Care for the Modern Mother with Margot Del Rey

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IN THIS EPISODE

French-born fashion veteran Margot Del Rey traded Paris runways for a very different calling: holistic postpartum and lactation care. After a transformative move to California, she founded Sisterhood, an integrative practice combining Ayurvedic care and yoga-based healing — and joins Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC to discuss care for the modern mother.

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DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: My guest today is a French-born fashion industry veteran turned holistic postpartum and lactation specialist. After years working in high luxury fashion in Paris and a transformative move to California, she founded Sisterhood, an integrative postpartum and motherhood support practice combining Ayurvedic care, lactation consultation, and yoga-based healing. I'm pregnancy-focused chiropractor Dr. Elliot Berlin, and you're listening to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast. Margot Delbray, welcome to the podcast.

MARGOT DEL REY: Hi, thank you for having me.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm so honored to have you, not only on the podcast, but also more recently at our practice offering your incredibly nurturing and restorative services and care. We'll get into that in a moment. Let's start at the beginning. Where are you from originally?

MARGOT DEL REY: So I'm from France. I was born and raised in the suburb of Paris, and I spent all of my childhood there and like a lot of my adulthood, too.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Whenever you talk, whenever I hear you talk or you talk to me, I get hungry for pastries right away. All it takes is the accent. Yeah, it's all the croissant, right? Oh, I'm going to need a minute. OK, so France, and what was your aspiration growing up? Like when I grew up, I want to.

MARGOT DEL REY: When I, oh, I wanted to be a dancer, a singer and the person who replaced singers and dancer when they're sick.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, an understudy?

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah, probably.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you sing and dance?

MARGOT DEL REY: I do sing. I don't really dance.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: OK, we have, now we have something in common. I can sing, but nobody wants to see my hands including me. OK, so singer and dancer, but that's not what you ended up doing. So what was the actual trajectory?

MARGOT DEL REY: So I don't really know. I mean, I do know, actually. I went to New York to follow my high school boyfriend, who's today my husband.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, wow. Stuck with it.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes, I did stuck with it. And in New York, I started learning English. I didn't know how to speak English at all. I had a very strong French accent and my English school was right next to the FIT. So the Fashion Institute and Technology in New York. And I would see like all of those cool girls, like coming out of this big building. And I wanted what they had, like just this energy. So I peaked and I actually did a certificate course there. And that was the start of my fashion career. When I came back to France, to Paris, six months after that, I did fashion school. And I actually did it only for a year. I dropped out because I had an amazing opportunity to work at Saint-Laurent, like in the middle of my school years.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow, that's amazing. So you didn't even have to finish school. You just jumped right into the field.

MARGOT DEL REY: I did.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. How many years ago was that?

MARGOT DEL REY: I was very young. I was probably 22.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: 22 years old. So you still have a strong French accent, but your English is very good too. So how long did you stay in fashion?

MARGOT DEL REY: I stayed in fashion for about eight years, seven years. You liked it? I loved it. I loved it. It was very fun. It was very artistic. Like I loved the energy of it until it became a nightmare. It was very hard. People are very stressed and it's a very high demanding industry. I was working long hours and when my boyfriend, the same one at the time, started jumping on his own venture and traveling to San Francisco. He was coming back and forth. So he was going to San Francisco and then coming back to Paris. And every time he was coming was Fashion Week. And so during Fashion Week, when you work in fashion, you're just working almost 24-7.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, not available.

MARGOT DEL REY: So I could never see him and we did it for probably nine months. And then one day, like in the middle of a meeting, like, you know, trying to pick a fabric for the show, I just quit on the spot. I was like, I'm done. I called my husband, I mean, my boyfriend at the time. And I told him, okay, I just quit. I'm coming to San Francisco. And he was like, well, we don't have visa. You know, I didn't raise any money. Like, how are we going to do that?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: For his new startup that he was working on?

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wait, is he French also?

MARGOT DEL REY: He is French also.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right. Okay. So neither one of you had visa. So you're living in San Francisco without jobs, without permanence, just...

