

00:00:00 Speaker 1:

Okay. So, um, the first place I want to just kind of return to is the, the first embryo transfer.

00:00:08 Andrea R:

Mm-hmm.

00:00:09 S1:

So you mentioned at the, in the first interview that you and your partner, I think, were both really shocked that it didn't work. That that wasn't, I think your words were, it wasn't even like on your radar that it wouldn't, right? And you mentioned at the time that, I mean, at the time we spoke that you didn't feel the clinic offered support for that sort of shock of that, um, experience. So I'm wondering if you think back then, obviously it was an adjustment, an emotional and, you know, psychological adjustment to being, I would imagine it being, um, recalibrating to it being a moment in a longer process than maybe you had envisioned. Um, I'm wondering where you did get some support where you, how you did find some support for that, um, adjustment and for, for kind of moving forward from that point.

00:01:01 Andrea R:

Um, great question. I really leaned very heavily on my carefully curated network of women [S1 affirmative]. Um, neither of our families or, or are like, pillars of support. Not that they mean harm, um, they're just limited in their own emotional depth and capacity [S1 affirmative]. Um, and so that was, family was not where we looked for that support. Um, no, it was leaning pretty heavily on, for me personally, it was leaning heavily on my tribe of women.

00:01:54 S1:

Mm-hmm. And what would you say that support looked like for you? Was it, um, focused on accepting the moment? Was it focused on moving forward?

00:02:05 Andrea R:

Um,

00:02:06 S1:

Maybe both.

00:02:07 Andrea R:

Definitely both. Yeah. Um, it was, yeah, focused on grief, um [S1 affirmative] grieving, what was, um, and then moving through those stages and then getting to that point of planning the next step [S1 affirmative].

00:02:36 S1:

And so then if we look at the time after the second transfer, you mentioned in, um, our initial conversation that that was a time, looking back on you feel you should have moved providers, you should have moved, you know, groups you were working with, clinics you were working with at that point. And I'm curious what you think, looking back at where you were in the moment, what do you think held you back from seeing that at the time or acting on those feelings at the time?

00:03:01 Andrea R:

Yeah, great question. I mean, at that point in my own consciousness, I was still seeking, I was still outsourcing my power, so I was still looking for validation from the outside. I was still kind of in that patient pleasing mode. Um, you know, who was I to question or to look outside [00:03:30] of, you know, this clinic. And I think the other two factors that were very present was, um, this clinic was covered under my insurance. And, um, and I did like this doctor, so it wasn't a personal thing. And I think I had a, yeah, I had a harder time with the clinic practice and their protocols. Um, but I did like this doctor in his bedside manner, and I felt like he actually really did care about me. I just didn't really get a lot of face time with him.

00:04:14 S1:

[S1 affirmative].

00:04:15 Andrea R:

Um, and so there was enough of, you know, the financial factor alone plus feeling like, okay, well let's, you know, let's just give this another go. Or, and also thinking like what a hassle switching clinics would be. Um

00:04:43 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:04:45 Andrea R:

And I, and my energy was pretty depleted at that time [S1 affirmative]. Yeah.

00:04:53 S1:

Okay. It's interesting for me because I, I feel like people who, who experienced some fertility challenges, especially if it's been like in your case, preceded by a loss, I feel like they're, um, they're so vulnerable entering this relationship with a clinic or a care provider because there's, there's a sense of this loss and then a sort of, I think women take on, um, a personal sense of being a failing to recapture, in other words, to get pregnant again, sort of quote naturally that they, they enter into this what would ideally be a helpful construct of a clinic helping you with a real vulnerability to feeling, um, not worthy of that help or somehow in so, so much need of that help that they are- something is deeply wrong with them personally [yes]. Right. And so they feel, um, they just don't feel empowered any entering that setting [Andrea R. affirmative]. So it's interesting for me in listening to your whole story about looking at the points where you started to sort of reclaim, and I don't wanna, I don't wanna put words in your mouth, maybe you didn't feel a loss of it, but I hear you sort of gradually reclaiming that empowerment for yourself. But I think your story is so interesting in sort of that seeing that gradual process, I wondered if that was something that you, you feel reflects your experience.

00:06:20 Andrea R:

Oh, very much so. Yeah. I feel like I, in, that's sort of the design of the clinic too, is to make you feel like the problem is you [S1 affirmative], and, you know, here we are, the science with all of these beautiful practices answers, art, and if you don't respond to what we offer, that's, that's not a, an us problem. That's a you problem [S1 affirmative]. And it, yeah, it felt very, um, I don't even know, I, I lack a word for it [S1 affirmative]. Um, but shameful? [S1 affirmative] Um, like,

you know, already questioning why my body isn't doing what biologically it's set to do [S1 affirmative], but also what I desire more than anything in the world. There are many people in this world that biologically can do what I couldn't do, but they didn't have the same matched desire to do what I wanted to do [S1 affirmative]. And so it felt like, um, it felt like a double whammy, um [S1 affirmative] and, uh, I saw [laughter], we saw a fertility consultant, I don't know if I actually included this in the story. It was such a blip on the screen. Um,

00:08:04 Andrea R:

Um, and, um, she had referred to, um, like, because we got connected to a support group within the clinic, which I will say I did meet some wonderful people through it, but she had said those groups are like low vibe all around [laughter]. It's just like one sad, horrible story after another [laughter]. Like,

00:08:30 S1:

Right? Hard, hard sometimes to picture like, who's gonna do the uplifting [laughter].

00:08:35 Andrea R:

Right.

00:08:36 S1:

Right. 'cause everyone's coming there for support and it's hard to think who will have the extra to give to someone else. Right.

00:08:45 Andrea R:

Gosh. Nobody, nobody has the extra as the answer.

00:08:48 S1:

And who will be the one asking for it also, not just like, does anyone have something to give, but like, who wants to be the one that's like, I hear what you're going through, but could you help me with what I'm going through?

