Kathrin Zenkina - Before Birth

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IN THIS EPISODE

Kathrin Zenkina — personal development coach and the voice behind Manifestation Babe — joins Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC at 39 weeks pregnant with her first baby, a son, to tell the before-birth half of her story. Born in Ukraine and raised in Los Angeles, she grew up pushed toward medical school, discovered The Secret at 16, and built an almost eight-figure business teaching manifestation instead — after first living on her grandmother's couch. She is candid about being bullied, about the breast implants she got at 21 and the breast implant illness symptoms that followed — fatigue, memory loss, vertigo, and days when she could spend only an hour out of bed — and about the moment, six days after having them removed, when she looked out her window and felt like living again. Now she is planning an unmedicated home birth in her apartment, with her husband Brennan, her mother, her doula, two midwives, a photographer, and a videographer — eight people, nine counting the baby — plus hypnobabies, combs, a TENS machine, and a backup doctor at Cedars just in case. But first she has to work through the fears pregnancy has surfaced, from her mother's traumatic pregnancy with her to a scare at 24 weeks in Egypt, and decide how much of that old story she is willing to carry into the birth room.

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DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: To the informed pregnancy and parenting podcast. I'm your host pregnancy focus car proctor. Dr. Elliott Berlin My guest today is a personal development coach. We're gonna talk about pregnancy adventures in Africa what you learned from having her breast implants put in and taken out and some planning for upcoming unmedicated home birth Catherine's and Kina welcome to the podcast. Thank you so much for having me. I'm super excited to be here I mean, I think I'm more excited to have you have a crazy Energy, it's like very positive. It walks into the room about two minutes before you get there

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Seriously, I feel the exact same way about you and I've been telling everyone about you. Yeah I'm like you have to see dr. Berlin his energy is just unmatched. Wow. Thank you so much coming from anybody

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That would be such a nice thing to hear but from you. It's even nicer. All right, let's go to the beginning There's so much to learn about you and from you. Where are you from originally?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Originally I was born in Ukraine and I'm 75% Russian 25% Ukrainian and yes It's a very interesting dynamic of right now. Yes Not in our conflict, but there is some conflict in my family very interestingly enough But I'm an immigrant. So I was raised in Los Angeles became when I was just one years old and Yeah, that's where I'm from

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. So where'd you grow up? Which cities I

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Grew up in LA and then I moved to Gig Harbor, Washington when I was 14 years old Hated every second of it and moved back to LA when I was 23 and have been here ever since welcome back

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Thank you. Why did you move to?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Boondock Washington and what did you not like about it? It's so funny. We're recording this on one of the gloomiest days I've seen so far in July in Los Angeles and that's literally how every single day is is Western Washington State It's just like soon as October hits the rain start and they don't stop until May and coming from Los Angeles I'm like I need the Sun like I'm a Sun worshiper. I need the Sun Where is the Sun and it just like made me feel so depressed and icky, but I will give it some credit It really helped me hyper focus on being a great student because there was nothing else Inside and study for school

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, look at that. Maybe I should send my kids there. I Mean it works for something studying for school. What were you focused on? What were you gonna do?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Yeah, so like any great immigrant my options were to become a lawyer or to become a doctor And if not, it was to become a failure, right? So I was always pushed into medical school my whole life and Anytime someone would ask my mom like what is Katherine want to be when she grows up, you know, just in conversation I would always over here. She's gonna go to medical school. She's gonna be a doctor She's gonna be a surgeon and so, you know, like any kid they take that on as their truth their label And so I'm like, okay I guess that's what I'm doing and my mom went to nursing school when she immigrated here like right away She didn't speak any English enrolled herself into classes like enrolled herself into microbiology and had to use a

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Translator to be like what is this word and I'm like mom who enrolls into microbiology like in another language Can you imagine going to Japan and enrolling yourself? in microbiology? Like, no.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No. I haven't had enough time with the menu at the restaurant.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Exactly. Like she's such a badass, but she always pushed me into that route. So that's what I went to school for. And at some point along my journey, it was my junior year of college, I came across the online business world through an MLM beach body. And I just completely fell in love with the idea of making money online. Something about learning how to market yourself on

social media was the most exciting thing in the world for me. And the more excited I got about this new online business venture, the worse my grades got. And I realized that I have absolutely no passion whatsoever in medicine, in biology, in just anything that I was doing. And I graduated from college and I just decided

KATHRIN ZENKINA: to pursue my business full time. At some point, I lost passion for that as well. And I reignited a passion that I discovered when I was 16 years old, from a book that I discovered that my friend literally handed to me when I was 16. And she said, Hey, Catherine, this is how my grandpa has everything that he wants in life. And he doesn't work for money, money works for him. And as a 16 year old, I'm like, yeah, yeah, to me, like I'm in, I never even had my first job. And I'm like, yeah, I don't want to work for money. I'm too cool for that. And that was kind of like a secret life that I also lived where I was very much into spirituality. I was very much into mindset, law of attraction, universal laws. And there was

KATHRIN ZENKINA: like this part of me that was very much in that world. And then the part of me where I was like, no, but I have to be a doctor. So I have to be left brain. I got to study these facts. I got to be a good student. That's what I'm going to do. And when I graduated from college, I was like, you know what? I think that's what I really want to be doing. Like I really want to help people manifest their dream lives. And I got into manifestation, like it was really good at manifesting world travel. I was really good at manifesting like certain aspects of my life after I read that book, but I made a decision of like, what if I applied it to business? What if I applied it to my life? Like what if I applied