MARGOT DEL REY: He was just traveling back and forth. So like on a travel visa. And I was still in Paris at that time, not even following him. But when he came back, the last time I told him we're getting married. And, you know, you need to raise money, do something. And that's what he did. And the fact that he raised money allowed us to get a permanent visa at that time.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Nice. Okay. And did you have any idea what you would do next? Were you still thinking fashion in the U S or done with fashion?

MARGOT DEL REY: I was thinking fashion in the U S, but in San Francisco, there is less companies, I mean, less fashion houses than in Paris. And I also wanted to just, you know, think about what I wanted to do next. So I started just like helping their company. So my husband company, like a lot on the side and I started writing. I've always wanted to tell stories and I've always written women's stories. So I just started writing fiction for myself and I enjoyed it. And I was like, I don't really need to work now. Let's wait six months and let's see where this writing takes us.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You mean to maybe make a career out of it? At that time. Yes, maybe everything's creative singing, dancing, fashion, design, writing your creative by nature.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. Yeah. Everything is kind of connected. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What happened next?

MARGOT DEL REY: So next the company decided to move to LA. They pivot, they pivot ed, and then they were creating something that was closer to the entertainment industry. So we all move to LA. We have a big house in Beverly Hills where we host lots of fun parties with tech people and people from the entertainment. And I'm still looking for a job in fashion and there are more opportunities here in LA, but the CEO of the company who became our best friend asks me if I want to work with him instead and just, you know, be the office manager and his assistant and just like help him with everything. And that's pretty much what I was doing anyway, without being paid. So, so why not? So why not? So I said, yes.

MARGOT DEL REY: And, you know, when one moves to LA, they need to do yoga. So yeah, I also started just going to yoga a lot and I signed up for a yoga teacher training at the same time.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Interesting. So you, I mean, the young living in France, working in the very demanding fashion industry lifestyle is not the healthiest in any way, shape or form.

MARGOT DEL REY: Not at all. I was very gray, smoking a lot, drinking a lot. And it was the opposite of the lifestyle I had in LA after. All right.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you come to LA and then you stop smoking and drinking and start yoga instead.

MARGOT DEL REY: I know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, it's a big shift.

MARGOT DEL REY: It is a big shift.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, did you feel the difference pretty quick?

MARGOT DEL REY: I mean, you know, when the body becomes healthy, that's when you can become pregnant. So that's what happens.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. Why don't we take a little break and we'll be right back for the next chapter of this interesting story. Don't go anywhere. Welcome back. We're talking to Margo Del Rey. Okay. So from the, I quit fashion and I'm going to wing it in San Francisco, then moving to Los Angeles with the company and a big lifestyle change, you decide to get healthy, no more smoking, no more drinking, not only taking yoga, but starting to teach yoga. And of course you find out you're pregnant. Was it something on your radar to get pregnant?

MARGOT DEL REY: So it wasn't my radar at the end of my career in Paris. So before my husband left, I was working at Louis Vuitton and Louis Vuitton is like kind of the highest in the industry. And I was comfortable and I was like, if I'm working there, like I want to just stay there and have kids there. That wasn't my husband's plan. He flew away in San Francisco instead. But I've always felt like I was a mom and he was never ready. He thought, you know, we needed more money, more space. So when it happened, I kind of freaked out, but I told him right away and he was the happiest person on earth. It was like, why did we wait that long? So yeah, it was a very good surprise. It was like probably like, yeah, we were like 10 years together

MARGOT DEL REY: and like six months in LA.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right. How long ago? Looking back.

MARGOT DEL REY: Oh, seven years, seven and a half. My son just turned seven years old. Thank you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. So did you have a plan, a vision for the birth?

MARGOT DEL REY: So I wanted an unmedicated birth in a hospital. I hired a doula. I don't even know how I heard about doulas because in France, we have midwives in the hospital and midwives kind of do the job of doulas and lactation like a little different, but they are a lot of like, they're a great support, so I don't really know how I heard of a doula probably from a book I read.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Also, but the unmedicated birth, which seems to me like through the people that come through my office, more common in Europeans, is that something that you always knew? Like, I just want to do this on my own steam or where did that come from?