00:08:59 Andrea R:

Right. [Right?] Exactly. Yeah. And so we really become partners in pain. Yeah. And, and there's, you know, there's some value in that. And it can be, um, it could be an easy trap for like victim hood [S1 affirmative]. Um, and, and I feel like, you know, in the, the way the clinic is designed, kind of sets you up for victim hood or [S1 affirmative], it's like that's the relationship is like the victim hood rescuer [S1 affirmative]. What is that triangle? Um,

00:09:31 S1:

Yeah, I mean, I think a lot of the medical establishment is based on this, and, and for good reason, because usually when you're seeking medical attention, you, something has happened that you need to help with, right?

00:09:44 Andrea R:

Right.

00:09:45 S1:

And so just that institutional setting again, just sort of comes with that dynamic and it's really hard to work against it, especially when you are depleted.

00:09:54 Andrea R:

Yeah, exactly. Exactly.

00:09:58 S1:

Then the next step that I was thinking about was, um, you used this phrase being put in a holding pattern, and that was through the Lupron. I know that you were, um, so I'm thinking of the initial time when you were still at the first clinic and you were put on the Lupron when Covid first kind of started impacting the process.

00:10:16 Andrea R:

Oh, yeah. Mm-hmm.

00:10:17 S1:

I was thinking about it because I think for some, you know, you had had this buildup, you had had this buildup of being on the Lupron right, for this period of time, and then you were gonna do another, um, transfer and you were put in this sort of holding pattern. And I, I feel like for some people in that moment, that would be somewhat comforting that all that work leading up to that was sort of being held. It wasn't being quote, wasted, right? [Andrea R. affirmative]. And at the same time you're facing Covid so you're gonna, there's no way to know how long you'll be in that holding pattern. And Covid itself becomes very isolating very quickly. 'cause we all went on lockdown [Right] right away. And so I'm wondering, um, I'm just thinking about how you experienced that time. Was it, was there a sense of well, at least we're holding onto this moment in all of that, that, you know, hormonal work up to this point isn't being lost? Or was it more, um, you know, the, the disappointment of not being able to do a transfer then plus the isolation of covid, I feel like would be, you know, just like a perfect storm of feeling sort of carried to a point and then sort of dropped. Right? And I'm just wondering how you experienced that time when those kind of factors all just in your story happened to come together in really poor timing of those factors. Right?

00:11:34 Andrea R:

Yeah. And so I love this question actually, because I like reflecting back on it. I remember feeling like, yes, initially we had that surge of like, what the fuck, like, of, this, you know, all of this buildup, this three months of Lupron, all of these injections, and now we're waiting, I'm on birth control and we're in this holding pattern. And, um, I think I felt like that, um, I don't know how long I felt like that for. A week, maybe? Somewhere in there. Um, because also my, um, a friend of mine, uh, a friend and coworker of mine whose sister who was out in like the Portland area, she and I were on like parallel journeys. We were on Lupron at the same time. Our transfer dates were set like two days apart kind of a thing. And our story hit a stop and hers continued going [mmm].

00:12:48 Andrea R:

And so it's, it's actually very interesting 'cause she has a, a daughter who's now, what, nine months older than Charlotte. Um, but yeah, just so very interesting when, um, when I look at it through the lens of divine timing, um, which is where I was like invited, um [S1 affirmative]. And so really ultimately I, I like hit the threshold of surrender. Um, I think also because I saw everyone around us, like going in a tailspin over all these things, they couldn't control. And I, I actually felt like, oh, welcome, [laughter], welcome

00:13:33 S1:

A little company maybe [laughter].

00:13:34 Andrea R:

Yeah. We've been here all along. Like, there's so many things we cannot control, and I see what it looks like now when people get frustrated or like agonize over what they can't control. And so it, it honestly provided like a, a landing place where, Covid did, like, where I was just able to settle in.

00:14:02 Andrea R:

Greg [husband] and I both were able to settle in to like, we're doing everything we can do mm-hmm. [S1 affirmative], and right now it's out of our hands. Um, and so that also talking about reclaiming my power and stepping into what I could control, that's really when I focused on what I was putting in my body. Um, you know, because we can't say like, you can't believe in Western medicine saying that I believe when I put this pill in my body, it is going to make a difference in ways X, Y, and Z without also then believing that when I ingest this food, it is going to affect my body or affect my life in these ways [S1 affirmative]. And, and so my focus really became healing through food [S1 affirmative]. Um, and I, I don't know if you're familiar with the Medical Medium, it's a little out there, like, like anytime you say medium, I guess it's a little out there, but, um, I, um, are you familiar with him? [S1 negative] No. Um, so,

00:15:11 S1:

So is this the same, you mentioned your first interview a medical intuitive, I think you called her?

00:15:15 Andrea R:

Oh, yeah. Okay. That's different, but yeah. [laughter], yeah.

00:15:18 S1:

But two different people, right?

00:15:20 Andrea R:

[S1 affirmative] Yeah. Two different people.

00:15:20 S1:

Ok, that's what, that's what I was imagining. I just wanted to clarify. Ok.

00:15:24 Andrea R:

Yeah. Two different people. Um, Patty, my medical intuitive, I actually, I know and I have a relationship with, um, but this, um, person, Anthony William is his name. He is, um, a, um, I guess, yeah, um, a medium in that, um, he receives like downloads and message, message messages from spirit of compassion, holy Spirit, whatever, like language you use [S1 affirmative], um, on like the healing powers within foods, um, and like the root causes of our chronic illnesses. Um, so he has a, a fascinating story, and I don't know how much you want me to get into that, which I'd be, I, I mean, I could talk all day about it, but, um, basically the information was very empowering and, a snippet is like, um, for fertility, for instance, um, to eat fruit. Like if you want, if you wish to bear fruit, eat fruit, [hmm] like the, the information that fruit provides to our cells is, um, is that of like procreation [S1 affirmative].

00:16:46 Andrea R:

And it nourishes on such a deep level, a deeper than medical research, um, or science and medical research have, have yet to discover. Um, and, and, and so the things he was saying, you know, if you're looking at it through a skeptical lens, the things he's saying like eating fruit, ok, like that's, who's gonna argue with that? [laughter] I know there's like fruit fear and all that stuff out there, but like eating whole foods, who's gonna argue with that? [S1 affirmative] You know? [S1 affirmative]. Um, but he, there's, he taps into like the, um, the deeper healing, um, resources that these foods offer to our bodies and how we can, um, incorporate them in our lives in meaningful ways. And so that's really what I was empowered with [S1 affirmative]. Um,

00:17:37 S1:

So his information that he can impart to you is general, it's not personal to you, or does it have [correct, correct] He doesn't do readings for you personally, or, [right, right] I don't know if reading is the right word, but

00:17:47 Andrea R:

Yeah. Yeah. He, I mean, I think he did it for like celebrities, like that's kind of where he got his [S1 affirmative]. Start, I guess [unclear]

00:17:56 S1:

But it's sort of a philosophy more than an individual relationship basically.