KATHRIN ZENKINA: it to every single aspect of my life? And that's what birthed my current business, Manifestation Babe. And it started like as an adventure of me really documenting what I was doing and how I was rebuilding my life in Los Angeles when I moved back. And I actually lived on my grandma's couch because I was so broke and I had no idea what I was doing. I decided not to go to medical school. So all of my certainty literally just flew out the window of like, okay, so what am I going to do with my life? And I was like, you know what? Screw it. Let me just see what unfolds. And over time, people start asking me like, Catherine, your energy is incredible. I see you're like manifesting these awesome things.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Do you have courses? Do you do coaching? And over time, it just grew into this almost eight figure business now, like literally within a year just became a million dollar business. And I've been obsessed with it ever since. And that's what I do. Oh, money's working for you. Money's working for me. I mean,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I do work. Let's be honest. You're working for each other.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Yeah, exactly. We have a partnership. That's a great partnership. What was the book? The book was called The Secret. And, you know, it's a movie as well. The Secret is out. And you know, it's old now. It came out I think in 2008. When people asked me like about the book, it's not the whole picture of manifestation and law of attraction. But it's a really great window for someone to jump through when they're at a place in their life, when they're feeling like a victim to life. And I just think like, for me personally, being bullied through middle school, elementary school, growing up super poor, growing up in a domestic violent family, it just helped me like understand why as an adult,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: like a teenager, you know, older, I kept attracting such realities that mimicked my childhood and I realized, oh my God, it's because that's what my programming is. I'm still stuck in that programming. And if I change my mind, if I change my vibration, if I change my energy, I can change my reality. And it just gave me such a sense of freedom. It opened me up to a whole new world and just like started my life part two.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. And it started really young for you.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: It did. Yeah. Kind of an old soul.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. I mean, at 16, when you were having all these manifestations, I was making very non-important decisions in relation. Okay. But that's a lot of things. What were you bullied about?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Um, you know, I don't know. It randomly started in fifth grade. Like I was completely fine until fifth grade. And all of a sudden, all of my friends that I had just turned on me. And I just remember literally specifically the last week of fifth grade sitting because we had nothing else to do. It's basically graduation. And we're just told to bring in activities to school to keep us busy for that last week. And I just remember all of a sudden, all of my friends being incredibly mean to me and making fun of me. And I'm like, what? This is so weird. And I didn't think much of it. And then going into middle school, all of a sudden, I actually went to a different

KATHRIN ZENKINA: school than these friends. So I knew nobody in this school, but that energy kind of stayed with me to where just in sixth grade, like I just could not make any friends. I was overweight. So I did make fun of a lot for that. Like I remember kids slapping sandwiches out of my hand telling me not to eat anymore, like you're too fat to eat. And I developed like extreme anxiety. I remember this is so embarrassing, but I remember developing this like OCD ritual where I had to call my mom every single day. And thankfully she gave me a cell phone when I was in sixth grade and I called her every single day just to hear her voice. Cause I thought like, for some reason, my mom's going to die or something, or like something's going

KATHRIN ZENKINA: to happen to my family. And so I always wanted to check in with them. And only when I would check in with them, I would feel safe enough to continue with school. It was just like a weird psychological thing. I'm sure you can talk to your wife about it. And yeah, it was just like a really dark time. And then, you know, after I lost some weight, like an eighth grade, for example, the boy started to like me. The girls did not like that the boy started to like me. And so it just developed this whole other element of like Catherine's a slut, you know, like Catherine, uh, this, that, and it just continued on. And I never felt like I belonged in any group. I always felt like I was 10 years older than every single person that I was

KATHRIN ZENKINA: around in school. And even to this day, most of my friends, you know, I'm 29 years old, but most of my friends, they're in their forties and we just vibe. I've always vibed with people who are older than me. And I attribute that to being an old soul.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And you talked about to me personally, about having breast implants and then taking them out. When did you get them and why?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Yeah, that was another thing I used to get made fun of. I was extremely flat chested growing up and, you know, always waited for that one day that I would sprout and I never did. And I remember making it that decision when I was around 16, because I was like, all right, I got no hope after 16, right? Like maybe up until 16, but afterwards there's no hope. And I've always made the decision that as soon as I turn 18, I would get breast implants. Like actually my best friend growing up who we didn't go to the same school, but she was kind of like my safe zone that I would see every single weekend throughout my childhood. And her dad was actually a plastic surgeon. And so my mind was always open to plastic surgery.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: It was always like, if anything, you can always make changes, but you just have to be old enough to make those changes. And it was very normalized in my family is very normalized in that inner circle of like plastic surgery is normal. Right. And I made that decision. And then my turn 18, I learned that the type of implants I wanted, they don't put in unless you're 21. And I'm like, Oh crap. Cause I wanted the silicone ones, not the saline. And so silicone implants, they're like fully silicone. So they're a little more natural looking, a little more natural feeling. They have a silicone shell and then a silicone internal like a substance. And then saline, they are still silicone. A lot of people say

KATHRIN ZENKINA: saline don't have silicone. They do. It's a silicone shell. And then there's that water. It's kind of like water bag implant. And for me as someone being super flat-chested, the silicone would have a lot more of a natural look. And so I was like, dang it. Okay. So I had to wait until I was 21 years old and I will never forget. I actually paid for them myself, went into debt over them myself in college. When I was 21 years old, I wanted them that bad because I thought they were that important to my self-esteem and my confidence and my femininity. And I got them in and I was super gung-ho. I didn't care about the risks. I didn't care about anything. And in fact, no one told me about the risks. Like my doctor

