Esmee Geeratz - After Birth

Episode 301 · September 8, 2022 · with Esmee Geeratz

IN THIS EPISODE

Esmee Geeratz — fashion designer and stylist — returns to join Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC two weeks after the birth of her first baby to tell the after-birth half of her story. When we last heard from her, she was planning a home birth with a frank breech baby and trying everything short of an ECV — chiropractic, acupuncture, spinning babies, moxibustion, and meditation — to help her baby flip. When the baby stayed breech, she rebuilt her birth team around the plan: her doula Stacey Blackwell, a new midwife, and Dr. Victoria Flores, a medical doctor who attends breech deliveries at home. In this episode she picks up the story on a Wednesday, when she loses her mucus plug at 39 weeks and four days, talks to her baby — we're ready for you, you can come — and feels the first cramps begin that night. She takes us through a quiet grounding moment alone in the bathroom at 5 a.m., laboring in her bamboo garden at sunrise, hip squeezes in the shower, and the birth pool as the sensations build — with her doctor an hour and a half away racing to reach her in time.

About this transcript: *This transcript was created with AI-assisted transcription and reviewed by our team. It may not be 100% accurate — names, medical terms, and phrasing can occasionally be mis-transcribed. For exact wording, please listen to the episode audio.*

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Welcome back to the informed pregnancy and parenting podcast. I'm your host pregnancy focus car practice. Dr. Elliott, Berlin Today we have a returning guest she was last on the podcast very pregnant with a breech baby and Plans were sort of unfolding on how to give birth Now she's had the baby and she's returned to share the story as me he gots Even close Welcome back to the podcast and congratulations mama. Thank you so much You did it. Well, I don't know how or what but you did it and sometimes once in a while I wish this podcast was video together with audio you are Beaming I mean the babies

ESMEE GEERATZ: Two weeks old. Yeah, I don't feel that way. But thank you. I look how you feel

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And I don't know how you look but you look like, okay. I had a baby. I don't know a year ago Rested you look fantastic. So let's dig right into it So you're into your pregnancy doing all these different things to try to help your baby flip Give us a reminder. What things did you try?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Sure. Well, of course, I saw you and I failed every week It was very helpful for labor and Acupuncture, you know spinning babies Martian talking to the baby meditations Everything I think there is yeah, did you try manually turning the baby? That's the only thing I didn't try Where the other things felt soft and right for me This felt a little like to turn a being that is Deciding to sit that way and then manually turn in from the outside it felt a little rough or something You didn't quite feel like something I would do so I didn't do that and you had been planning a home birth

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yes, so let's put this back. You're from Amsterdam. So, do you know if there are birth options for breech babies?

ESMEE GEERATZ: The hospital. Yeah, so they do vaginal breech delivery, but in the hospital they do. Yeah. Yeah So I was glad to be here actually

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Which is interesting because you said a lot of people do home birth

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yes, we have around 30% of people doing home birth. I was born at home. My partner was so Very regular not over here Yeah, it's a normal thing, you know one in three. I don't know what the price of the gas the way it is

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I think more people are gonna give birth at home Where that drives although you said everybody rides bicycles but that's not a factor But we did say that's probably why there's so much home birth because yeah, even labor You'd have to go get on your bicycle to get to the hospital Who wants that? Okay, so for you, you know home birth is a kind of an actual thing well, it sounds like about one in three people in Amsterdam give birth at home and Vaginal breech delivery is not super taboo. It's just not done at home So for you it's not like that foreign except that you're here in the shiny United States of America where we don't really have that many people doing home birth like I don't know one and a half percent

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Roughly and we have very few people attending each birth vaginally, so a little bit of a pickle for you. And you didn't want to do the ECV, but you didn't want to have a cesarean birth or even a hospital birth.

