

(introductory music)

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MARYN: Welcome to Indie Birth's series of podcasts here on iTunes, *Taking Back Birth*. Hi. Maryn here today with my first podcast recorded in my new creative space. I've been fighting calling it an office just because that implies work in a way that I don't approach this kind of thing. But nevertheless, I'm in this sweet little space I've rented and started to create and make my own. And that's all really lovely and exciting. But it feels weird. So I feel like I'm in a foreign land at the moment. It's been an interesting thing having a place amongst people I don't know. Other offices. And, in general, they have not been the friendliest of people. So I feel like I'm even talking quietly just because I'm feeling the need to be as private as possible for some reason even though this is more of a public space. So I'm hoping that shifts a little bit.

I feel like the more time I spend here the less foreign I will feel. That's the hope anyway. So spending more time. I think definitely starting to get some women in here for classes and prenatals and all of that will really enhance the energy. And overall just hoping for a very successful loving space that holds lots of women and babies and families over the next year at least. Who knows? Who knows if I will continue on in this place past that?

So anyway, I'm sharing that just because I'm already feeling sort of weird. And, like I said, like I'm in a new foreign place. Not quite my normal natural habitat of home where it's easier for some reason to just speak freely about things. Even though, of course, this podcast isn't just me talking to myself or me listening to myself, so that's kind of funny. But the subject matter today is also one that feels really new and mystical and kind of like, "Where am I? And what is happening?" So the feelings I'm having actually sitting here are definitely being reflected on a deeper level, a deeper emotional level. And I want to share those today because it feels a little sometimes like I'm creating a time capsule with these podcasts. So sometimes, admittedly, I do them because I want to preserve whatever the phase is, whatever the space is that is happening. And these kind of things are a great way to do that.

Journaling and such I find another way. But you can't always with journaling really capture like the emotional essence. So, again, I was led to do this podcast today all about—I don't even know. I guess we could call it super early pregnancy feelings. But

first it is one of my best friend's birthday today. And I thought that was really meaningful. My friend, Samantha, left this earth last August. And today is her birthday, so I was prepping this podcast this morning. And even now sitting in what I really hope to call a sacred space I feel comforted and led to share today even more knowing that today is really a special sacred day. So I know Sam is with me all the time, and she was one of really my own birth keepers especially during my miscarriage and birth of Sable. She wasn't trained in any way in birth work but didn't matter. She had the soul and the spirit for supporting and loving women. And so that energy feels really good today to know that she's here and still kind of working with me and through me.

So today is a moment in time captured on a podcast. And I was thinking about all the words that could apply that I wanted to share about this time when pregnancy is most likely where I'm at. But there's always the doubt. There's always that, "Well, maybe it's too early." There's always that unknown. And I feel like I've had enough pregnancies—this would be the 12th pregnancy. So I've had so many. And I don't think I've ever appreciated this stage quite as much as I do this time, if indeed that is what's happening. And, of course, if it's not, I suppose you wouldn't even be listening to this podcast because I probably wouldn't put it out there.

But I'm hoping to in a couple of weeks or months because this moment in time before we know for sure, before we have any kind of acceptance, right? It's just this crazy abstract idea much like sitting in this strange office. Oh, I called it an office. This strange space. It's before we have any kind of confirmation although confirmation, I guess, could come in lots of ways at different times for different women.

I did do a podcast on pregnancy tests not long ago. So if you sat through that one, you'll know that I haven't utilized that tool in many pregnancies, and I don't plan to with this one. So perhaps I'm sitting in a very unique state without even realizing it knowing that most women, for better or for worse, do utilize pregnancy tests and definitely have that visual reference that pee on a stick positive line. And maybe they don't feel quite some of these feelings that I'm feeling.

I feel like this stage, if it is a stage, right when a period is due essentially is a stage of uncertainty. And so much of vulnerability. So many thoughts and what ifs and dreams of the future coupled with fear sometimes of the reality. So I wanted to capture that state today as best I could. It's such a fragile state. And I wanted to be brave and bold in capturing that fragility because I know I'm not the only one. I'm not the only one who sits at this threshold. There's millions and maybe billions of women sitting at this threshold with me right now in this moment just like birth.