KATHRIN ZENKINA: was just like, yeah, this is super safe. Look at it. If we cut through it, if it leaks, it doesn't actually leak, which, you know, if you show anyone that demo at 72 degrees Fahrenheit room temperature, yeah, nothing happens to the implant. But if you put an implant in a warmer at 98 degrees, which is, you know, the human body temperature for 10, 15, 20 years, like no one's really studied the effects of that, right? Which is a whole nother story. But yeah, I was like super excited. I got the implants. I actually love them, but I want to say two years after I got them, I came across someone who I actually work with today. She's my coach. I came across her on Facebook and she was talking about something called breast implant illness.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And at the time it was like completely unheard of. And I was like, that's not a thing. You know, everyone was like fighting her. They're like, that doesn't exist. That's not a thing. We've never heard of that. That's not real. And she was talking about all these symptoms and I'm like, well, thank God I don't have those symptoms. It's nothing I have to worry about. And passed by another two years, I started to develop seemingly overnight. If I really am honest with myself, I can spot them around even that two year mark where just random symptoms started to pop up for me. Like over time I started to get more and more fatigued and I just thought like, wow, I'm just losing motivation. I'm just losing inspiration.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I'm getting older, right? Even though I'm like 26, 27 years old, that's not normal. And I started to lose my memory. Like I would be in conversation with you and I would just completely forget what I'm talking about. In fact, my OG podcast listeners, if you go to that time in my life of my podcast, it's almost like I make fun of myself and I'm like, guys, I just forget what I talk about. Let's just continue on. And I just like, you know, would add a little humorous flair to it. I lost like my libido. I would get vertigo, dizzy every single day, tingling extremities. I have like a list of 30 to 35 symptoms that I developed. And I remember it was actually in the beginning of 2019 that I started to see a chiropractor because my back hurts so

KATHRIN ZENKINA: bad. And I would have this intense back pain. And my husband would keep saying, Catherine, do you think it's from your implants? You know, there's weight on your chest. And I'm like, that's not a thing. They're not that heavy. It's not for my implants, right? I was in such denial. And I saw this chiropractor and he adjusted my back. And through that, it put pressure on my implant and it actually caused capsular contracture. So all of a sudden I came home and one of my implants is like super high. And I'm like, oh my God, I have to fix that. And in this process of being like, I have to fix that something in the back of my mind was like, well, wait, Catherine,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: before you fix it, let's do a little bit of an assessment here. And it was the beginning of 2019. And I'm really big on setting intentions and setting manifestations for the year. And I remember my big manifestation was I'm going to manifest health into my life this year. Because I felt so unhealthy to the point where I only could spend one hour a day out of my bed per day. And I feel so grateful that I've been working from home in the online space since 2015, end of 2015, and that I could work from bed. So it didn't really impact me in the sense of like, I had to, you know, if I had an office job. So I was really grateful for that. And I somehow made it work, but I was also like,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: this isn't normal. This is not long term. This sucks, right? An hour a day. Like it felt like I had a chronic illness. And I remember just being like, okay, I'm going to resolve this. I'm going to manifest the answers to this. And I was driving home from Mammoth in February of 2019. And I've always been intuitive, but I really activated it, I would say around the time when I started Manifestation Babe. And I just received this like download when I was driving home from Mammoth of like, Catherine, it's your implants, get them out, do some research, find a doctor, but you have to schedule that appointment right away. And I remember being like, okay, you know, I always listen to my internal guidance and

KATHRIN ZENKINA: like, okay, got it. You know what, like instead of replacing them, I'm just going to remove them. And I remember going online and just Googling. I'm like, okay, let me look into that thing that that one girl said two years ago, breast implant illness, and let you see what people are saying about it. And I discovered a landmine of people like tens of thousands of people in many different Facebook groups, because I just wanted to hear like real people talking about it because plastic surgeons, doctors, they were, especially at that time, still in complete denial of it. I think it's growing more and more in awareness, like even my plastic surgeon who took out my implants, he started to be like, okay, yeah,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I definitely see some patterns and I'm recognizing some things that I'm seeing people recover after removing them. And certain people just don't react to them very well. And I saw

all these women, they were literally as if I was writing these posts and they were showing before and after pictures. And this was like the biggest thing for me. They're showing before and after pictures. And I remember at the time looking like I was exhausted 24 seven, I had the darkest circles under my eyes. My eyes were always bloodshot. People thought I was always smoking weed. And I'm like, no, I'm not high. Like this is my normal life. And I promise like I slept nine hours last night. I got plenty of sleep. Like I don't