ESMEE GEERATZ: No, I had this strong urge that I wanted to try at home at least, you know, I was, you know, willing to whatever would happen to pivot with the situation, but I had confidence that with the right team, I could do it at home. And I'm a person I'm very sensitive to energy, to smells, to people, and I thought, oh, for me, the best labor experience for me, where I feel safe is at home to be in my own environment and to have a team that I chose to be there that felt right for my labor. You know, a lot of people feel much safer in a hospital, which I also totally understand.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, for sure. I mean, I always recommend that people give birth where they feel safe, where they feel most relaxed, you know, obviously within the realm of reasonable risk, but all things being equal. Then some people are so relaxed at a hospital and feel so much safer. That's a great place to give birth and other people don't, and they feel much safer at home. So it's an important factor to take into account. So who did you select for your team? I remember you switched midwives towards the end when you were a breach and trying to sort of pivot gears to a breach friendly team.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yes, I did. I had my doula Stacey Blackwell. I had my Stacey.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I wanted to say, Oh, well, you did have your Stacey. You got to be careful because there's a lot of people out there.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And she was my doula for months. So she recommended a new midwife or for me new Alexi Frangelitti. And she was a great match. And through Instagram, God bless Instagram in that way. I found a birthing instinct from Dr. Fishbine and working with him is Dr. Victoria Flores, and she does breed deliveries at home as well. And she happened to share office with Alex, which is also funny. Sometimes it lines up and they both were willing to take us on at 36 weeks.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So, yeah, I imagine that's something that they encounter fairly regularly. When people find out I'm breached and I have very few options, probably their phone starts ringing. Yeah.

ESMEE GEERATZ: I think I was a little like later on to the game. Most people don't find out until 33 weeks or so.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you don't, you don't get that much time. No. Uh, okay. So you have a medical doctor who does home birth and a midwife in California midwives, you know, can't be the sole provider for a home birth anymore. And then you have your Stacey.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yes, she's mine now.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You're right. Mark you. And then you have you and your husband. Yes.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And the midwife and the Dr. Flores, they both had an assistant as well.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, wow. It's like a full house. You guys basketball. Okay. All right. I got to find out how this whole experience went. I really want to know the juicy details. We'll be right back with as me. Podcast. We're talking to new mama Esme who has more energy and radiance and you look like you've not been sleep deprived at all. I don't know how you do it, but actually you do take very, very good care of your body, your machine, so I guess it does pay off.

ESMEE GEERATZ: It does help, I guess, I don't know. To make you feel even better,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I went to the opposite end of the spectrum for contrast. I'm doing my part to help. Okay, so your plans are changing, your babies reach, you're hanging upside down, you're burning weird smoky stuff at your toes, you're yeah, subjecting yourself to my 18 plus years of dad jokes while I'm trying to loosen up your body and nothing's happening. So you switch teams. You've got a midwife and a midwife assistant, a medical doctor and a medical doctor's assistant, your Stacey, which is Stacey Blackwell, your doula, and then you also have your husband. Did he have an assistant? No. Okay. No, the only one who didn't. Oh, wow. But he's your assistant. So really it's you and your assistant.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Okay. How does labor begin for you? I lost my mucus block like the day off and normally you can lose it and walk around for two weeks, but I kind of knew like, I think this is it because yeah, go me a little crazy, but I really talked to the baby like, we're ready for you. Like I

wasn't done being pregnant, but I was ready for him. Like we had everything in place. So I was kind of talking to him like, we're ready. You can come. And then a day later it all started. I believe in that stuff. Most people don't, but I think it's helpful. You're crazy. I mean, you told me to call you

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: crazy. Where are you in relation to your due date? I was 39 weeks and four days at that point. So you're approaching the center of the target in terms of guessing when the baby is coming. And you signal politely. Hey, now it's not a bad time if you're available. And your plug comes out and it feels like things are getting very close. Did you lose your plug? Did you just notice it in the toilet or? I noticed it in my underwear.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And then the midwife was like, send me a picture. I don't know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: They always want pictures. I was just thinking of those TikToks where they say, put your last 10 pictures to this music. No, they cannot do that. They should open up just an account called lost and found for all those mucus plugs. Okay. I mean, if you're not grossed out, can I ask you details about your plug? Sure. Like what was it compared to what you expected it

ESMEE GEERATZ: to be big or small? The coloring of it. I Googled a few days before the way it looked, because I didn't know people just told me it kind of looks like snot. Sometimes it could be blood. There could be this. I'm like, okay, I'll just Google it. Kind of looked like you blow your nose. Okay. But like you blow your nose and there's a lot in there. No, not too

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: much, but I just knew like, this is it. Yeah. Did you have any color to it? Was there any blood?