So let's see. Where to start? So if you are a cycle tracker person—and I vaguely am. Obviously, I have a really good understanding of my cycle and the phases. I don't go the full nine yards or whatever and do fertility charting or temperature or anything like that. I know my body pretty well. And so I had two previous cycles after Deva was born, and that didn't occur until she was about a year old. So I've had two cycles already. And pretty well aware of that and what was happening. And pregnancy definitely is always on my radar, but it wasn't something that we were trying to make happen.

And, in fact with details of cycles for those that care, my first two cycles I really ovulated pretty late which I don't think is abnormal or weird when you're still nursing a baby and/or having your first few postpartum cycles. There can be sort of lots of variation. Some women have really, really, really long cycles. Mine were still pretty normal. So 32 to 35 days were those first two. But yeah. The ovulation was quite late, so let's see. I think the first two cycles—well, of course, the first time you couldn't say when it was. But I could feel the lead up of it being pretty long. And then the next one was not until like day 19 or 20.

Okay. So with this next cycle, the one that I'm previously either awaiting to begin or sitting in a state of very early pregnancy, I would be 15 days past ovulation. So most women have, on average—very average, of course, maybe a 13 or 14 day luteal phase. Definitely some women have a shorter one. There's probably not too many women that have a much super longer than that one just because of the way bodies generally work. But for me, my normal is about 13, sometimes 14, days before I start bleeding. So 13 or 14 days after ovulation and then day 1.

So here I sit at this threshold of being past my normal and feeling lots of different fun things that maybe I'll share a little bit later and just thinking about how did this happen. I mean, yes. We all know how this happens. But just more like the energetics or thinking back to two weeks ago when we were off visiting Harry Potter World. And I felt that ovulation was definitely approaching, and I wasn't sure, of course, when it would happen. If it would be as late as previous months or not. And so while pregnancy wasn't avoided by any stretch, I definitely thought I probably had a couple of days left before it happened. And so I was wrong. And my body did actually wait until I got home to ovulate which I thought was kind of cool.

But all the fun ovulation intimacy had already happened, and then boom. I ovulated the next day, so there definitely was a chance. But I've been that way before. I'm sure

many of us have, and I hate to say. But as you're getting older, it's definitely not like you were younger, right? So yes. You can get pregnant from having sex just one time. But it wasn't something I was thinking would necessarily happen. I definitely wasn't like having my heart completely set on it happening. Just kind of like whatever. If that happens, it's fine. And if it doesn't, then that would be pretty normal too. And maybe it will sometime in the future.

So that is how that happened. And sitting in the two weeks after that has been fairly easy this time just because I've been so busy. And we had our retreat and all kinds of fun stuff to keep me busy and my mind off of it. So that was just part of me reflecting this morning thinking, "Oh, were there signs in those two weeks?" And I'm well acquainted with all the signs and been confused many times myself even as I'm sure many of you can appreciate. So many premenstrual signs really do overlap with pregnancy, and you can drive yourself absolutely insane in that two week wait as they call it trying to decide, "What do I think? Am I pregnant? Am I not?"

And my sort of running joke with myself is that I'm always wrong about that. Last month I thought, "Oh, I'm probably pregnant." For whatever reason, I decided that was the case. Then I wasn't. And then this month whether it was because I was busy or whatever, I thought, "No. No way. I don't think that's a thing at all." So here I am like many women shocked, in a way, but also completely in knowing of this being right and beautiful. So feeling all of those things and, again, thinking back on symptoms or not. And I can't really come up with anything just because my life was so busy and, again, so many of those symptoms overlap.

But definitely feeling more today. And, again, I'm just 15 days past ovulation. So I'd probably get a positive test. I almost definitely would if that's the case. But I'm not going to test, so I'm just kind of sitting with how things are shifting or not. And I definitely feel a shift. And I think I did even yesterday. But I really didn't want to call it in any sort of way even within myself. I thought, "No. Just wait out another day," as hard as it is. Time will tell.

But today I'm definitely feeling a little different just super hungry or having that feeling like a period might come. So feeling kind of like heavy and crampy here and there but yet not exactly like that. So, like I said, that could totally happen. I guess a period could start later today or even tomorrow, but it's not feeling like that to me. So that's why I'm here.