KATHRIN ZENKINA: know what's going on, but I feel so sick. And every single test that I would take, I would see specialists and doctors and naturopaths and people and they would run these blood tests on me. And they're like, you're fine. Everything's great. You know, perfect epitome of health over here. And I'm like, okay, clearly not, but okay. And I would see these women, they would literally post pictures of themselves a week before removing them and a week after taking them out. And it's like, they look like me in the before and then after you could just see like something shifted and they would talk about their symptoms and we have the exact same symptoms. And they would say the moment they would remove the implants, all their symptoms would go away.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: That encouraged me so much where I got so excited and I'm like, yes, I'm gonna do this. I walked into my plastic surgeon's office. I picked like someone in Beverly Hills. I literally live in Beverly Hills. So like, there's plenty to choose from and I just Googled one of them and I was like, who does Xplants here? And I saw this guy and I remember specifically having the strategy of, I'm not gonna bring up breast implant illness to him because I don't wanna argue with a plastic surgeon who's dealing with implants and that's part of their business. I'm just gonna tell them that I don't want them anymore. And then it was funny because after like a couple appointments, he started to say, you know what?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I don't even allow my sister to put implants in because I've seen this stuff starting to bubble up and to rise up and people talking about it more. And you know, the inserts that we never show patients, he does show it to patients, but most surgeons like they give you all this paperwork to sign, but they don't actually go through the paperwork with you. They don't really explain it. But there are all these risks that come with the inserts of the implants. And it says like, you may develop an illness after having this that you haven't had before. And it's just crazy. So anyway, I got them removed and then I got to have my own before and after pictures where I literally looked like a completely different human

KATHRIN ZENKINA: even hours after taking them out. And after about six days, I remember on day six, cause one of my symptoms was suicidal thoughts. And I remember on day six, when the medication started to wear off, I looked out the window of my ninth floor apartment. And I was like, I feel like living again. Like I wanna keep living my life. And that was like, I knew that something worked because that was the thing that was scaring me the most about my symptoms. And day nine, I remember doing laundry. And usually by 10 a.m., I'm exhausted. And after getting the implants out, I remember doing my laundry and then getting exhausted and all of a sudden feeling discouraged. I was like, oh no, it didn't work. I'm still so exhausted.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: But then I looked at the clock and the clock said 5 p.m. So I've been up out of bed doing things, killing it, like accomplishing tasks and errands and things around the house until 5

p.m. Like that is such an improvement. It's only been nine days in surgery. And just over time since then, I got into like holistic health and did some detoxing, infrared saunas, colonics, things to just remove excess toxins from my body. And I would say after about the six month mark, every single symptom was gone.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's incredible. Yeah. Oh, so you had them in for like five or six years.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Five years, about five years, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow, that's a powerful story. And you know what? I never realized until I got into what I do, like one of the questions we have in our intake form is have you had any surgeries? What a large volume of women put that they have breast augmentation. And I realized that it was that common. And also now more and more people saying, put them in, took them out. Yeah. I have a patient just really recently who her menstrual cycles were on another level. They just ruined her life for five days. And for other reasons, she took out her breast implants and that stopped happening. Yeah.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And even for some people, it's a fight or flight response to something foreign being in your body. And just some bodies are more capable of handling foreign objects or just fighting them off a little bit better and some people worse. And even the IUD, I also had the IUD and that was ruining my life for sure in terms of menstrual cycles. And I remember two weeks after removing my implants, I also removed my IUD, which was a little sucky because then I had to go to the condom method with my husband and that presents its own, okay, this is boring, this sucks. I loved having the IUD for that reason. But in terms of health, I mean, that taught me so much. It was the greatest lesson I've ever learned

KATHRIN ZENKINA: in terms of taking care of my body and my health. Like it really solidified of like, I can't ever get Botox. I can't ever get fillers. I'm just never gonna put a foreign substance into my body. I just can't do it anymore. I will never, ever, ever sacrifice my health ever again. And I invest a lot in my health. Like I spent a lot of money in this pregnancy, a lot of prep work, a lot of specialists, a lot of seeing people, making sure my supplements are amazing and food quality and all this stuff. Like it just created this, I would say, healthy obsession that led me to then, you know, having the kind of pregnancy that I've had, which I would say is a pretty great pregnancy so far.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Let's take a little break. When we come back, we'll find out about your pregnancy and your plans for birth. Welcome back. We're talking about Katherine Zinkina, manifestation babe. You're pregnant. You talked about birth control with your husband. So I guess you weren't planning to have the baby right away.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: No, not at that time. You know, I've always been like a planner in my life, right? And interestingly enough, most of the things that I've said that I was gonna do by a particular age have manifested by that age. It's like, I remember deciding like, I was gonna get married at 26 and like that's exactly what happened. I remember deciding that I would get pregnant at 29. And that's exactly what happened. I remember saying I would create my first million dollar business by 25 when I was 17. That's exactly what happened. So I've always been like this, like, okay, by this age, this is gonna happen. And it's so interesting with this pregnancy, two years ago, August of 2020, I'll never

forget.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Like I was set on, I have no interest in kids right now. I'm only interested in my career. I'm interested in my relationship, my marriage. Kids are gonna wait until 29, 30. And at this time I was 27 and I remember looking at my TV and I was ready to put something on to watch. And I went on YouTube and for some reason I typed in births. And I, in my mind, I just heard this voice be like, I'm ready to prepare for birth. And I'm like, what, what's going on here? And suddenly there's like this crazy baby fever that just overcame me. And I was like, I'm ready. And my husband comes home and he's like, what are you doing? And I'm like, I'm preparing myself for birth, for pregnancy. And he's like, okay. And I'm like, I'm ready now.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And he's like, I'm not ready. And so we had this like conflict of like, okay, shoot, what does that mean? And I remember just feeling like, have you read the book Spirit Babies? Or do you know the book Spirit Babies?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I know it, I haven't read it.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: It is a godsend. Like I love this book so much. I recommend it to every single person. And the author talks about how when a couple is ready to bring a baby into the world, there tends to be like this spirit that comes around them and kind of circles them. And you know, women can really feel the spirit. And so they feel ready. That's when the baby fever really begins. begins. And it doesn't mean you have to have a baby right away. It just means like this soul is ready to come through you when you are ready. And I could just feel this spirit baby around me. And I'm like, Brennan, we have to like, I already felt pregnant with him. And I knew it was a boy. I could see him. I would have visions of him. I was