ESMEE GEERATZ: No, nothing. So I just knew like, just boogers. All right. So you send the picture,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: discard the plug, and then that is what time of day? Yeah, that was like midday and nothing happened, but it was Wednesday. Okay. So Wednesday midday, you lose your plug and you kind of feel it coming. So are you excited? Are you like, Hey, this is one big step

ESMEE GEERATZ: closer. I was excited. And also the two days before I was stocking up on groceries. Like there was a box coming or something like a pandemic or whatever would give you that crazy idea. Yeah. I stopped the fridge and everything. I thought we're so close. Better have food at the house. I think that every day. Yeah. Yeah, but that's not what I regularly do. Like my partner visit, he looked at the cabinets. He was like, what are you doing? It's like, now we have food, you know? A lot of people, they nest. And that was my form of nesting.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Your nesting was filling the nest with whatever. Parmesan cheese. Oh, lucky bird. All right, so you fill up the house and then that's Wednesday.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, and the funny thing, my partner told me a few days after, he came home that night and he is a music producer. He works in the studio. And he thought, I think she's close. I'll take everything I need from my studio because I don't think I will return here in a few, like for a while. But he didn't tell me that. So he came home with all his equipment and everything he needs at home. So it was interesting. And he came home, we had dinner and he fell into a deep sleep. And I thought, that's smart. If it starts tonight, then he has to sleep.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: He's rested. Yeah. But you didn't think maybe you should go to sleep?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was resting as well, but I was also exciting and starting to cramp a little, like lightly. But I also thought, okay, for some people, that's days, you know? Can be days, so.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I've had cramps for almost a week after some bad treatment.

ESMEE GEERATZ: What did you, yeah, what did you eat?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, it happens. I should have stopped out. Fresh food. Okay, so your plug is out, you're cramping, unbeknownst to your husband, brings home his whole studio. Yeah. And okay, now what time is it?

ESMEE GEERATZ: It was later in the evening, I think like 11 or 12. And we fall asleep on the couch a lot. We have a very comfy couch. And he moved to the bed and I was excited. And the cramping was definitely picking up and I wasn't timing anything. But I thought maybe I should time this. Because it seems like there's a pattern. So I did, but it was like five minutes and sometimes seven minutes. Yeah. So they were close together, but not like a pattern to call anyone. But I did text the birth team. We had a group chat with everyone in there.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, you have to with that kind of crowd.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yes. Yeah, and also Dr. Flores was like, without traffic, she was an hour and a half away.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, wow.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And yeah, with traffic could be two and a half hours. So, you know, first time, mom must usually take a longer time, but yeah, I wanted to keep everyone informed.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Sounds like a good time for Uber or Chopper. Yeah, really. Oh, so you wanted to keep everybody really well-informed.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah. I texted Stacey too and I texted her the minute and she was like, get some rest, you know, try to sleep. So I did. I went to bed and had a few hours of sleep.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Great.

ESMEE GEERATZ: What happened then? And then I woke up at like five in the morning, was too intense for the cramps or contractions at that point to sleep through. So I texted Stacey and also, well, I first got out of the bed, didn't wake up my partner, because I really enjoyed just one moment with myself, just like to sense hippie dippy, but like to ground myself like, okay, you can do this. It's gonna be okay. You can handle this sensation, you know, just to be, I don't know, center myself without having anyone else involved. Yeah, that was nice. I did that in the bathroom and then contractions really picked up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Two questions off the bat. Where are you feeling them at this point?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was feeling the contractions, luckily like in my uterus, like strong menstrual cramps, not in my back.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I've heard that's rigorous. It looks terrible. I'm gonna be honest. So you felt it like low in your belly, kind of centered.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, centered. But they're intense. They were, yeah, picking up, like it was, you know, from waking up to pain that I couldn't sleep through to moving to the bathroom. I think moving also like made it pick up. Yeah, from in just a few minutes, I thought, okay, I think I need to text people.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Are you able to breathe and let them move through you or do you feel yourself tensing up?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was, and I woke up my partner, Vin, because he had to set up the bed and everything. We have a wide bed, a wide rug.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, everything's white?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, he had to do like a Dexter mercy preparation. To wind-wrap everywhere.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, we had like all these equipments for painters and everything to-

ESMEE GEERATZ: Oh, the tarps, the tarps.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, to wrap everything and lots of towels and yeah. My second question was when you're in the bathroom and things are picking up, are you like sitting on the toilet or standing? Did you get into a shower or a tub? What are you doing in there?

