

[Book Journeys Author Interview - July 27, 2017](#)

Maggie McReynolds with Cindi Laree, author of *Flipping the Fairytale*.

"Keep writing forward. Absolutely." ~Cindi Laree

Maggie:

Hey, everybody! Welcome to another episode of Book Journeys Radio. Every week, on Book Journeys Radio, we talk to accomplished authors who've gone from just having an idea for a book to a finished book that's out there making a difference in the world. So, our goal for this show is for you to come away from it inspired and motivated to write your book, whether it's your first or your third or, in case of a couple of our authors, your sixth or your seventh. Today's author is Cindi Laree. She is a life coach, and her book is titled *Flipping the Fairytale*. Hey, Cindi, welcome!

Cindi:

Hi, Maggie! Thank you for having me!

Maggie:

Oh, it's so great to hear you and - and I - I could see you, but it's - it's all virtual. So, let's just say, "hear you" and I'm imagining your face, so I think to help - help orient our listeners, I usually start with the same question. So, could you tell everybody what your book's about and who it's for?

Cindi:

My book is actually ... a conglomeration of the lessons that I learned while dating post-divorce. So, it's a journey and it's really written for women who are out of a significant relationship, whether that was actually ... dating situation, but as they're trying to transition back into the dating world.

Maggie:

Yeah. So, that's not always an easy journey, is it?

Cindi:

Well, it's comedic and it can be very frustrating and - and honestly, it can be very overwhelming. For me, specifically, I had been married for thirteen years. So, it had been a very long time since I had tried to date. And we didn't have online dating when my husband and I had met, and so, you did it the hard way. You went out to places, you met people, your friends set you up. Now, it's a completely different, in a lot of ways, virtual world, where you're talking to people online and it's ... - it - and when you're not meeting in person, it's so easy to be deceived.

Maggie:

Right. Right.

Cindi:

The majority of relationships for talking are through text messages or e-mails or dating websites. So, really, just navigating that and ... having someone - helping someone, or being able to find your Prince Charming.

Maggie:

Thus flipping the fairytale.

Cindi:

Yes.

Maggie:

Yup. So, while you were talking, it occurred to me that the dating world is different and so, I think, is the book - book writing - book publishing world, ... back when I was in college and imagining being an author or a writer, wha - whatever I was thinking. ... I still have pretty old-fashioned thoughts in my mind of probably the way things were in, I don't know, 1950's New York or something like that, not that I'm that old, but ... what was - so, you went into this very new process with the Author Incubator. W - w - what do you wish you had known before you wrote the book?

Cindi:

Oh, what do I wish I'd known?

Maggie:

Yeah.

Cindi:

That's easy. How easy it can be to - to actually write a book. 'Cause I had toyed with writing in a book and - and I guess I don't wanna say "toyed with it." It's on my bucket list, it was my ... dream of ... someday, I wanna write a book and have it published. But it always seemed too big, and too out of the realm of the possibility.

Maggie:

Yeah.

Cindi:

Because, who was I to write a book? So, the process was amazing, and it was so much easier than I've anticipated.

Maggie:

So, you were picturing, I don't know, sweating blood?

Cindi:

I was picturing, possibly, the 1950's version of sitting in front of a typewriter - I don't even own a typewriter - but, sitting in front of a typewriter and ... massive writer's block, pulling and wadded up papers thrown and strewn about my bedroom or my office, wherever the case may be, and just literally pounding my head on ... how do I write this, what do I say, ... what do I do that makes someone want to read a book? ... how does that happen? So, yeah, it was - in my mind, it was very overwhelming, what it took to write a book.

Maggie:

So - so, having... it, did you have a vision of - of what it would look like, at the end, of what your - what your book would - would be like, and - and how it would be to be an author?

Cindi:

Well -

Maggie:

"No" is a perfectly okay answer.

Cindi:

No. No! Because I - because, to be quite honest, I think it was - like I said, it was such a big dream that I didn't have any context around what that looked like. To actually - one, have the stick-to-it-iveness to complete a manuscript, put thirty thousand words down on a paper that someone else is gonna wanna read, and ... two, just how to get through that. I didn't know anything about publishing, I didn't know ... editing, and ... it was - it was just so huge, ...the concept seemed like something other people could do, but not me.

Maggie:

Where ... in the program, I have ... my own ideas about this, since I went in the same program, but where was the first point ... in the trainings and the exercises, where you ... got a little vision of, "Oh. Oh! Wait a minute."