KATHRIN ZENKINA: so excited about him. And I was like, Brennan, we have to bring him in. And I'm so ready. And he's like, but I'm not ready. I'm like, shoot. Okay. So there was a little bit of conflict there. But we decided that in April of 2021, we would actually start conceiving. I don't say trying, because I'm very focused on like language as part of my work, personal development manifestation. And I find that when we use the word try, it implies failure, and implies that we're not actually going to do it. So I train myself to teach people and to say myself, like, when you're ready to bring a child into the world, start saying, we are conceiving. And, you know, there's plenty of journeys that couples

KATHRIN ZENKINA: go on, like IVF, you know, IUI, natural, whatever, wherever your journey takes you. But the end result is that you are going to bring a baby into this world and even adoption as well. But when you say trying, I feel like it creates this energy of like endless frustration in that journey. So we decided to start conceiving in April of 2021. And when that time came around, it's really interesting, because I was working on a program at the time. And that program became my baby. And so for six months, I felt like the baby fever went away. I was like, this is no, this is my baby right now. This is my program. And my husband's like, but I'm ready. And I'm like, I'm not ready. Okay, sir. So I'm working on this program. Just

KATHRIN ZENKINA: give me a second. As soon as I finished the program, baby fever came back. But there's one thing I wanted to do. Maybe before I had a baby, which was to go on an African safari, because I was like, there's no way I'm going on an African safari pregnant. There's no way I'm going

with a newborn or an infant. So it has to happen right now. And my husband and our huge world travelers. So we decided that we'd go in September of 2021. And then afterwards, we would start conceiving our baby. So that's kind of our plan that we created. And it took us two cycles, we were pregnant by November of 2021. And now we're here 39 weeks

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: tomorrow. That's kind of crazy pop one out, especially with the energy you have. How has the pregnancy been?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: So it's had its ups and downs as all pregnancies have had. I would say I'm really grateful that you know, the first trimester stuff didn't extend past the first trimester with like a lot of people I hear, you know, they feel nauseous all 40 weeks. And I'm like, God bless you. I could not do that. That's insane. You know, there's a lot of emotions. There's a lot of frustrations between me and my husband, because he especially in the first trimester, you can't physically see the pregnancy, especially, you know, through a male perspective, someone who can't get pregnant. You know, from his perspective, it's like Catherine just went crazy. Like all of a sudden, like the switch went on. She's crazy. She's crying. She's

KATHRIN ZENKINA: freaking out. She's yelling at me. She's this she's frustrated. She's happy. She's laughing now. Like what is going on here? And that was a whole lesson for us in communication and learning that like, Hey, Brennan, I just want to vent. Like I just need to cry. Just don't mind me. Like I'm just gonna cry. I'm just gonna get pissed that you left a cupcake out and didn't clean up after yourself or something. Just let it happen. Like I'm pregnant. I don't know what's going on. I feel these hormones, and all these thoughts and all these things and just let it be. Second trimester was an absolute dream. I miss it. I would forget that I was pregnant all the time, until I would look down and see a little bump, so much energy, so

KATHRIN ZENKINA: much excitement, so much happiness. But something I do want to mention, you know, first trimester that popped up is a lot of fears and worries and past traumas that my mom dealt with in her pregnancy came up for me. It was like a lot of things. It was like a lot of unresolved stuff. Like, for example, my mom was 18 when she got pregnant. Very normal in Ukraine, like, you know, back in that day. My mom said she was one of the last people of her friends to get pregnant. So 18 is already old. And she got pregnant at 18, but she got pregnant with the wrong person. My dad was very violent, abusive, like created such a stressful environment for my mom. That stress passed down to me, like to the point where I kept

KATHRIN ZENKINA: trying to escape from the womb, over and over and over again, like my mom went into preterm labor constantly. She dilated to a five when she was 24 weeks. In Ukraine at the time, there's no such thing as a NICU. There's no such thing as like certain like, you know, medical access that we have, you know, here in the United States, where babies come early, that doesn't necessarily mean like something bad is going to happen. They just need help in the NICU. Right. But there was no such thing. So they sewed up her cervix. They gave her no medication because that medication didn't exist. And they flipped her upside down to make sure I was not going to come out. And my mom, my mom basically kept me in through prayer is pretty much

KATHRIN ZENKINA: what she said. And, you know, every single month or even two weeks, my mom would have to keep getting checked into the hospital because my dad would hit her and great

stress. I would try to come out and it would just be a constant repeating cycle over and over and over again. And that manifested in my pregnancy as an extreme fear of preterm labor, like extreme fear. Like I continue to travel my pregnancy, but I, in the back of my mind, I'm like, God forbid I start dilating. God forbid I have a contraction. And actually I had an experience in Egypt when I was 24 weeks around that time when this first happened to my mom where I ate something funky and I went to bed that night and I woke

KATHRIN ZENKINA: up at like 1am to severe cramping and I felt in Egypt in the middle of the Nile river on a cruise ship. And thankfully we have this insurance is incredible insurance for anyone interested who has any kind of worries about, you know, world travel and especially in a time of COVID. It's called Kovac Global, where it was invented for, you know, COVID purposes, where if you test positive in another country and they try to take you to their like government boot camp for two weeks, they will literally put you on a private ambulance plane and take you home right away. Like you can get saved from anywhere. And I was like, that's really appealing to me. Let's do that. We started to do that for African safari and they'll come anywhere. And they