00:18:00 Andrea R:

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Yeah. [Ok]. Um,

00:18:04 S1:

So I can imagine, like you say, when you, when you frame it as, um, a landing spot, I can, I can imagine it being - I was thinking of Covid as being an added layer of isolation for you guys, um, in your experience because it's so different than other fertility journeys for many people. Um, even, even people, you know, dealing with infertility challenges, um, but certainly people that are, that are becoming spontaneously pregnant. Um, but what I'm hearing from you is so interesting that actually with everyone kind of having to wrap their head around not being able to control so much and, and having it be maybe not body centered, but certainly, you know, Covid affects our bodies, and that's what people were worried about. Um [Andrea R. affirmative], I can imagine that it was, it was, um, sort of like join the community joining you where you were.

00:18:56 Andrea R:

[S1 affirmative] Very much so.

00:19:00 S1:

And was that comforting, or was there some level of almost like resentment, like, well, I've been doing this for ages, I don't want, you know, like, I have no room to also take on your [laughter] new anxiety about it, [laughter]. Do you know what I mean?

00:19:14 Andrea R:

Yeah. I, no, it honestly was more comforting. It was [S1 affirmative], um, and also sort of a testament to, where I could look and see how far I've come with accepting [Oh, nice]. That [absolutely] and seeing another lining, which is that, that this time was providing me more of that opportunity for surrender, and that people are given those invitations in different ways at different points of their lives. And just because somebody gets pregnant very easily, or what's perceived as easily, um, doesn't mean that then, you know, in parenthood that they're not going to experience a, a huge opportunity for surrender [S1 affirmative], um, to things beyond their control. And so I began to look at it as more of a training ground [laughter].

00:20:05 S1:

So, um, I do, I do have, um, I'd love to hear a little bit more about, I appreciate the Medical Medium explanation, and I do, I would like to hear a little more about your work with the medical intuitive.

00:20:19 Andrea R:

Oh, sure. Yeah.

00:20:20 S1:

'Cause you mentioned in your first interview that it gave you what you called an empowered direction.

00:20:25 Andrea R:

Mmm, yes.

00:20:27 S1:

And I like that phrasing, that it wasn't just a sense of empowerment, but it was, it was focused in a certain way or a certain path or towards a certain end. And, um, I'd love to hear a little bit more about what that direction was.

00:20:43 Andrea R:

Um, so that direction, I would say the empowered direction was inward. It was the, the, um, healing of my inner child, um, as I'm looking to bring a child into this world, really looking at how I can love my inner child, love that, um, that version of me and, and recognize where she took on different hurts or wounds that weren't hers to take on. And, um, and how to reparent her [S1 affirmative], um, and offer her that love and that compassion. And, um, in fact, I think our first several sessions, um, were a series of this inner child practice where I would be, um, like going to a place, um, going to a safe place. Like she would have me envision, um, whether it was

like a safe place in nature, basically, and, um, and like observe who, who showed up. Like there was a time, it was like my four-year-old self, um, and like a certain instance came up and, um, and it was, it was like going back in time, but like redirecting course, like offering her what she needed at that time [S1 affirmative].

00:22:34 Andrea R:

Um, there was a time that it was my 14-year-old self. Um, there was a time it was my nine-year-old self, and, you know, like these different, different points. Um, and, and what I found with that, was it, you know, we're not walking through our days thinking about that thing that happened when I was nine [laughter] that oh, is probably now feeding into how I'm responding to this coworker who just emailed me [laughter] [S1 affirmative]. Um, [laughter] so what it did was it, it healed something that, or it, it brought something to light that had been so tucked away, and in doing so, allowed it the opportunity to heal. And with that, then in my, in my consciousness, then I noticed that I was no longer like, tethered to these, these unconscious wounds [S1 affirmative], um, and it, it slowly, um, like continued to, to unfold. And as more things came to light for me, um, and that became the empowered direction.

00:24:02 S1:

[S1 affirmative]. That's so interesting. So how would you say working with her differs from therapy or a, [love it] you know, a psychologist, right? Oh, yeah,

00:024:13 Andrea R:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Both of whom I've, I've seen [S1 affirmative]. So I've worked with, um, a psychologist. Um, I've worked with a psychiatrist, I've worked with a therapist all in my, um, in my days, uh, [laughter] and, and they all offer beautiful things. Um, and I have some, some of my very best friends are social workers. Um, and what I found for me, um, with therapy is that it was a lot of up here [S1 affirmative]. It was a lot of, a lot of talking, a lot of – I'm pointing to my head - um, just it could be yes, incorporating the heart, but it was still very much very cerebral [S1 affirmative]. And a lot of, um, replaying things or reframing things, which, all of which can be helpful and, and to a point, um [S1 affirmative]. And so what I felt with the medical intuitive, um, was that it, there, it, it was impermeable, like there was no limit. Like, it, it surpassed it. It was like, okay, yep, this is why you have that behavior. Oh, but here we go. Here we go. We're going down like deeper [S1 affirmative] into that unconscious, um, where I feel like in therapy, at least for me, it was still a lot of in my consciousness [S1 affirmative].

00:26:11 S1:

So what I feel like I'm hearing, and just for my own clarity, I feel like for you, you experience therapy as more like what, how you can think about something differently [Andrea R affirmative] and how you can return to something and then now understand it differently and think about it differently going forward. [Andrea R. affirmative] And in contrast, the work with the intuitive felt more about honoring how it felt to be that nine-year-old, you know, person in that situation and not asking that to be different because that was a true, you know, valid thing to feel and understanding that that was the feeling at the time [Andrea R. affirmative]. And then because of that understanding, being able to possibly incorporate that into your present more holistically than just like, well, now I will think about it this way. [Andrea R. affirmative] Does that sound accurate?