MARGOT DEL REY: I think because of yoga, because it's not what my mother and sister had done. My mom had two c-section, very traumatic. My sister went to the hospital at the epidural. She said she pushed her baby very fast and it went okay. But in France, or at least in my family, but like in France, I feel we don't really talk about birth. Like I've never known how my sister birthed her babies before being pregnant myself.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm not sure we talk about it much here either, but I think most people's exposure to birth for the first time is when they give birth or what they see in TV, movies and newspaper headlines, which is not the best education. So you want an unmedicated birth. You're doing yoga throughout your pregnancy. You want to do it at a hospital with a medical doctor?

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. Yeah. I want a medical doctor. I want to do it at a hospital. I don't have any family here. And my mom is pretty stressed and I want to feel the safest I can be. So for me at that time, the hospital seems safe.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. So how did you prepare for that?

MARGOT DEL REY: I did yoga. I went to my doula classes and that's pretty much it. I read like probably one book and now I feel like, you know, I didn't really prepare, so it didn't go that way.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Um, how did it actually go down?

MARGOT DEL REY: So my 40th week, I been told, I mean, my entire pregnancy, I've been told that my baby was big and that, you know, this might be a problem for birth and on my 40th week, like baby's showing a really big and I've been told I was pretty small and I had a lot of water so that baby was floating around and that, you know, he wasn't engaged and there was like very low chances that I could give birth vaginally and they suggest that I get induced at week 41 or that I can come in tomorrow for like schedule C section. And so I come back home with that information and this is at week 40.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You make 40. So you get to 40 weeks, the baby's not dropping or engaging your fluids on the higher side, the baby's on the bigger side. So for just those reasons, there's no signs of distress or anything. Just those reasons like we got two options for you, wait up to another week and get induced or just.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Get induced in another week or just give birth tomorrow through surgery. Okay. Well, that's an interesting lot of choices. How did you process that information and what did you

decide to do?

MARGOT DEL REY: So it was like, I didn't expect that at all. And I called my mom to have her thoughts and she said, you know, like she was induced twice and both indictions led to C-sections that were very traumatic and she said, please, please take the C-section.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, she was worried about you getting induced.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. She was worried about me getting induced and me being here. Across the ocean and having an emergency cesarean birth. Yeah. And so her fear goes right through me and I take it as my own and I'm calling my doula and I'm like, okay, I guess we're having a baby tomorrow. And from the moment I chose that, like it was an exciting time. It was Halloween night. We put candy out. We went to bed early. I shaved my legs. I did my hair. Like it was fun. Like I was happy to go to the hospital at 4 a.m. to get that surgery, but things went completely differently. My baby wasn't ready at all.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wasn't ready. I mean, you were just doing the cesarean, right? So what do you mean the baby wasn't ready?

MARGOT DEL REY: So first I did the surgery and I started like shaking extremely bad.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: During the surgery while you're on the table. Open.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I had both arms strapped by choice or was it, would they just do that?

MARGOT DEL REY: No, it was just what it was. And I was extremely cold and my body was just feeling wrong. And I completely dissociated at that time. I didn't know, but this, I got sexual abuse. Like a lot of years ago, and this brought everything back.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm so sorry.

MARGOT DEL REY: Thank you. And my husband was scared. He was like seeing me shaking, asking if it was normal. They were telling him everything was normal and then baby comes out. He cries right away. So I kind of feel a relief, but then there is no baby on me. So it's such a weird feeling. Like I know my baby's here, but I don't know where he is. And suddenly my husband like leave my side and goes with baby. And I'm here by myself, like nobody tells me anything. And it might have been like a few minutes, but it feels very long. And then they bring baby. And when baby's on me, I feel great until they take me to the recovery room. And I have my baby on me and I feel shaky and I feel very weak and my vision gets blurry and I feel cold.