KATHRIN ZENKINA: also work with, for example, in kidnapping situations, or if all of a sudden there's civil unrest where you are, like they'll literally come rescue you for any reason. They'll take you anywhere. They can take you to the nearest hospital. They can take you to another country's hospital. They can take you straight home. I mean, you have so many awesome options. And so I always felt safe knowing that I would have access to some sort of medical care no matter what. But in this particular case, I was like, I'm in the middle of the Nile river and I woke up with intense like back pain. It was like, it felt like contractions, which I've never felt before to this point. So I wasn't sure, but I felt

KATHRIN ZENKINA: intense cramping all around my belly, all around my back. And I woke up and all of a sudden I had intense like diarrhea. And the week prior, my doula, she was telling me how when your body's ready to go in labor, you'll have like a cleaning out. And I was like, oh my God, oh my God, I'm in labor. Oh my God, oh my God, oh my God. And I started to panic, like panic. And after maybe five minutes, I woke up my husband, I'm like, I'm panicking, you have to calm me down. And so he thankfully he's so great at calming me down. And he calmed me down. And I had the strength to text my midwife right away. And I'm like, hey, well, you know, I'm in the middle of Egypt, I'm middle Nile river. And this is what I'm

KATHRIN ZENKINA: experiencing. And she's like, okay, Catherine, let's check. Like, do you see any blood? Is there mucus? Is there this? And I'm like, no, it's just this cramping. And she's like, where's the cramping? And finally, I tuned in and I realized it was just my upper abdomen when I was sitting up, which is, you know, gastric pain. And only when I lie down, it just like spreads down. And I was like, you know what, I only feel it up here. Oh my God, I ate something. And I was like, thank God. So I processed that and I was like, okay, great. And then I had an upcoming trip to Greece planned around when I was like 30 weeks, and I was like, okay, I have to work through that again, but I'm not going to

KATHRIN ZENKINA: live my life in fear. I just had to trust that like my body was going to carry this baby to full term. Another thing that came up for me was my mom, when she got pregnant, technically, her life was kind of over. Like I had this feeling when I got pregnant that my life was over

for some reason, like having kids meant that's it, your life is over. This is the end, I'm not going to have a business anymore. I'm not going to have this anymore. I'm not going to have a marriage anymore. It's all focused on the kids and my life is over. And I was like, where is this coming from? And I realized it came from, you know, my mom's experience. So really just had to process all this old trauma. And I realized that I had to process all of this because I'm

KATHRIN ZENKINA: not meant to pass it down to the next generation. So if I can heal it, it's not going to get passed down to my son, right, and his kids. And so it was just like a very, very interesting, tough, but beautiful experience. And then third trimester, I'm just so uncomfortable. Of course, you hear that all the time. Third trimester feels like it's lasting forever. What are you feeling? So I have a shorter torso. So even though he's dropped, he's still in my ribs. And it feels like his whole butt is in my ribs constantly. And I'm like, Oh, my God.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. Well, I'm gonna have to listen to this podcast two or three times. Process everything that you've just said that was so deep on a more superficial level. You talked about early on being made fun of for having some excess weight and also discomfort, you know, personal self-esteem issues with your trust. How has the changes in pregnancy in your body been?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: That's such a good question because I shared this on social media in the first trimester of like this being a thing for me, you know, because in the beginning you're gaining weight, but there's no belly yet. And so you're just like, cool, awesome. And especially having had eating disorders because of course that developed into eating disorders. Like when I was 14, 15, it was the first time I ever ate food and threw it up and that turned into bulimia. And then that turned into just extreme obsession around, you know, calories in versus calories out, going to the gym. I think that's part of the reason why I lost interest in my business that I started in the junior year of college was because it had to

KATHRIN ZENKINA: do so much around fitness and the way I looked. And so I just decided that like, that's what's keeping this hold on me still. And in order for me to really heal from my body issues, I have to let go of connecting my success to my body and how it looks. And that's what got me into personal development because I was like, you know what? It's all about mindset. It doesn't matter what the body looks like and be successful through my mind. And that was incredibly freeing for me. But with pregnancy, there was residual eating related stuff that came up for me. But interestingly enough, like by second trimester, it went away. And I just surrendered to like whatever my body

KATHRIN ZENKINA: has to do to bring in a healthy baby is whatever has to happen. And I'm no longer in control of the body. Like I've never experienced pregnancy before. I just have to let it go. And interestingly enough, like I felt more in love with my body through pregnancy than I ever have before. Even me and my husband talk about like how I truly do believe that I look amazing. Like I really do love the way that I look. And I think it comes from that energy of like complete detachment and surrender and just like following my actual hunger cues instead of worrying about like, oh my god, am I overeating? Am I eating too much? Am I eating too little? Like actually listening to my body and actually taking care of it and

KATHRIN ZENKINA: loving it just allowed it to kind of blossom into this like beautiful shape and beautiful form. And I know postpartum is gonna present its own thing for me, but I'm excited to

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: work through that too. And that's somebody who is 39 weeks pregnant. So yeah, as pregnant as it gets. I want to talk about your plans for birth. We'll take a commercial break and be right back. Welcome back to the podcast. We're talking to Katherine Zinke. You're 39 weeks pregnant. Manifestation babe is about to have a manifestation