00:27:05 Andrea R:

Right. Whereas, yeah, it was actually like going to the root [S1 affirmative], and it was healing the root, and as a result the fruit was different.

00:27:13 S1:

[S1 affirmative] I think that's so interesting because especially if we think about things that happened to us as children or happened around us as children, things we experienced as children, I should say. You know, children don't go around thinking about how they're thinking about things [laughter] [Andrea R. affirmative]. So thinking as an adult can be helpful, but, you know, ask, you know, taking something that came from a, a different place and, and I would agree with your framing that it's a deeper place for that child. Right. And now thinking about it is sort of starting, you know, at a different level than where the, the actual experiences. And I, I, I like the way that you're describing that because those, those experiences that are building us as humans started in a noncerebral place [Andrea R. affirmative]. And so there's only so much that cerebral processing can do to re-access it [right] and re-frame it. Right? Is that what I'm hearing? Okay.

00:28:11 Andrea R:

Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. And we did some tapping, are you familiar with the practice of tapping? [No] Um, and so it works with, um, these different points, um, different meridians, um [S1 affirmative] and, and it's like, um, repeating, um, different like self-affirmations or like, that are in line with strengthening different chakras, um, and, and the act of something physical [S1 affirmative], when, when you say, while you're saying that, it, it releases something in the body that can't just be released by talking [S1 affirmative]

00:29:06 S1:

Interesting. That's so interesting. I'll have to look into that. I don't know anything about that practice.

00:29:11 Andrea R:

Yeah. [Nice] Yeah.

00:29:13 S1:

Well, thank you. Thank you.

00:29:14 Andrea R:

Oh, thanks for asking.

00:29:16 S1:

Um, okay. So it was sort of at this point in your initial story that I started to hear, and I, I want you to correct me if any of my sort of conclusions I've drawn are incorrect, of course, I don't want to speak for you, but here's where I started to sort of hear a shift in your language where up until this point, um, you had become pregnant or not, right? In these various points. And here you started to talk to me how the third transfer, your words were they were, it was closer, but not technically a pregnancy. So I see in that phrasing, like the spectrum, right? Where it's not just pregnant or not pregnant, it's a spectrum of possibilities that get closer to what I think you started

talking about later of like a soul actually anchoring. Right? That was you know, a phrase that you used later.

00:30:08 S1:

And I wondered if you were, if, first of all, of course, I'm curious if that perception that that shift started, started to happen is correct. And that framing is correct of thinking about it sort of as a spectrum, but also I'm wondering if you experienced that at the time, you know, that you, if you could feel yourself kind of moving towards this more kind of openness about the conception of success or failure or pregnancy or not [Oh yeah] Or, or the, um, weight of it not happening, you know, being a little bit lighter because it was closer kind of thing.

00:30:44 Andrea R:

Yeah. Um, hmm. Yes. That, I think that really highlights, um, the evolution of my consciousness in this journey is recognizing that it is going from that shift of being pregnant or not to looking at it as more of a spectrum, um [S1 affirmative] and what I, gosh, so much to say about that.

00:31:14 Andrea R:

Um, some other things with working with this medical intuitive. So I was raised Catholic, um, and so I have a lot of, um, like I was, I was already primed for the belief of life outside of here [S1 affirmative]. Um, and what I felt like, and like the, the help, the guidance of angels of spirits of, of a world we can't see [S1 affirmative]. Um, and so hearing and hearing those things doesn't, um, doesn't faze me. And I don't, I don't have skepticism towards that. Um, and so with the medical intuitive, what I had also described, my work with her being, was like I was leaning up against a wall where I felt like I was trying to practice all of these things with my Catholic faith, like, you know, God's will, and this, you know, things happening at the right time and, and it just, like all was just falling flat.

00:32:19 Andrea R:

It just felt like, so we talk about, in like, in the church, like children are a blessing. Well, what does that mean for the person that doesn't have a child? Are they unblessed? Like that, no, that doesn't, that doesn't compute. Um, and, and so what I felt like, I felt like [laughter], I felt like I was pushed up against like the ceiling in a planetarium and, and this Patty, my medical intuitive just like tapped and the door just opened and it was like, oh, [wow] like here is the universe. [S1 affirmative], like what you were looking at was a, a subdued form of what is actually also out there.

00:33:14 Andrea R:

I love that

00:33:15 Andrea R:

Not to say that, [laughter] not to say that those things aren't in existence, and there's so, there's all of this too [S1 affirmative]. And, and in talking with her, um, my, my belief about past lives, I had never thought about, I think maybe I talked about it in, in the last, um, interview, but I had never thought about that or given it much thought at all. Um, outside of, I know some other religions think that you could come back as a fly or something like that, [laughter]. Um, and, but this concept of being on, being an infinite divine being, so being a soul on a journey and then

making the decision to anchor into a body or choose a form on a planet, and we're not the only planet that has life, like having that belief as well [S1 affirmative]. Um, and then I began to see it as a spectrum, of like, and I began to shift my view from my story, my pregnancy, my baby to her, her journey.

00:34:37 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:34:40 Andrea R:

Like Charlotte in, and her soul, her unique individual soul contract. And that, and in developing a belief in, we set out to accomplish certain things for our soul as evolution, and, and we select the parents to whom we come to based on what we need to accomplish for our soul [S1 affirmative], for our soul's evolution [S1 affirmative]. And, and so that doesn't mean that who you choose is going to be like this easy, wonderful, I mean, sometimes it is, who knows? You know, who knows what your soul needs [S1 affirmative].

00:35:30 Andrea R:

Um, but it was that ,like coming to that belief that also gave me peace with the family that I came from [S1 affirmative] and the family that I chose and, and gave me more patience for this timeline for a soul that I, uh, for a soul who's on a, a timeline that I don't know about or, or time that isn't of this world. Um, and a friend of mine at the same time had also talked about the, um, like with the vibration of the planet, like increasing and, and still earth is a very dense plane [S1 affirmative], and it can take a lot for a really high vibe soul to anchor onto a very dense planet. And so thinking of that with like, in terms of a miscarriage too, was like a high vibe soul touching down, but not, not staying at that point in time.

00:36:44 S1:

[S1 affirmative].