So I do think this is a sacred passage. It's one I haven't preserved enough for myself. And I don't think I've heard it preserved in any other way other than just between women when we share these things. And I haven't shared this with anyone yet, so probably by the time anyone is listening to this podcast that won't be the case. But I'm holding it so close. And that's something I wanted to sort of immortalize on this podcast. That we're in this sacred space of knowing perhaps or maybe half knowing or maybe being in denial or whatever it is that we're feeling at this juncture. But yet it is sacred space. It is special. It is a place of the heart expanding and opening, and that's definitely something I've noticed is feeling so much more loving even towards all the kids when they're maybe being sort of too much or sweet Deva just like loving her and kissing her. And literally feeling the oxytocin running through my body. That is not typical for me premenstrually usually. I want to rip someone's head off.

So I do feel like there's something energetic about being pregnant that, in this case or maybe lots of cases, is so heart opening. And then I think there is just the harsh reality that it's also opening yourself to expansion and perhaps heart break. Most people are aware of sort of that fragility too of early pregnancy and early life and wanting to hold onto that but not knowing what the plan is. So I don't know the plan either. And I've certainly been through miscarriages. Of course, that's not my hope. That's not even necessarily my feeling about the way this will go. And I feel like I have had that feeling when that's been the situation. But I have to admit a surrender. I have to admit I don't know. And all I have is right now. For whatever this is right now, whatever this should become is good and is best, and I can handle.

So, of course like I said, I hope that's not the way it goes. I would love to have this blessing of walking another sacred pregnancy path and birth and welcome another beautiful healthy little soul into our lives in about 9 ½ months. But, again, it's the potential for heart break. And even doing this podcast, to be completely honest, felt like, "Oh dear. I don't want to jinx myself. Maybe if I'm going to sit and talk about being early pregnant, it's going to come back to bite me. And I'll have a miscarriage or whatever." And I had to get over that for myself like I have before that babies stay if they want to stay. Babies go if they want to go. And there isn't too much we get to say about it.

So we have the choice of living in love and acceptance of this moment and everything that it brings, or we can live in fear. We can live with the what ifs or what does tomorrow bring or what if this isn't a thing in a month. Or what if I'm wrong? There's so many ways to feel fear and that heart break, but I've decided that this time around no matter what this time ends up bringing me that I am going to be in a heart space. And I

am open to heart break. I have to be. That's just part of this journey that I've learned with Sable especially that I can't control it. And all my fear and anxiety doesn't cause anything, but it also doesn't make things better. So what will be will be. As mothers, we open ourselves to heart break by the act, right? Of being a mother. When we're pregnant, and it certainly doesn't stop.

So I think just being aware of that has felt good in this space because it's allowed me to feel surrender on a level that in 12 pregnancies I don't that I've really felt. So that could change tomorrow. If I was to record this tomorrow or the next day, perhaps, I would have a different way of looking at it, or maybe I would be feeling more fear or who knows where I'd be at. But right now in this moment, I'm okay with where things are. I'm okay with expansion. I'm okay with heart break. I know that that's just the mystery of this sacred space. There is so much mystery.

So I want to talk about sharing about a pregnancy and just when people do that or choose to do that. And I've had experiences, like I've said like with Sable, where I was not into sharing. And it was sort of—felt like a foreshadow in a way. And I've had other pregnancies where I've shared really early. Five weeks or something. And so being in a space where more people know me and that sort of thing, that's probably not what I'm going to do just for my own personal space and protection. Sharing a pregnancy at five weeks with the world doesn't necessarily feel like something I want to do. And I don't think that's fearful. It's just like not the space I'm in at the moment because I think keeping this close is something that I really enjoy.

And I'm assuming—I always say this for those that know me, right? I've said this for the last five pregnancies. But this probably is the last time. If not, it's very close to the last time. So I am relishing and loving these minutes, these moments. Even recording this podcast kind of in secret. No one knows. And it feels a little crazy. Am I pregnant? Am I nuts? Is this just something I've made up in my head? Maybe I was a day off in my ovulation, and I'm going to bleed tomorrow, right? Anything is happening.