KATHRIN ZENKINA: baby. Yes. What are your plans for birth? Oh my god. Okay. I've always known this to be my plan, but my plan is to do a home birth. So I have midwives, I have a doula. I actually have a photographer coming to my birth, of course, because I want to document it. I feel like my life's been, you know, public for a while now. And it just feels so natural to share that as well with the world, as well as have memories for myself, of course, and a videographer. And I plan to have it in my apartment. I have everything set up for it. Currently I've been nesting like crazy and I'm just, you know, there's no induction. There's no like cervical checks, you know, beforehand is just like, we're waiting for

KATHRIN ZENKINA: the labor to start as naturally as possible. So any day, that's a big cast of characters. So it's you and your partner. Yeah, me and him, my mom, who was not, she was not part of the original plan, but somewhere along the lines of her coming to some of my appointments, me and my doula and my midwife really realized that my mom has a very special connection to this birth. She has a very special connection to this baby. In fact, my mom did ayahuasca right around the time when I was conceiving my son and she had an entire vision of him, like very accurate. This is what's crazy is the night that I was ovulating, okay, which she didn't know. It's not like, Hey mom, I'm ovulating, I have sex tonight.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: You know what I mean? But she was on a retreat, a spiritual retreat. And you know, playing with the other dimensions. And my son came through to her and basically revealed himself as a baby lion cub. And my mom came out of that ceremony and she said, Catherine, I think you're going to have a Leo. Like I think there's going to be a baby in around July, August. I calculated and I was like, oh my God, that's this cycle. Like that's me getting pregnant right now. Like right now I would have to be pregnant for this prophecy, right, to come true. And two weeks later I took a pregnancy test and I was pregnant and I was like, oh my God, this is crazy, right? So my mom has a very special connection to this baby

KATHRIN ZENKINA: and I can get even more esoteric than that if you want me to. There's like a whole history behind my mom's subsequent pregnancies where I'm her only child but she's had other pregnancies. She's had abortions, things like that. And this is actually originally supposed to be my sibling who didn't manifest through my mom but is now manifesting through me. So there's a very special connection and I decided, you know what, I want my mom there. So me, my partner, my mom, Doula, there's two midwives because they always come in twos even though I see mainly one for my appointments, a photographer and a videographer. So what was that?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Eight people?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Eight people and eventually the baby, little cub.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's true.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I didn't even think about that.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: The little lion cub. Nine. So at a home birth, I always like to ask what I think is the most important question. What kind of food are you gonna have?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: What kind of food am I gonna have? Oh my gosh. My midwife had this other client of hers who he literally like, it was the partner, the husband, he literally in labor like panicked and bought like wine and cheese and like coffee for the birth team, made this whole charcuterie board and I was like, you know what, that's genius. Why didn't I even think about food in that sense? I was thinking about, okay, what are the snacks that I'm gonna need to sustain myself in this marathon essentially? And I was like, wait, hold on, what about the birth team? Hold on, we have to make this like a fun environment for everybody. I want everyone to vibe, right? So I went to Arowan and I bought all my non-perishable snacks.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I already have like a basket of bars and granola and beef jerky and just, you know, coconut water and like things to have in this basket. But I have my assistant when I go into labor, she's gonna get us a bunch of fruit platters, charcuterie boards, there's gonna be coffee. I mean, there's gonna be a whole festivity. It's gonna be whole party.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, you have a whole production team to feed.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: It's true, I really do.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's sort of a reproduction team. Yeah, exactly. Yeah, I always notice, I don't usually eat most of it because I'm kosher but when I'm at a home worth, they have the best food. And I was like, oh, I see like why people become midwives now. Yeah. Yeah, fed really well. Yeah. Okay, so people talk about labor and delivery as kind of intense in some ways. Sometimes they talk about pain. What are you expecting and what kind of techniques or measures do you plan to use to sort of help you through the intensity?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Yeah, so I'm so curious what that's gonna be like because you hear all kinds of spectrums in the context of unmedicated births. And I've been doing hypno babies. So I'm very into hypnosis. I've been into hypnosis for a while now. I use it for my own life. I actually used it for conception too. I saw a hypnotherapist for conception. I use it for manifestation. I use it for so many different things. And I was like, okay, let me apply everything that's worked for me in my life to birth. So got hypno babies. I've been doing the whole hypno birthing thing, listening to audios every single day, like just like it's my homework assignment. You know, I have to do it every day. And then there's like certain things that I picked up.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: You know, I watched a lot of births on YouTube, like starting from that period of August, 2020, I would YouTube every single unmedicated birth that I could find in the hospital, at home, doesn't matter, as long as it's unmedicated because I could see what that process was like because I knew, obviously, if I had to, of course, I would get, you know, epidural, C-section, whatever. Like I would do whatever it takes to bring the baby out into the world safely. But my plan is unmedicated, right? So I just would watch like, what are they doing to manage their pain? What are they doing to manage their contractions and their emotions and things like that? So I picked up on some tricks. Like, for example, they have combs.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: A lot of them hold onto combs because the combs, when you squeeze a comb in your hand, yeah, it's painful, but it redirects that pain to your hands and away from your belly, which seems to help trick the brain into feeling them a little bit less. A lot of people have TENS machines that they put on their back, especially for like back labor or just in general, redirecting that sensation. You know, I'd see a lot of people do hypnosis and hypnobirthing, affirmations, just like affirmations on the wall. And of course, getting a doula. Like, I know my doula. I mean, she's also trained in like bodywork and massage. Like, I know she's gonna be pushing on all kinds of things and doing all kinds of cool tricks to help me manage that.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And then I think the rest of it is really just a mental game. Just knowing that as long as my mind is out of the way, like I will be successful because my body was literally designed to do this. There's women who have given birth in comas. It's fully the body. There's absolutely nothing mental about it. Like you don't have to say, okay, now let's have a contraction. It's like breathing, right? You're not telling your body like, okay, inhale, okay, exhale, okay, digest, right? There's so many bodily functions that we don't have to tell our body to do. And it's very similar with birth. And so often these interventions, they get in the way of those natural processes. And so I'm just like really all about,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: okay, how do I surrender as much as possible and let my body do the work?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Do you see different roles for your husband, your doula and your mom?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: You know, it's really interesting. I don't know. And that's a question that my mom keeps asking. She's like, what's my role? What am I doing? Where am I? And I'm like, I don't know. Like I don't even know where I'm gonna be. I don't know if I'm gonna be, you know, in the living room, in the bathtub, in the big tub, in my bedroom. Like I have no idea what's gonna happen. And I think it's just going with whatever dance that wants to unfold on that day.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Are there things that you are either nervous about and or excited about?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I'm so excited to meet the baby. I think that, you know, as long as I keep that in mind, like that's gonna be the reward at the end of it. Nervous, of course, like, especially as I've gotten closer to birth and my midwife, Abby will totally laugh about this and agree, I would just randomly be like, Abby, what if this happens? And she's like, Katherine, okay, thanks for bringing it up. Like, let's process that. Okay, this is what would happen in this scenario. Like, for example, I would be like, what if this cord prolapse? And like, I'll literally start thinking, oh my God, cord prolapse, cord prolapse. And then like, she'll talk me through like, okay, this is what would happen. This is what we would do. This is why you're gonna be fine.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And then now I'm like, oh my God, what if he gets stuck in the birth canal? Like, you know, just like random, my ego will just like, because we're almost there. Like for so many people, all their fears come up when they're five minutes away from their breakthrough. This is just like a principle in life for everyone to know. Like five minutes before your biggest breakthrough in life, you're gonna have the most self doubt. You're gonna have the most fears come up, most things because your subconscious mind is literally preparing you to receive what's on the other side of that breakthrough by allowing you to process what potentially might hold you back. So I can sense that in