00:36:45 Andrea R:

Um, and so those sorts of, um, of thoughts and beliefs that I, that intuitively connected with me, um, there's no, yeah, there's no other way to really describe that other than they just intuitively connected with me. And that gave me the peace of, of seeing this as a spectrum and recognizing, and don't get me wrong, it was still hard, um, when it didn't happen.

00:37:23 S1:

Of course, of course.

00:37:27 Andrea R:

And, and recognizing that it, as a part of this human experience is the emotion that comes with a perceived loss. However, I, it was a, it was a different turnaround with that

00:37:48 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:37:50 Andrea R:

Um, yeah. Does that answer your question [laughter]?

00:37:58 S1:

It does, it does. So I'm curious about what made you feel that that third transfer was closer? You used that word specifically, so was that a feeling you had? Was it a belief that you had that each one was sort of getting you closer?

00:38:15 Andrea R:

Oh, I would say that medically it was just quote unquote closer. Like my, my levels were going up kind of a thing. [Ok] [S1 affirmative] that if it were just up to science quote, it should have quote unquote happened [laughter].

00:38:30 S1:

Got it. Okay. So that, that clarifies then also sort of, or, or highlights then sort of the power of this other piece that, you know, if medically it should have, right? Then there's something else that is also at play that wasn't quite in place.

00:38:49 Andrea R:

Right.

00:38:52 S1:

Okay. Okay. Okay. So then, um, that's the, at that point you switched to the Gago clinic, correct? [Andrea R. affirmative], and that's where we're, we're at now. So she has you go on Lupron again. And in the first, um, in our first interview you mentioned that she explained, and maybe this wasn't the first time it had been explained to you this way, but she shared that going on Lupron was sort of like, you know, building up the potential in the same way that going off birth control did when you became spontaneously pregnant [Andrea R. affirmative]. And we touched on this in the first interview too, and I'm curious if that, associating those two kind of processes or experiences was that I could see how that could be helpful for you, because that was in theory, you know, I hate to use this kind of terminology, but a, a successful pregnancy, right? [Yes] Right. But I could also see how that would, um, connect a process that you've worked really hard to see as a positive process towards a different outcome [Andrea R affirmative], that connecting it back to something that was a painful experience for you in some measure, I could see how that wouldn't be helpful. So I'm curious how you experienced that sort of, or maybe it, maybe it didn't even register as a meaningful connection to you, but I'm wondering if it did.

00:40:04 Andrea R:

It was, yeah, it was certainly a meaningful connection, connecting it back to when we got pregnant the first time [S1 affirmative]. Um, and, and in terms of that outcome, um, yeah, I didn't, I didn't draw any connection there.

00:40:20 S1:

[S1 affirmative]. Ok. So then with that fourth transfer, you become pregnant. [Andrea R. affirmative], and this is a part in our first interview, we didn't spend a lot of time on the experience of the pregnancy itself [Andrea R. affirmative]. Um, I heard in the, in the interview that it was uncomfortable physically, right? You had some physical challenges, migraines and things like this, right? [Yeah, yeah]. But I'm curious how it was for you mentally because, you know, carrying a baby can be stressful and anxiety inducing in all scenarios [Andrea R affirmative], but I think sometimes, um, I'm always curious how people see that time, because I think of it as a time of sort of carrying the baby forwards towards birth. Um, but not everyone does. Lots of people see it as like a waiting time, that I was waiting for my baby to be born, and it took forever, and I wanted the baby here, [laughter]. You know, it's not like a, it's not like a thing they're doing. So, I'm just curious how you experienced the pregnancy, especially considering sort of these last pieces of your journey getting there that seem so, you know, looking inward and connecting inward with the baby that is coming for you, or you're looking for [Andrea R affirmative], um, how that time felt to you.

00:41:31 Andrea R:

Oh, yeah. Um, so yeah, I definitely didn't look at it as like a period that I needed to just wait out. No, I felt like, now we're here. Like, I had waited for this [laughter] [S1 affirmative] [Yeah]. Which, which felt like a different shift, um [S1 affirmative] than what, you know, what the mainstream belief is. Yeah, so I didn't relate to a lot of, in fact, I didn't even relate to even some of my fertility friends who had gotten pregnant, that then it just felt like they switched on a dime and now they're complaining about pregnancy. Yeah. So I, I did, I looked at it as caring. I mean, I love your, your language. I didn't necessarily have that language, um, of carrying her forward, but I did, I looked at myself as home. Um, and, and oh goodness, you know, I could add it to my, um, to the album, but I, and I recently sent this to a friend, um, are you familiar with Morgan Harpers Nichol or Har- Morgan Harper Nichols. She's like a, uh, but she does poetry. Um, Instagram has kind of made her a little more, um I don't know if famous is the right word, but, ok. Here, I, I wanna find it because I wanna read it to you, um, because it, it really summed up my entire, um, there we go, um, because it summed up my entire pregnancy.

00:43:18 Andrea R:

“And I hope you don't feel pressured to make sense of every good thing right away. I hope no matter how small it is, something within you recognizes that there is still time and space to soften into simply letting yourself receive and be grateful for it. Letting you- letting it give you the courage and energy to share what's good with those around you.” I felt like I was in this place of, I was like numb [S1 affirmative]? But, yeah, it was like numb,

00:44:05 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:44:06 Andrea R:

where I wasn't experiencing pain, but I was like, am I, is this really happening? [S1 affirmative]. There was a lot of that kind of question.

00:44:14 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:44:20 Andrea R:

Um, and I wrote Charlotte letters like each month for [of] pregnancy [S1 affirmative]. Um, and I remember having this very real fear that she wouldn't like me [laughter].

00:44:41 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:44:42 Andrea R:

I, and, and it was like this grappling with, for so long, she's been an idea [S1 affirmative], and, and where did I, where have I projected different things onto her [S1 affirmative] without giving her the space to just be who she is [S1 affirmative]. Um, and so pregnancy was a lot of wondering who she would be [S1 affirmative], um, and yeah, I'm wondering if she would like me [laughter].