MARGOT DEL REY: And I tell my husband, I feel like I'm leaving my body. So a nurse hear me talk and she's like, you know, coming to me and like seeing I'm very pale and she's pressing on my belly. And there is a huge clot. And within 10 seconds, there is four other nurses that come in and the doctor and they try to remove the clot and I'm hemorrhaging in this recovery room and I feel every single thing. It's very painful. And they give me like a drug that makes me so, so high. Like I can still feel every single thing, but I'm just out of it. So it's a lot of dissociation and at the same time, they take

my baby away and my husband leaves and there is just me and the doctors in the room. I don't know where my baby and my husband is.

MARGOT DEL REY: I don't know what happens next. What I know is that I wake up in a room by myself with no baby, no husband, no doctor. And so I call someone and someone comes and she says that my baby is at the nursery and I say that I don't want my baby in the nursery that I want my baby with me, like what my baby is doing in the nursery. And then my husband comes right through the door and he says there's something wrong with our baby, but like, I don't understand, you know, it's like, I gave birth to this baby, but I don't know where it is. I don't even like remember his face. Like it's such a weird feeling. And then they bring him back and I try to breastfeed and he's all red

MARGOT DEL REY: and breathing very weird and I've never like held a newborn that young before. But I feel that something is wrong. So we called a nurse and that's when they take him and they take him to the NICU. He can't breathe by himself. So he's just plugged in machines and I'm on the other floor just trying to pump, but I have lost a lot of blood and so I can keep up with what he needs to eat because he is actually a big baby.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Um, first of all, sometimes a cesarean goes just fine. And we do have an episode of our podcast, number 48 on the gentle cesarean, sort of how to have the best cesarean birth and what informed cesarean birth and try to make the best experience out of it. But sometimes it goes just fine. Yours did not. And I wonder if when you had to make that decision, you even really knew all the things, you know, pros and cons of the two choices in front of you. And it makes perfect sense that without that information and with the fear from your mom, this would be the choice you make, but it sounds like, and I'm not even sure. I don't know if you want to get into it, but I'm not even sure how the cesarean, was it because you gave up so much control that

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: it brought back haunts from your sexual abuse in the past? Or, I mean, cause I guess in some ways you would expect that more to be with a vaginal birth.

MARGOT DEL REY: So what happened to me years ago was that I had my boyfriend come through my window. It was my boyfriend that sexually abused me and that night was very cold and he abused me and then he left and he left the window open. So I was left shaking all night. And I guess that the feeling of being cold and being so shaky and shocked brought everything back in my body. And that's something I forgot. I did write about it during those years I was writing and I had no idea I was writing about myself until this birth.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. So that does make sense. It sounds really scary and crummy and I'm so sorry that happened to you, both with your boyfriend and then as, you know, coming back to you during your cesarean birth was supposed to be like the sort of most dramatically happy time in life. And all the complications that followed, you know, I think postpartum is generally a rocky period to begin with. And with all the things you had going on, even a more challenging time, more radical transition, and you're like the nicest, kindest, sweetest person. You should have the exact opposite experience. I'm really sorry. It didn't go well for you.

MARGOT DEL REY: Thank you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I can only imagine that this experience has contributed to the work that you do now.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah, it did. It really did. Like he left me really raw. And when I came back home, it was just us. I mean, we came back home seven days after everything. My son came back home one day after us, and it was a happy day when we were all at home, just the three of us, but we didn't have any support. My parents came for two weeks after birth and they were helping, but it was just like lots of trauma and we didn't know what we were doing. And I was exhausting and I was depleted and I felt like this shouldn't be like that for anyone.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So I wonder in your own situation, how did you start to pull out of that, recover from that, and then how did that lead to what you do now to help other people?

MARGOT DEL REY: So about four months after the birth, I started going back to teaching yoga just because I wanted community and I didn't have childcare. My friends didn't have children at that time. They were still partying, drinking and all the things. So I would come to class with my son in the carrier and teach classes with him. And after maybe just a month of going back to teaching, I felt that moms needed more and I needed more. I needed more intimate space and just more discussion, not only movement. So I took the class to my apartment in Mar Vista and I made it a two hours class that was one hour yoga and one hour circle where we could discuss the challenges and the wins of being young mothers.