birth where I'm like, oh my God, what about this emergency?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Oh my God, what if this happens? Oh my God, what if? And I just have to like, you know, talk it through, ask my midwife, process it and just know that in the end, we're gonna be okay.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And you have a backup doctor and hospital in case you want them or need them.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Yeah, I call him my, oh, doctor. Yeah, it's like, it literally, I'm, you know, working with Dr. Crane at Cedars and it's just so because I know like if there was an emergency, which there won't be, but if there was, instead of having like some random doctor, whoever it happens to be on staff that night, working on me who I have no relationship with whatsoever, I really wanted to know that like, I will be in this environment that I don't wanna be in. Like I don't wanna be in a hospital, but if I have to be, I know the person who's gonna meet me there. And he knows my birth plan, he knows Lori, he knows me, he knows what my plan is and like what my original plan is. He'll know what the emergency is.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: And I just feel so much calmer and safer knowing that I already have a relationship with whoever's on the other side of that emergency.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Well, you sound prepared in lots of different ways and you know, it's imminent. Are you seeing any early signs yet?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: You know, I've seen a little dropping. I've seen some more frequency in the Braxton Hicks. Like they've gotten not more intense, but more frequent. TMI, but looser stools for sure. I feel like my bones are just like so flexible. Like I just feel like everything's just loosening in my body, like my pelvis literally feels like it's just gonna split in half and fall apart. It just feels so like mushy for some reason, which I know is the relaxing, like really kicking in. Yeah, but besides that, no mucus plug loss. I don't know if I'm dilated or not, cause you know, doesn't matter to me. It's not really like a sign cause some women will dilate like weeks in advance and then they stress about it. So yeah, I mean those things,

KATHRIN ZENKINA: but not some of the others. So we'll see.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, we're very, very close. You're very fascinating to talk to you and to be around. Like I mentioned at the beginning, huge energy. First of all, where can we find you online?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Okay. So you can find me if you're on Instagram at manifestation, babe, can find me at manifestation, babe.com. Take talk manifestation, babe. Anywhere you type in manifestation, babe, I will come up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You're going to pop up. Okay. And you also have a podcast.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: I do. And it's also manifestation, babe, manifestation, babe podcast.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right. And then you do personal development. So yeah, through your social media, can we tap into your programs?

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Absolutely. Please do. Okay.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Amazing. Catherine Zanchino. You're an amazing person. You're very close to meeting your baby. I can only send you blessings and positive birth mojo and juju, the positive birth supporting you. And I'm grateful that you will come back on the other side and share your story. I'm so excited to share that story so soon to our listeners. Thanks for listening to our podcast. We have an amazing new blog with lots of information. If you'd like to check it out, visit informpregnancy.com or go to Instagram at Dr. Berlin D O C T O R B E R L I N click on the link and you'll have access to all of our media. Tick tock way too old, but never too old. I'm proud of you young ones for carrying the torch forward.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right, Catherine, we'll see you very soon.

KATHRIN ZENKINA: Thank you so much.

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