00:45:18 S1:

Well, that's actually a really great, um, lead into my, my next question, which had to do with, you know, you could see this in some measure in a lot of pregnancies, but I feel like there's, there's a couple places that your story would've really, um, had the potential for it is, you know, pregnancies and birth that go, go really differently than you had expected or hoped, and may even involve some measure of trauma. I certainly don't wanna put that word on your story for you. [Oh, yeah. Yeah, yeah]. But then I think it can be so difficult to find the space for, for the necessary grief about that outside, outside of the joy of it, you know, shifting. Because there's plenty of space for the grief when that's all that's happening, right, when, when there isn't a shift, but as soon as it shifts to being a pregnancy or a healthy delivery after a traumatic, you know, labor and things like this, then, then where there's no gap for grieving the experience. Right?

00:46:20 S1:

Because now it's a happy thing and it's made this shift and it can take time for people to catch up [Andrea R affirmative], and socially and certainly in our families, um, there isn't usually that space given [Andrea R affirmative]. And so, um, I was wondering if you, um, you know, if that was part of your experience - was having to, to find a way to have that grief, or if you found that people made space for it. Yeah, I'm just curious if what, what you, um, exp what your experience was of, of handling sort of the grief of the process [Yeah] amongst the joy of its outcome.

00:46:59 Andrea R:

Yeah. It's interesting, uh, my cousin actually, um, who is a social worker, even like had said, who had a similar experience of laboring a long time, and then having a, only hers was an emergency and [S1 affirmative], um, anyway, [S1 affirmative] and her, I don't know that her words were exactly, "at least she's here safely," but it was absolutely in that same category [S1 affirmative], um, and I, I completely, um, relate to, to feeling that way where it sort of skipped over [S1 affirmative]. Um, I think I had talked about, yeah, those feelings of quote-unquote failing to bring her to become pregnant and now quote unquote failing to deliver or to, to have

her in, uh, the conventional way. Um, but you're asking if I saw, or if I was able to process that, or who I was able to process that with.

00:48:32 S1:

Yeah. Or, or how did you, I mean, you experienced it whether you processed it or not. Right. So how, how, if you can talk a little about the experience of that, you know, those sort of holding those, both those things at the same time.

00:48:45 Andrea R:

Yeah, yeah. Um,

00:48:56 Andrea R:

it was challenging. And I think the, the other thing I was juggling too, which just felt so overwhelming, was, um, she was hospitalized five days later for jaundice [S1 affirmative]. And, and so it just kind of felt like, like the C-section, the, you know, now I'm sedated and they're like, and I'm trying to figure out breastfeeding, and now they're coming in every however many hours for a heel stick to check her, um, whatever levels to see if she needed, or to monitor her jaundice. And they kept rising and, and it was like advocacy, advocacy, advocacy at every single fucking juncture [S1 affirmative]. And, um, in fact, I just remember feeling exhausted [S1 affirmative]. Um, mentally, emotionally exhausted [S1 affirmative]. And I remember my in-laws, my mother-in-law specifically, um, I feel like there's, like, there should be a book written of like unhelpful things mother-in-laws say.

00:50:19 S1:

[laughter] There probably is [laughter], you know, a little coffee table book [laughter].

00:50:24 Andrea R:

Yeah. Cute little conversation starters. Um, yeah, she said something about like how they, "oh, they haven't gotten to meet their granddaughter yet," or they can't believe they haven't met their granddaughter yet, or whatever. Like, okay. All right. Well, we have been in and out of the hospital, like haven't really had a minute to breathe and just like, cool your jets [S1 affirmative]. Um, oh, I'm remembering, yeah. Uh-huh. She said to her like, golf ladies, I haven't met my granddaughter yet, I can't believe it. And her response, which she told us this story was, is it your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter? She was like, my son. And they were like, oh, yeah, get used to that, basically. What? Anyway, yeah. That, that goes in a book of emotionally immature people, but, um, [laughter]. But yeah, my point is like, I was in a vulnerable spot, you know? [Of course.] Um, and, and so I don't know. Huh, I'm really thinking back to that time, was I able to process and grieve that? I feel like I sort of had spots in like talking with friends. Um, I felt like I had let myself down. I felt like I'd let, like, on some level, but then here on the other, from the outward, like you're saying from, from the world's view, I'm holding a healthy baby, so that's a success. But over here, when I had wanted to bring her into the world in a different way, um, yeah, it was a lot to, a lot to integrate and accept and forgive and, um, and even now, you know, telling this story two years later, almost, I, I still have, there's lots of mystery around that.

00:53:00 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:53:04 Andrea R:

And something that I feel like I, I can learn from it or have learned from it is, um, like prior to giving birth, I had a lot of judgements about, um, births ending in C-sections, like really being honest about that. Like that it was, you know, the cascade of medical intervention of the Pitocin to the overwhelming contractions, to the labor failing to progress, to “failing to progress” right? [S1 affirmative]. Um, or to the like, yeah, the overwhelming contractions, but all of the, the different things and then, and now baby's heart rate drops, and now we need to like provide a, another medical intervention, but you're going to be thanking us for saving your baby's life. [S1 affirmative]. Um, and so I, I had a lot of judgements about like how to, how I didn't want that and how to avoid doing that, and, um, and then there I was [S1 affirmative]. And so it was very humbling. [S1 affirmative], I was also like having to come to grips with, with my preconceived judgments about it.

00:54:34 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

00:54:39 Andrea R:

And accept that I had done everything in my power at that point. Um, and we, we did make the choice [S1 affirmative], we could have waited [S1 affirmative], and waiting seemed to be the less wise option with, um, the other factors with my fever and [S1 affirmative], those, those other things. Um, so kind of went in a circle. [laughter] Did I answer my way into your question?

00:55:23 S1:

That's okay. Um, okay. So I know I've had you for a little while. I have a few more questions, if that's okay.

00:55:28 Andrea R:

Yeah. Yeah, sure.

00:55:29 S1:

I wanna look a little bit about these ideas and experiences of control, because your story in particular has a lot of negotiating control, both, um, you know, your own personal sense of it as you've talked quite a bit to that already about, you know, when you surrendered some, when you felt it was important to, you know, sort of, um, what I want to say, um, sort of demand some, or, you know, assert the need for some, but also control between yourself and your partner. You know, fertility journeys can be really challenging between part- in partnerships for obvious reasons. [Yeah.] And then with you guys and the world, right. And so there's a lot of that in your story. Um, and what I, you know, one thing I loved is you basically started our first interview by saying that that was during a time when you “plan as though you're the ones in control of it.”