ESMEE GEERATZ: When it really picked up, Stacey suggested, she wasn't here yet, but she suggested get in the shower on your birth ball. try to bounce and be under the warm water. But for some reason, I did that for a few minutes. I thought, no, I don't want to be here. It's really strange how you and they were like, have places you really don't want to be and you do want to be or you want to be touched or you don't, you know, it's, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I could tell you this as a guy does body work at birth all the time. There are moments where, you know, if I were to take my hands off of someone's back, they would freak out and scream, get your hands back there. And then two seconds later, it's like, okay, that's too much, get off, you know? And it's just, you know, you learn to find the rhythm and to communicate without even using words. But it's just like, so interesting how in one minute, don't touch me, in the next minute, why aren't you there? And also the temperature, like, oh, I'm so hot, I'm freezing, I'm hot, those fluctuations are so interesting. And then, yeah, usually like if you close your eyes and take a deep breath, your body will tell you

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: if either the position or the surroundings that you're in are favorable or not.

ESMEE GEERATZ: That's really cool.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. All right, I want to find out more, but we should take another break. And then when we come back, the rest of the story. Welcome back, we're talking to Esme. Gosh, things are heating up. You're having surges or contractions. Luckily, like strong menstrual cramps in your lower belly, your body says no to the shower with the birth ball. You're texting your whole crowd, especially your doctor who's like one to three hours away. What happens next?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, I moved, weirdly enough, I moved to my garden.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, that's beautiful.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And it was about six in the morning then, so it was still, you know, the sun was out yet, but birds were chirping. And we have a fairly small garden, but it's full of bamboo and it's like secluded, so no one can look into it, so it's very private.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, nice.

ESMEE GEERATZ: But for some reason, I like the fresh air and I put down a bath mat and my bird ball where I leaned on and it was on my knees and I leaned on the birth ball and moved. And that was my sweet spot. That's where I stayed for a while.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That sounds beautiful. Were you vocalizing? Were you making noise?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Not yet, at that point I was still breathing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Stay tuned.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah. Yeah, and Stacy arrived a few minutes later and I know Alex texted her, the midwife. She was like, is she in active labor? And Stacy said, yeah, she's so in it. Like, it's hard to get contact with her. So yeah, she's in active labor.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So they started heading over?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, the rest of the team started heading over and luckily like Flores already was on her way because she saw the timing of the contractions and she followed everything and she thought, okay, I better go over there. So she came around 6.30 or 6.45 and she suggested to check me, which I wanted. I was ready for that to see where it was at but it's also scary because you're like, I hope it's not, you know. What if it's, I have this on a mirror. Yeah, definitely, but it was funny. I even have a picture of it. I have two like sunbeds near, we have a small pool and I have two sunbeds and they just laid a towel on the sunbed outside.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, and they checked you there?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, they checked me there.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, good thing for that bamboo. Yeah.

ESMEE GEERATZ: She has this ultrasound on her phone, which is amazing because she wanted to check the baby's position again. It's on her phone. It's incredible.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, wait, it's gotta be a probe that attaches to her phone.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, yeah, it is.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, and her phone is the screen. Yeah. Oh, that's really cool.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, so she wanted to check if the baby was still frank breech, which means bum down, which is a good way to labor.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, if you're going to be breech. Yes. I'm looking for an app that lets my Android phone make fresh pasta. Maybe it's doable. I'm not there yet. I'm working on it. So sharks, who wants, okay, back to you. So when she checks you, you find out that?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was six centimeters.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, amazing. Does that feel good?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, I was still breathing, you know. It was painful, but I was like, okay, you know, I think I've got this. Only four to go. Yeah, and I wasn't in panic. My worry beforehand was like, okay, what if the sensations overwhelm you from the beginning? You know, it could be. You don't know, you've never done labor. So I was happy, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: In addition to the laboring, you also have a breech baby, which again here is sort of considered taboo-ish, you know, scary, risky. I'm not judging for anything for anybody, but is that even on your mind at all? Or are you just like in regular, plain old labor?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was just, and I don't know from any different because it's my first baby, but I was in regular, plain old labor, but I was already in that state the last few weeks you saw me. I was going to you with the intention like, okay, let's loosen this body up for labor either way this baby comes out.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. And then- And towards the end, you realistically realized this baby is probably not gonna turn and I'm okay. I'm gonna just deliver. And being Frank Breach does give you that advantage out of all the Breach positions, the safer one to deliver. Okay, six centimeters. What next?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I moved to a shower again. Another shower-

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Indoors?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Indoors. Okay. And that was good to have the heat on my back. I still didn't have contraction in my back, but it was just nice to be on the warm water. And to move to change your scenery is good, I guess. And Stacey was squeezing my hips, which yeah, if she left for the bathroom, I was like, where is she?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I know. If you're a good hip squeezer, you can't even have anything in a drink two hours before the birth.