MARGOT DEL REY: And after probably a couple of weeks, like they kind of started texting me with questions about feeding and, you know, is it normal that my baby is doing this? Is it normal that I'm feeling like that? And I didn't know anything. I mean, I was just a mom like them. So I started researching and finding resources for them. And I loved it. I loved finding solution or like tricks that, you know, could make people feel better. And I reached out to my doula and I asked her if she could recommend a doula training. And so that's when I started training to become a doula and a postpartum doula.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And somewhere along the line, you added more services.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah, yeah, I added more. Like every time I felt like I was missing something, I went back to school or I went back to another training. I'm very curious and I love knowing more things and I love supporting people. So it's after the birth of my daughter that I felt I really needed more. And that I learned lactation and that I learned more about Ayurveda and bodywork. And I'm going back to school next year to become a CMT. So it's another layer.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh wow, incredible. I would like to talk about your second birth. And, you know, obviously there are some things you learned after the first one, both for you and even making a profession out of it. I'm curious, given the opportunity to do it again, what you did differently. Let's take a little break and we'll be right back. Welcome back to the podcast. We're talking to Marco Del Rey. And after a very challenging, somewhat elective, cesarean birth with the first baby and a challenging birth experience, a challenging postpartum experience, you really sought out resources for yourself and then started to build up this arsenal of a tool belt of things that you can use to help people have better transitions around childbirth.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: As I mentioned, you now offer a Bianca Here Are Your Vedic Bada work at our practice. I've never had a Bianca, but I've had the light of spending 25 minutes with you now and again and just being around you is therapeutic. So I'm sure a Bianca is amazing in general, but I think the practitioner makes a big difference. And A, I see people come out of the room after your hour long treatment and they look like they just walked out of the womb. And people tell me they're like in a cloud for two hours afterwards, a heavenly little cloud, just feeling great physically, spiritually, and mentally. So it's a real gift what you do. Before the break, we mentioned that you now have another baby. So was the second pregnancy a surprise as well?

MARGOT DEL REY: It was not. I thought I only wanted one child for four years and I woke up one morning and I wanted another one. And we were aligned on that one with my husband. So we tried and we got pregnant and I learned I was pregnant on a trip in Paris by myself with my son and I felt terrible. I felt like this baby wasn't supposed to be here. It was very, very weird. And 10 weeks after that, I had a miscarriage.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, I'm so sorry.

MARGOT DEL REY: So it was really painful, but before that, I learned so much about postpartum care that when I had that miscarriage, I treated myself as I was postpartum. And I took two weeks off of everything and I took care of myself like I never did before.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow, what kind of things?

MARGOT DEL REY: I cooked for myself. I nourished myself. I called my friends. They dropped foods. They took care of my son. I did a bionga. I did Reiki. I did a lot of therapy, a lot of meditation and I slept a lot. And after those two weeks, I felt like I was healed. I felt this was my postpartum from my first birth and that's what I needed to be able to. Create that second human.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Sort of did a redo on postpartum. Do you know what changed when you woke up one day and felt like I'm ready for another baby?

MARGOT DEL REY: I have no idea. I do remember like really waking up that day and be like, I feel her and I knew she was her and I knew her name and it was very strange. And I sat down with my husband. I was like, I want another baby like today. And yeah, it was very, very strange. Like I felt her.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: After the postpartum done right, I guess, were you ready to try again?

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes. And we got pregnant in two cycles and that time it felt wonderful. It felt right. I was very nauseous but happy and it was a great pregnancy. And for some reason, I went with the same doctor that I had the cessation with. But I had a different doula and she was asking a lot of questions and so she asked me like, why do you feel you need to go with that same doctor? And I guess I liked the practice. I liked the material they had there and like, you know, I trusted that it was kind of like they would see if something was wrong with the baby. So that was reassuring to me. But my doula suggested to do co-care with midwives and at that point, I really felt like I needed to have all the people I could around me

MARGOT DEL REY: so I could get the V back I wanted.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. So was the plan when you say co-care meaning midwives and obstetrician?