00:56:18 Andrea R:

Hmm.

00:56:19 S1:

And I really loved that phrase because it speaks to this process that's, that's true for all pregnancies and, you know, entering into parenthood, but yours especially in certain ways, of

this like long, um, adjusting to new landscapes, you know, and rebalancing what you want, what you actually need, who is in charge of that? Is that something you're, you could give yourself, you could ask for yourself, or is it something somebody has to give you, like validation or support, you know, that you can't always give yourself [Andrea R. affirmative]. So I just wonder if in the sort of large sense, if you can talk a little about your experience with that, how that played a, a part in your experience.

00:56:58 Andrea R:

Yeah. Um, so I understand the question being my thoughts on perception of being in control, um, and versus when and how it kind of switched.

00:57:15 S1:

Yeah. Sort of what was your sense, did you feel out of control? And if so, like what was that like? Did you, are there moments when you felt that you, you know, had it or didn't or, or was that even meaningful to you? Were you kind of tracking on that sense during the experience?

00:57:30 Andrea R:

Yeah, so I think the first feeling of being completely out of control was, um, learning that we, that our baby was measuring at eight weeks when I was supposed to be at 12 weeks. [S1 affirmative]. Um, it was that that wasn't computing, like, wait, what? How? No, that's not how this goes. Um, and that was, yeah, that was the first overwhelming feeling of being out of control. Um, and then even several weeks following that, trying to reclaim control, like, well, we'll just get pregnant again. We'll just get pregnant again fast. [S1 affirmative] Like [S1 affirmative], um, I remember Greg and I both having that, having that conversation together. Okay, well, we got pregnant quickly, we'll do that again. You know, we'll just keep moving forward. Um, and, and then when it didn't happen, that was very confounding, like [S1 affirmative], wait, but it, it did, it did happen quickly. Um, that time, I do not, I, I look back and I just have so much, so much compassion and empathy for that person who had to go through that or who went through that, um, who went through month to month feeling so out of control. [S1 affirmative], um,

00:59:19 Andrea R:

And, and then grappling with, I feel like when we did seek, uh, fertility, um, intervention, I felt like that was reclaiming some control, [S1 affirmative], and certainly when we did our transfer, I felt like that was reclaiming control. And then when it didn't work or it didn't result in, uh, viable pregnancy, the first three of four times, um, continuing to feel just completely out of control.

01:00:07 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

01:00:08 Andrea R:

Um, and that, and looking around with envy to the people that looked like they were in control.

01:00:21 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

01:00:24 Andrea R:

I think I, I never put that language to it, but that's what it was. Looking at them and, and seeing “you made a decision to get pregnant and you got pregnant, you made a decision to have your kids two years late apart, and you had them two years apart”

01:00:41 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

01:00:43 Andrea R:

Um, and feeling, you know, like those, those feelings of injustice, um [S1 affirmative], which are, I recently tapped into with my medical intuitive, I mean, as recently as last week, um, like old life scripts [S1 affirmative]. So, um, talking about, you know, we talked about past lives, but having those perspectives too of like, um, an old script for me, which, and this is like a super vulnerable thing to share, is like, is that things come easily for other people and not for me [S1 affirmative] and, and recognizing, um, the ways in which I was operating as though that was true.

01:01:39 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

01:01:41 Andrea R:

It is not true. Spoiler alert, [laughter], um [laughter], but, um, those, those beliefs are so painful [S1 affirmative], and that was really like flaring up during this time [S1 affirmative], um, when that's what it felt like. Um, and then I think when Charlotte came, the feeling of [laughter], and I'm still grappling with this, the feeling of like, no, nothing's in our control [laughter].

01:02:24 S1:

Yeah. Yeah. That's the irony, right? [laughter].

01:02:31 Andrea R:

I think it's really not, I, it's that, you know, that joke about like, I was such a good parent before I had kids, like, yeah, I [laughter]. Yeah, um,

01:02:42 S1:

I'm curious, since you mentioned that you come from a, a Catholic upbringing, if that also plays into that sense of, of justice or injustice. I don't, full disclosure, I, I can't speak authoritatively on Catholicism, so I don't want to be offensive, but I have this sense that there's a lot of like, do this and you get this kind of

01:03:01 Andrea R:

[laughter] transactional

01:03:03 S1:

Yeah. Well, kind of like, you know, there are rules to how life plays out and if you follow the rules, then you should have this kind of life. I get the sense of that. Do you think that there's any of that involved?

01:03:13 Andrea R:

Oh, a thousand percent [laughter] probably still operating unconsciously. Yes. Yes. [S1 affirmative]. Yes. Yes. And that is why you can see a lot of people, like, you know, go one of two ways, really, like doubling down in that faith [S1 affirmative], like, oh, well, I'm just not following the rules good enough [S1 affirmative]. Or, or going another way, which is kind of letting, letting go of that, um, or being grateful for the container and then, and then emptying yourself of it, like [S1 affirmative], um, I think there's, there was something very, there is something very comforting about the, the structure of that [S1 affirmative]. Um, and there was a lot that was very uncomfortable about this experience because it didn't fit into that [S1 affirmative], um, you know, it fit, we were good people, we are good people who love one another and wanted to bring a baby into this world and [S1 affirmative] by the simplicity of those beliefs, we should be quote-unquote blessed [laughter].

01:04:40 S1:

Right.

01:04:42 Andrea R:

And, and it wasn't happening and [S1 affirmative] or not as timely as we, um, so yes, I do believe that added in a, a great deal to, uh, the pain and suffering of this process.

01:05:00 S1:

[S1 affirmative] since we mentioned it, um, and you mentioned in your first interview that during part of this process, you and your partner got caught, sort of caught up in this cycle of disconnection.

01:05:14 Andrea R:

Hmm. Yes.

01:05:15 S1:

I'm wondering if you can speak a little bit about how that may have changed or shifted through your pregnancy and the birth and new parenthood.