ESMEE GEERATZ: And my partner, he was really sweet. He tried to squeeze when she left, but it wasn't as good. It's a technique and you know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's a technique if he practices with a whole bunch of ladies in the labor, he'll get. Really good at it.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah. But yeah, so that happened. And then I had a birth pool as well, actually.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Nice, filled up and warm?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah. The assistants were filling that up while I was in that shower. And then I moved to that pool, which is really nice for the transition. Yeah. And that was also a moment where I said to Vincent, like, wow, this is, you know. And also a moment where I realized, oh, I wanted to do this at home. I didn't want any epidural or, you know. And I was like, okay. That was a side thinking. Yeah, there's no way back now. Yeah, there was a moment like that, but you know, I knew transition is where you think like, okay, can I do this? You know, you have a moment of wow.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Self doubt. But it's, yeah, it's also the climax. Like it's generally your last wall of fear to overcome. And then boom, it just autopilot takes over.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah. So this was around nine o'clock and I felt pushy already. Like I felt these surges that were stronger that were, yeah, crunching my whole belly. So I knew like, okay, I think this is like where I push. And they checked me again. And yes, I was 10 centimeters.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: 10 centimeters. They checked you in the water, huh?

ESMEE GEERATZ: They checked me in the water.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, that's possible. Yeah. Yeah, cool. Is Dr. Flores transducer for the iPhone water?

ESMEE GEERATZ: She didn't do that. She didn't do it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. My pasta maker works on a tub. Yeah. Yeah. All right, 10 centimeters ready to push. But you knew before they checked you. Yeah.

ESMEE GEERATZ: It's really cool. I could feel it, but I'm really in tune with my body. So I know, and yeah, I know against a lot of women though when they labor, but yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, sometimes, you know, like everything's some more than others. Yeah. So how was pushing?

ESMEE GEERATZ: That was a moment where I, well, in the water it didn't really work. I think the water was too relaxing or something and there's no gravity in there. And for some reason I wanted to be kind of on my hands and knees. And after a few trying of pushing, I thought this is not working for me. So I got out of the tub and got onto all these paddings. They laid over our white rug. White rug. The rug, it was still the rug. I tried on a birthing stool, which I thought looks like a stool, but this one, it was just an iron. I would call it. Yeah. It didn't look like a stool. I thought you could really sit on it, but it's more- Oh, it's empty in the middle.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, it's empty.

ESMEE GEERATZ: It's more to like squat. Yeah. There's no support really, but yeah. So I tried that. And that was also a moment where I felt fear because I felt every time I pushed, I felt more pain. And it's really weird because you've been breathing through those contractions and kind of like breathing them, letting them move through you. And then you have to work with them. So it's really a switch where they ask you to push on a contraction and with pushing you- Surrender. Yeah, you tense your body, you work. Yeah, I was tensing my jaw and everything. So yeah, it was the first moment I did fell afraid, but I was vocalizing that. I just said to everybody, I was like, I'm afraid. So they could tell me like, okay, that's okay,

ESMEE GEERATZ: but we're moving through here.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: This is like 24 hours since you first felt things, right? Yes. The surges before you went to bed. Yeah. And Stacy said, get some rest. Did you, now that you're 10 centimeters and pushing different formats, did you kind of feel the baby? Did you either see or reach up and feel the baby?

ESMEE GEERATZ: I didn't. I was feeling his little head still in my tummy. And they also taught me to push down a little bit because that helped. So I did that. And at that moment while I was pushing, his heart rate went down every time I pushed. And it went down into the 90s, but also one time into the 70s. So yeah, that was not good. So this is not when you're just to clarify,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: you're not pushing with your hands, like pushing the baby down. It's just, you're pushing like, Oh, sorry. Yes. Labor pushing, labor pushing. And every time you push the baby's heart rate starts to decelerate. Yes. I'm scarily low. Are people getting nervous at that point?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Vincent was, my partner was, he didn't show that to me. He was so calm, the whole labor, like God bless him. Yeah. And no, but Dr. Flores, everyone was very calm, but she was like, okay, get up after every contraction. She made me get up and move my body, dance, wiggle, and talk to my baby. She was like, connect to your baby. And then his heart rate jumped back up again to like 40. Yeah. Within a few seconds. So it was really weird to witness. Of course I was in it, but I was hearing all the numbers and that happened every time. So it was like a dance. They made me push. And then I had to stand up, dance, talk to the baby. They said, you're really like swinging your hips. And I was just doing