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: The same obstetrician?

MARGOT DEL REY: The same one, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. Then was the plan to deliver at home or at the hospital or to just wait and see and have your bases covered because you had both types of provider?

MARGOT DEL REY: At the hospital. But I was open to change my mind.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. How did that labor start?

MARGOT DEL REY: So at 35 weeks, I stopped seeing my OB.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, so you did change your mind?

MARGOT DEL REY: I did change my mind.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay. How did that labor start?

MARGOT DEL REY: So my water broke. In the middle of the night, I was 38 weeks. Okay. Already different. Yeah. So different. And so from 35 weeks to 38 weeks, we were now planning a home birth. Like we were sure. Not a lot of time. Okay. A lot of change. Yeah. And so my water broke in the middle of the night. I'm so happy, like insanely happy, like laughing and crying. And I text my doula and she's like, go back to sleep, you know, put a diaper on, go back to sleep. But it's like the rush of endorphins from just like, you know, being happy. And like, I couldn't wait to just like have that birth. I couldn't go back to sleep. I tried and my husband-

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I could see how that would be challenging.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. But my husband was like, yeah, go back to sleep, you know, listen to her. So I go back to sleep. I have some contractions, but nothing too painful or too uncomfortable. And then I wake up in the morning and no more contractions.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, they're gone.

MARGOT DEL REY: They're gone. And so I'm not happy anymore. And so I call my midwives, my doula and they're like, okay, you know, do some yoga, go on a hike, nourish yourself, hydrate. So that's what I do. I go on a hike and I send pictures to my mom who is freaking out. She's like, my daughter just like her water broke and she's hiking in Topanga. Like that doesn't seem safe, but I'm very happy and I'm feeling great. As I walk, contraction comes back. They're not uncomfortable. They're not painful. And then it's night again. And I go back to sleep. And in the middle of the night, I'm woken up by more contractions and they're stronger. They're stronger. They kind of have a rhythm. And so we call our doula and she said, as long as you're still in the bed

MARGOT DEL REY: and still talking to me, you go back to sleep. So just deep breath and try to go back to sleep. So I do that and it's a little more challenging than the previous night. And when I wake up, it's stopped again. And I don't accept that it's the daytime. I wear my eye mask and I stay in my bedroom and I try to walk and do yoga and try to trick myself. But my midwives come up to my house and they say, okay, it's been 48 hours since your water has broken now and you are contracting, but it's not regular. Let's take your temperature. And I have a little temperature, so it's not high, but I'm a little too warm for what they would like me to be.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Outside the comfort zone.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. So they call my backup OB who is not the previous OB but who's this incredible rock star OB that I love. And she says, you know what? Just come to the hospital and I promise you we'll try to have you have a home birth in the hospital. And I feel some grief. I also feel like at that point my son has been at a friend for two days and I want to see him as quick as I can. So I do go to the hospital and when I enter the labor and delivery floor at the hospital, I feel like Beyonce. They're not even asking for anything. They're like, here's your room. Just go in. We know you don't want the epidural. We know you don't want to be disturbed. So just do yourself. Like, do whatever you need to do. Like, you know, we won't interrupt you.

MARGOT DEL REY: And they start me on a little bit of pitocin. That was the deal. Just to get things to pick up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Because your water has been broken. You're spiking a little fever. You know, there is some sort of a clock, I guess, ticking.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes, a little bit. So I get started on a little bit of pitocin and my body is responding so well. So I'm contracting. I have a rhythm. It gets more intense. It's kind of a party in there. Like I'm dancing and music is loud and it's just like all I dreamt of. Except I'm not at home, but I'm still very happy. And things progress quite fast. And we arrived at the hospital at probably 1 p.m. And around midnight, I feel like contractions are really, really strong. And I feel like I think what is transitioning. And they bring the doctor in and they're checking me and I'm two centimeters.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh no, oh my, okay.