01:05:22 Andrea R:

Hmm. Yeah. Um, so full disclosure, he is in, um, early recovery [S1 affirmative], um, so part of this fertility journey, like the story that would be his to share would be about how his drinking intensified [S1 affirmative], um, which created more of a disconnect for the two of us. [S1 affirmative]. And then, when she came into the picture, which, you know, he's shared with me now that she, um, or that he had had said to himself, well, you know, once, once she's born, that's when, you know, I'll cut back on the drinking and all of that. And of course, that did not happen. Um, in fact, it got worse. [S1 affirmative]. And, and so while he was kind of spinning out of control in his own orbit, I really just hunkered in on her [S1 affirmative], um, and, and focused on what she needed, which kept me very occupied [S1 affirmative]. And so mentally I felt very, like, protected in a lot of ways. Um, and her and my bond was very strengthened. Um, we, there would be periods of connection, I think when we, you know, when we got pregnant and, and throughout my pregnancy, um, there was more connection. Something else, um, those hormones going through the drugs, the constant synthetic hormone injections, I, I can't even tell you the

person I was. [S1 affirmative]. Like there, like as a result of our disconnection and also the excess estrogen, and I, I remember, um, messaging with a, an like an ex-boyfriend, I mean, nothing ever, you know, played out or came of it [S1 affirmative], um, because I, I wouldn't have gone there, but it was like mentally, I, I can't, I just can't even describe what was happening in my body.

01:08:14 S1:

[S1 affirmative]

01:08:15 Andrea R:

It was so hormonally out of control [S1 affirmative]. Um, and, and he was so in his own like world. Um, so in terms of our, like our marriage, I, we were operating separately, but together? [S1 affirmative] Um, and, and hmm, I don't have a lot of like, memory about [S1 affirmative], like all of it. [S1 affirmative] Because I was so in my own world and he was so in his own world, um, and it was never like I was looking to leave him, and it was never evident to me how bad his drinking had gotten [S1 affirmative]. Um, but,

01:09:37 Andrea R:

uh, there would be moments after she was born, moments where he would feel like, where it was like, as he was so preoccupied with drinking, which I didn't know that that's what he was preoccupied with [S1 affirmative], that he wasn't connecting with Charlotte. And as a result, even as a baby, she was more hesitant to like respond [S1 affirmative] to him. Um, and he would take that personally or internalize that [S1 affirmative], um, which then just drove him deeper into himself. And, uh, meanwhile I'm just like maintaining happy homeostasis between mommy and baby and [S1 affirmative], um, and just like sort of, not dismissing, but like he's got some things he needs to work through [S1 affirmative], you know, this is in his head. This isn't like she, and also, she is reliant on me. This is such a different relationship that I have with her right now than, you know, he will have this [S1 affirmative] in the future too, or have a, a stronger relationship with her when she's not solely reliant on me [S1 affirmative] for her every need. Um, and, and then with his own, um, like come to, uh, sobriety, entering a 12-step program and all of that. I, it was rocky, I will say [S1 affirmative]. But it,

01:11:17 Andrea R:

it just organically then created more space for connection because he was available mm-hmm [S1 affirmative]. And, and he has a lot of remorse and regrets about how he wasn't present for, you know, the beginnings of, of her life as he'll say the first 13 months. Um, but, um, for our connection,

01:12:01 Andrea R:

I mean, where we are now, like I wouldn't trade it. I would not trade where we are now for anywhere back, back then [S1 affirmative]. Um, we, we both look back and acknowledge fertility really did a number on us [S1 affirmative], and it, it, um, it's hard when, you know when you need support and so does your partner. It's like that seesaw [S1 affirmative] where you're like not really able to balance one another out. And so we were seeking our own comfort outside of one another.

01:12:45 S1:

[S1 affirmative]. Okay. Well that brings me to my last question, if it's okay to ask you [Andrea R affirmative], how you're feeling about the possibility of pregnancies in the future. If that's something you're interested in, if you guys together are thinking about it [Andrea R affirmative], and if so, how you're, how you're feeling about that?

01:13:08 Andrea R:

Yeah. Um, so that actually was what I was meeting with my, um, medical intuitive about [S1 affirmative]. Um, I wanted to get more insight into like energetically, with where my chakras were, if I'm ovulating. [Hmm.] Um, and, and also just shine, um, a light into where I can focus my energy, um, because I could see he and I, we would like to have more children. And, um, and we're starting to, it's easy - we're starting to - he and I are both like pretty, um, Type A planner. Like we like, we like things a certain way. We like, um, to know what to expect. We, I think, I don't say that like we're unique, I just [S1 affirmative], you know, that's, um, the reality. And so I had a breakdown recently of like, this is starting to feel, oh, and he did, you know, we were able both able to come together and say like, the last thing we want is for, uh, you know, a replay [S1 affirmative] of like how emotionally distressing everything that we went through, um, was. And, and we do believe that we're going to have more children and the fertility world is not going to be where we're headed. We're not, we're not looking at inviting them into this realm, um, and if that means, well, here's the thing with sobriety and also with fertility, is one day at a time [S1 affirmative]. Like, and so for today, we live with such great joy that Charlotte brings into our life [S1 affirmative]. And, and that for today, that's enough. And, and we hold both that we are open to the other babies that want to join our family, and that we're doing what's in our power to invite them in [S1 affirmative], and without oversteering and temping and like [laughter], you know,

01:15:57 S1:

Planning too much.

01:16:00 Andrea R:

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. Like it's holding that like awareness and also just leaving some room for the, the soul to anchor when it's ready.

01:16:16 S1:

Yeah. I mean, there's something really to be said, I think there's a beautiful starting place in removing the barriers you can and being open to what's next and just seeing,

01:16:27 Andrea R:

Yeah. Yeah.

01:16:29 S1:

Well, I'm glad to hear that.

01:16:31 Andrea R:

Thank you. Thank you.

01:16:35 Andrea R:

Um, I think for me, this, this advice for myself, or takeaway for myself would be to give myself the room to have a different story [S1 affirmative]. Um, different than what, the beliefs I was raised with, um, different from my friend, different from the woman in my hypnobirthing class [laughter].

01:17:20 S1:

Yeah. Yeah.

01:17:23 Andrea R:

Um, and

01:17:24 S1:

maybe different even than you expected.

01:17: 26 Andrea R:

Certainly different than I expected.