ESMEE GEERATZ: what I was told. So I wasn't really there. I think for my partner was way scarier because he saw me in pain, you know, saying I was afraid. He saw the heart rate of the baby go down, but I was just working. You know, he needs to get out. Yeah. How long did that go on? It went on for like 10 times trying to push. And then you have some time in between where there isn't a contraction, but eventually because that was happening, I just was pushing. Even if I didn't have a contraction, I thought, okay, let's go. And I think it was good for me to move through my fear, knowing that the baby wasn't, he was recovering really well, but he also wasn't coping while I was pushing. So it was good,

ESMEE GEERATZ: a good motivation for me to set aside my fears. I think that's parenthood and you work for your baby during that process. Did you feel where there's signs of progress that you're bringing the baby down? I didn't feel that I just felt pain. And in the meantime, we were also trying

different positions. So they had me lay on my back on the bed, didn't work at all for me back on the birthing stool that we even got a squatty party out. I was on the birthing stool and we turned the birthing stool around. So it was backwards. I was on a squatty party with one foot. And that's when I made the most progress. Like, that's when his little bum like moved past my pubic bone and yeah,

ESMEE GEERATZ: he was ready to be born a squatty pushy. Yeah. Okay. So then did you at any point feel with your hand? What was coming through? No, and also a breach is supposed to be hands off. Like you shouldn't touch the baby in case they startle and gasp. Like because their head is still inside. So they don't recommend that. So yeah, I didn't even ask if I was allowed to do it, but I don't think so. You know, it's hands off for everybody. Yeah. Just have them here so you can see. Yeah. And my partner was in front of me while I was pushing and he was seeing the baby in between my legs because the birthing stools. Yeah. It gives you clear vision. Yeah. Not like your backyard. No,

ESMEE GEERATZ: no, my personal backyard. And he was telling me what was happening. So he was like, yeah, the bum's out. The legs are almost out. You're doing so great. So he was vocalizing what he was seeing, which gave me motivation. Like, okay, I'm doing this right because the birthing was like, okay, push, push it out. Like they're supposed to, but it was good to have a visual being told to me. Like he's almost out. And I was scared that the head might take a while. I don't know why I had that idea in mind beforehand with him being breached, had being born last. I thought, what if that doesn't come out? But that went within a minute or so from his body being born. So you're standing at that point. No,

ESMEE GEERATZ: I was still on the birthing stool with one foot on my squatty body.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You're sort of in a squat with your one leg up. Yes. Yes.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Oh and Victoria Flores the doctor she had her hands like Kind of up in my perineum like lifting my butt cheeks to give the baby more space

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I wonder what your medical school that technique

ESMEE GEERATZ: But it was helpful, but she was like yeah so close to me like lifting my body Alex was below like laying to see if the baby was coming like yeah, but at that moment you're like, okay

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Like when you take the car for the oil change and then go downstairs and they're looking up from underneath and just Sort of sounds like yeah Yes, okay, so then the baby comes out

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, he comes out but first but first because he was so close to the ground They had a lot of soft petting and because it's hands off They kind of don't know if you've ever watched EU force lots of reach birds Sorry, let the baby kind of fall out it sounds Not good, but that's the best for them And I moved to the bed and they carried him, you know through my legs I'm still attached by the court still attached by the court and They put him on a bed next to me because they kind of wanted to see like if he was okay from Having that heart rate go down, but it's hard. It was good. He didn't need any suctioning didn't need any air He was perfectly okay, and he was more covered in blood

ESMEE GEERATZ: Then phoenix which I was surprised by but I immediately started rubbing his back and like talking to him and he started vocalizing And my partner was crying. I wasn't even crying. I was still like Now I was still in the mode of like is he okay is are we okay, you know, because yeah You're still in your animalistic, you know, like all the other animals. Yeah

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Young is okay

ESMEE GEERATZ: Natural, you know, yeah

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. So was there a moment when your baby came out like a feeling in that moment? Oh

ESMEE GEERATZ: Just a big release, you know, because I know a lot of women say the ring of fire I don't know. I didn't really feel a ring of fire. It was just a ring of Pain So happy I could feel the whole room I had relief You know because Vincent said that the birding team was also looking at each other like, okay Like we need to get going he needs to be here They didn't tell me anything like that and I didn't notice but I'm sure they were you know

