'm not going to get every place on the map because I didn't make notes for this podcast. I just thought I would free wheel it. I know there are more. There has been so many, I guess. The whole license thing has been huge. Just realizing what autonomy is and how a midwife can play into that and how most midwives don't play into that with licensing. I'm not going to go into all that. I think most of you are up to speed with that but, obviously, that was a huge shift for me. And it became less about babies and even mothers and started to become more about freedom. And I think that's when Indie Birth felt like it was really born for me. And, of course, that's when Margo got on board, so that was a really defining experience that has made me realize over all that I'm not even in birth work because of birth. I'm in birth work because birth is an initiation, and we are human. And we should be free and autonomous in all areas of our lives, not even just birth. But yes. In the initiations to create sacred experiences that affect us and make our lives worth living.

So I'm really kind of speeding it up here for the sake of time. But yeah. That, the license thing, the birth of my son, Rune. His story is in our book. And I was just talking about him yesterday, and I've mentioned it on podcasts many times where he was the one that needed to be resuscitated. He was the one that was airlifted to a hospital sort of against my consent. And, again, another opportunity to work through who is in charge. Who is in charge here? Because I let the midwife be in charge. And so, again, that feeling of victimhood, that feeling of this was done to me, this feeling of she ruined my birth. I can laugh about it now because I've worked through that trauma, and I see that that is not true. And in releasing that, I am powerful again, and I've explained many times how his birth has just so severely impacted positively actually in the ways that I feel like I can hold space for emergencies, specifically resuscitation. It's something that I don't ever want to take away from a mother because it was done to me. But not from a place of this power struggle, from a place of, "This is your baby. You are perfectly

capable of giving your baby breaths.” That’s all. Returning the power to its rightful source.

So I guess that kind of sums it up. Returning the power to its rightful source, which is the mother. The mother in all the ways. So the individual mother, the Earth mother, returning to ourselves is really what birth work has become to me. And I’m liking that today. It’s feeling like really good because there are moments throughout the week, throughout the months where it becomes about the minutia. And I think that’s okay too, right? But I’m writing a bunch of Instagram posts, and they’re about this and that and the little fine points of physiological birth or the politics of midwifery. And I love that stuff too. But I’m grateful for this opportunity today to just kind of back up and be like, “Hey, I’m in birth because life matters, because freedom matters, because autonomy matters, because we need a radical shift in our lives, because we need a new paradigm, a way of thinking, a way of being, of being in community.” All of these things have become actually why I’m in birth.

And I guess that makes sense. I don’t know that you stick it out 15 years just because babies are important to you. I mean there are midwives, I’m sure, that do. And don’t get me wrong. I care about babies. I really do. I love babies, but that is not why I wake up every day necessarily. It’s really the bigger picture of yes. Those babies being born in love and peace are going to change the world, and that’s what I really are about. I want to change the world. All right. I think that’s a pretty good blab on my why and how I got called to birth work. We’d always love to hear from you, so give me an email shout out, [maryn@indiebirth.org](mailto:maryn@indiebirth.org). And tell me your story. I’d love to hear from you. Have a great week, everybody.

(closing music)