MARGOT DEL REY: So I tell my husband, I need the epidural. And he's like, are you sure? And I'm like, if I tell you I need it, like, yes, I am sure. I know I want a V-back and I need to save energy. You know, it's been three days. So they give me the epidural. I want the lowest amount they can give me. And I go in bed and I sleep. And I wake up at 6 a.m. I call my mom because she hasn't had any news for like almost three days. And while I'm on the phone, contractions start to really get stronger and I feel the urge to push.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh wow, how much time had elapsed?

MARGOT DEL REY: It was probably, I think, four to six hours after the epidural. And so my husband is texting the midwives, the doula, the doctor, like, you know, bringing everybody back. And it's getting intense and I'm breathing through it and I'm really, really, really feeling that pressure. And when the doctor come in, she says she sees the head.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Whoa, okay.

MARGOT DEL REY: So we are here and she's like, it's time to go. And my doula like doesn't even make it for the first push. Like she's running through the hospital door. And yeah, and in 30 minutes, my daughter comes out and she's not crying right away. She just like comes. And after some seconds, she just like cream very loud. And then chill. And I did it. And I felt like so complete. And the first thing I said was, whoa, I could do this six more times. Wow.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. I'm so happy for you. I know it wasn't all that recent, but still you can feel the energy coming out of you. And still I would say congratulations.

MARGOT DEL REY: Thank you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I know that's your vision and you put a lot of work into it. And also it just, you know, it must've been hard at points to keep your faith up as things were taking longer and longer. The clock was ticking. Fever started. You weren't progressing.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I love that you knew that you needed and wanted an epidural at the time and got it with confidence knowing that was the right move for you. And seemingly did the trick for you.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah. I felt it was about surrendering and feeling what was best in the moment and not being scared of pivoting if that's what was needed.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How was your postpartum experience after that birth?

MARGOT DEL REY: It was incredible. I had an amazing postpartum doula who was my midwife. So she knew me and she's a friend and it was so dreamy. And my friend put together a meal train. I didn't have to cook for six weeks and my parents came and helped. It was, I felt held. I healed very quickly. Breastfeeding went so well and my son was an amazing big brother like since the beginning. So yeah, it was just like everything I dreamt of.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's so beautiful. I'm so happy for you. Before we wrap up, so now at this moment you're studying massage therapy too. At this moment you offer lactation consulting.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You're an Ayurvedic postpartum doula.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Does that include cooking?

MARGOT DEL REY: It does include cooking.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Sign me up.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And then also you do Ayurvedic bodywork, Abhyanga. For someone who's in Los Angeles in an earshot, can you describe the Abhyanga session?

MARGOT DEL REY: Of course. So in home or in office, it's a warm oil ointment. So I use sesame oil and castor oil and it's a full body experience. It's choreographed sequence strokes. So it's always the same choreography for every single body. I don't assess. I just trust the choreography and the oil and it's not deep like a massage. I don't go into deep tissue. I just stay in the surface so your nervous system can reset and it's an hour long and usually after the hour like when you get up, you do really feel like your nervous system got to reset. You feel grounded and replenished. It's such a magical work that I discovered during my post-partum healing and I felt it's the most powerful thing that you could do post-partum.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And that's exactly how people are describing it after your session. Sounds really, really cool. Yeah, like you're working on the body, but it's not about releasing necessarily the muscles and the bones. So it's somehow rebalancing the mind, body and spirit. And also because you've been doing it for people before birth, post-partum, during the fertility journeys. I've heard a couple of people sort of express it like this that they're after you work on them, they have a sort of a clearer communication with their inner voice and they're better able to trust their bodies and the guidance from inside instead of all the noise on the outside.

MARGOT DEL REY: Yeah, exactly. It's about coming home to your body. So it's about like just resetting everything and kind of shutting down the outside noises so you can really feel like you're home and in peace in your body.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Margot, thank you so much for sharing and for the work that you do. Where can we find you online?

MARGOT DEL REY: So I'm with.sisterhood on Instagram and my website is withsisterhood.com

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Incredible. Thank you for joining me in at home. Thanks for listening to the Informed Pregnancy podcast. For more pregnancy and parenting information just like this, visit us online at informedpregnancy.com

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