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, the diesels with the breach, you know, yeah It's different than just like a plain old home birth. Yeah. Wow. What an amazing triumph

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, and my partner was just like women are amazing

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's really like once you see that I mean You can't not think that even just during pregnancy how your like body just Makes a life support system for the little one grows the little one from a couple of cells into a Multi-trillion cell human and then how you deliver that through your body and then, you know Everything kind of closes back up and goes back to the way it was

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, like after I was laying down and my placenta didn't came out right away And it was 30 minutes and dr. Flores was like, well, I like it to be delivered now Otherwise, can I manually do it? But I also had a midwife Alex So she was like, let's give her a little more time because the ending of this birth was quite Rigorous let's give her more time and I sat on the birthing chair again and Alex helped me from the back like a mom She put her hand on my chest and she was like, let's take a moment to thank your body for carrying this baby For birthing this baby. Let's take a moment for that. And that's when I cried. I was like, oh, yeah Sorry No, that's where I felt like oh, yeah, you know we did this my body did this and everything's good

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, and you know midwives they have this spiritual connection, which was beautiful. It was beautiful to have both. Yeah

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, it's really cool to have both. Yeah working together like that, you know the best of both worlds as they say Yeah, the latching and feeding go well

ESMEE GEERATZ: it did and Placenta took an hour and a half

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm sure Victoria Flores was like

ESMEE GEERATZ: She was checking my vitals and everything was good. So I was like, oh so you did it on your own They didn't take it out. No, I said give me a little more time It was also so busy in

that room six people and they were cleaning up and I also asked like hey Can I have a moment and can everyone be quiet? I just thought you know, I still need to I know for some people it falls out But I apparently needed a little more time and a little bit more peace and quiet for it it. And then it came out. So yeah. Yeah, it released and I had some blood clots, which figured for she took him out by hand. That's not the funnest looking. No, but I'm glad she did. Because then the bleeding stops sooner and it's better for your body. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So how old is the baby now? Tomorrow is going to be three weeks. Yeah. Well, and what

ESMEE GEERATZ: did you name it? His name is Saul. So yeah, yeah, I know it's a Jewish name. And his second name is Zion. My brother's name is Zion. So also do we share. We're

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: happy to share. Yeah. Well, a huge congratulations to you. I mean, if ever there's an example of someone who does their homework and sort of ends up in a situation where curveball is thrown your way and you calmly, you know, explore the options, work your way through them and make a decision and follow through on it. That was you and your birth and your fabulous team that you had around you. I'm just happy for you that you had the option and you had a sounds

ESMEE GEERATZ: like a really lovely experience. Yeah, thank you. Yeah, I feel so fortunate, you know, having the right people and also trust in myself, but my partner and people like you, like, you know, just say like, yeah, you got this. I think that's the most empowering for a woman. And then, you know, whatever birth ends up to be, you know, it's just nice to be empowered

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: in whatever situation. Yeah, well, as I'm always inspired by, like your husband said, what you guys do to make deliver and feed babies and raise them. But in your case, like, I don't know, just a little extra hint of inspiration from really just like following your dreams confidently and pushing through to a beautiful ending. Literally, literally. One foot up. Yeah. I'm just gonna repurpose the squatty putty and go on the truck. Well, congratulations. Let's not lose sight of the fact that you have a beautiful clothing line called? Fubi. And where can we find you online?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Yeah, you can find me on Instagram. I'll think I'll link it in the show notes because my name as you heard in the beginning.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Okay. Well, let's spell it out.

ESMEE GEERATZ: Okay, sure. It's E S M double E as my underscore g double E r a t z. And you'll find me and you'll find my brand in my profile and pictures of the little one and everything.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Did you put up any birth pictures?

ESMEE GEERATZ: Not yet. I'll send some to you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Share with the clip. Yeah. Okay. Amazing. Congratulations again. And at home, thanks for listening to our podcast. If you want to connect, we have this awesome new blog at inform pregnancy.com. Come check it out inform pregnancy.com

Enjoying the Informed Pregnancy Podcast?

Visit us at **informedpregnancy.com** for episodes, articles, and resources for pregnancy, birth, and beyond.

Want more? Subscribe to **Informed Pregnancy+** at **informedpregnancy.tv** for films, series, and exclusive content.