So it's this really mysterious, crazy, wild place to live in your head for as long as you choose to live there. And that is something, I think, we obviously have choice about and putting your intention into how that looks for you I think is all that matters. There's certainly people that don't tell anybody about their pregnancies until they have a baby. That happens a lot especially on Facebook, and I honor that. I think it's pretty cool. And, again, there are people that tell the minute the test is positive. So there is no right way. It's just what feels right for you. And I guess the space I'm in is this time is so awesome. I want to share at least with maybe some close friends. But I don't want to

share. Not yet. Not until I (a) maybe feel more certain somehow, right? So maybe some more time has gone by, and I'm feeling it more. Or (b) just after telling my husband, who I think probably deserves to know first, and has sort of no idea at the moment. Ha, ha.

He has understanding of cycles really well. And so he said the other day, "When are you supposed to bleed?" And I said, "Oh, later this week." I was very vague. So here we are later this week, and he hasn't asked or said anything. But we have some date time later when our kids will be with someone else, and who knows? Maybe that's the time. Or he knows me well enough that I'm pretty much thinking that when we're just sitting there alone he's going to guess just by my saying absolutely nothing. That's the kind of connection we have. And that's pretty much the way it's gone for most of my pregnancies. Not really having to make any sort of announcement. Him just knowing and being intuitive and sensitive and figuring to the clues.

So this literally could be the last hour that I sit in this space of this being my secret. This being my closeness. This, again, thoughts, ideas, plans for the future, who this person is. It's all contained in my little head, in my little heart. And there is something just so beautiful about that, and something that I, again, haven't fully appreciated I don't think until this moment. I also think that's just part of this time capsule. Perhaps I'll listen to this one day when I'm way older and probably not be sad to not be in this phase of life but to feel that sense of nostalgia to remind me of the mystery as I work with women. That this is just a really cool space to be in. It's not one or the other. But maybe it's a little bit of this. It's a little bit of that. The world has no idea what's going on in my head or in my body. It's a completely protected idea, person, secret, whatever.

And telling people changes it. So I don't think it changes it in a negative way. It just changes the fact that it's not yours in quite the same way. So I will enjoy holding this for another hour or two. And then we'll see if I get him to guess. Or if it's something that unfolds later. And then once he is aware if I move on to telling close friends. Perhaps I will in the next couple days. But telling is also really exciting. And I know with my husband, at least, he is always so excited and really kind of moves into his much-beloved role of taking care of me, which I so appreciate. And I don't take for granted.

But, again, just being in this state right now of me alone taking care of myself. Not having extra attention or focus. I definitely don't necessarily feel like telling all the kids because then kids tell people. And then suddenly this thing that was close is sort of out of control, right? If you tell the wrong people. So I don't usually tell my kids super early.

But it's hard to hide when my husband knows because he goes into super caretaker mode and will start buying lots of extra food or making me special things. And so the kids usually catch on. They've been through this enough times too to know what all that means.

So it could be the domino effect in sharing this news with him. But I don't have a plan. I don't have a plan at this moment to necessarily do that today. I'm going to see where it goes. Obviously, if this is really the thing that I think it is then in the next couple of days it will come out, and then it will be changed. This experience. It will be beautiful and moving on in a different phase, and I will be in a different waiting period or threshold than I am right now.

So I love these moments. They are slow and sacred. It feels like time stands still. And all the moments during the day where I think, "Really? Is this? Is this true? How do I feel?" Or something will grip me. Like yesterday. I was starving all of a sudden. And it felt more of like a blood sugar drop where I had to eat everything in sight which is totally not my normal way. So enjoying those moments, keeping them close, and kind of chuckling to myself. Like, "This is crazy. Like this feels different," and nobody has any idea.

So that's kind of a shortish podcast today. Just wanting to share my thoughts about this space and time because I haven't. All of these podcasts, 100 and—I don't know. 50 podcasts so far. And I've been blessed to share with you through several pregnancies during this series of *Taking Back Birth*. But I have not done one on just this topic. So I know you can relate. I know there are so many women sitting out there in a similar state of, "Am I? Time will tell." And I hope that this has sort of touched you in a way and maybe inspired you to feel it a little more, to hold it a little more close, to let go of your fear as well just in this space of mothering that we can't control any more than we can control any of the rest of it.

So thanks for listening. I'll keep you posted. I hope you have a great day.

(closing music)