Cindi:

I actually - I have to say, it was - it was really in one of the very first assignments was - or one of the really - the beginning - yeah, it's in the beginning, when we were talking about ... who are you writing your book for? And - and the guidance that was given by Angela and Author Incubator was, honestly, fantastic. It was something I had never really thought about. But when you're trying to write a book for everybody out there, it's generic and it's watered down and it's not going to be something anyone wants to read. But going through the process that she talks about, with your ideal reader, and really identifying and connecting with that one specific person who's going to read your book and who is going to ... - you're speaking to them, and - and she uses a phrase, "Like you're writing a love letter to them." And once that clarity hits, it became so much easier. ... okay, I can write this book for one person to read. ... I can look at what ... - what advice I would give one person. ... the advice I would give my daughter, or I would give my

sister, even my best friend dating, 'cause that's really what I was looking at, was ... if my best friend is out there dating, what would I tell her right now? ... we're hopeless romantics. We love love. So, what can I tell her, and how can I tell that to her that will create a huge impact for her? Now, it might not be the same story I tell my sister or my neighbor, but I really feel like that was where the - the "a-ha" moment hit in the process for me was just identifying ... and really coming to grips and really getting to know who my ideal reader was. And then, it's just like having a conversation with them.

Maggie:

Right? Yeah. That's so cool. Did you know, from the very beginning, that you wanted to write a book about dating, about relationships?

Cindi:

Yes. Well, okay. I do have a theory that - I had some really horrific and tragic dating stories. Just guys that misrepresented themselves, guys that totally just had the wrong motivation, guys that completely lied to me about who they were and what they wanted, and - and they were also comedic, and I would be telling my friends about my dating stories, "And you'll never believe this guy that I met," and it was just ..., "You really need to write a book." And so, I really felt called, as weird as that is. I really felt ... I needed to share that information with women, because it is frustrating and it is overwhelming in the dating world. And ... a lot of times, that takes a huge hit to your self-esteem, and that, if I could share the things that I learned about men and the different types of men that I dated, and save another woman from going through that, I felt this really strong calling or obligation to share that message with them and to help ... - if they're already in it, let them know, "You're not alone." Dating sucks, dating can suck. But really, just have that ... - that message to share, that there is hope and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Maggie:

So, you mentioned ... that iconic theme that I think we both have in our heads, the typewriter and the - the ding and the carriage return and all that stuff. Obviously, neither of us have that experience. Did you, however, run into the writer's block that you imagined?

Cindi:

I don't - yeah. Well - the writer's block was interesting, 'cause I - what I had thought writer's block would be, I absolutely didn't run into. But I really feel ... that was because of the solid guidance of the process and - and the Author Incubator, they give you right up front, ... how do you ... - how do you lean into your writing, and I - I believe they call it ... the - the writer feeling scale, or the author feeling scale, before you're writing, ... where are you mentally, and then, how do you work through that? So, I felt ... from the coaching standpoint, they gave me phenomenal resources to get through that. However, I wouldn't call it writer's block, but I did start coming up with a lot of fear and a lot of doubt, and there was a lot of transformation that happened within myself, to become the person who wrote this book, Looking back at - at the time I looked back at where I was, writing the book, and there were some days that I was in

tears and I didn't think I could finish and I didn't think I could write. But then, ... having the support really helps me realize, what if this is actual fear of the book or what is this just dealing with BS from my past and ... feeling, So, there were absolutely fear and doubt with how writer's block ... manifested for me.

Maggie:

What do you think would have happened if you'd been writing your book on your own and you went into those - those feelings, those challenges?

Cindi:

I - I think that I would probably would have stopped because I didn't have - I don't think that I had enough - I - I don't know what the right word is, but the confidence and the stick-to-it-iveness that ... when something gets hard, it's really easy to say, "Oh, well, ... I wasn't a writer anyway. Not what I went to school for, it's not ... my - my career, so maybe next year. ... maybe when I get to a better place, I could pick it up and finish the book." But ... having the coaches - ... having the book coach, having Angela there, and ... having the cohort group of the other authors that were going through the same process, to really just ... be able to sit back and look at calls and - and ... our - our posts and things that we had in our group and say, "Wow! These guys are all going through the same thing. And they can do it, and there's light at the end of the tunnel," and ... really leaning in and - and ... Angela said it several times, "Just keep writing forward. Keep writing forward." And I think, had I not had that coach, or not had that experience, for someone to keep telling me to keep writing forward, I probably would have saved the file on my computer somewhere and figured, "One of these days, I'll get back to it."

Maggie:

Had you ever done that before? I don't mean ... with the idea of the whole book, but somewhere on your hard drive, is there ... beginnings of some somethings?

Cindi:

Oh, absolutely. Yeah, nothing - nothing as major as a book, but there are ... short stories or ... things that it was ..., "Oh, this is fun." And then, it was ..., "Oooh, I don't know what to say anymore," or "I don't know if this matters." And so, I thought I'd just save it, Blog posts started, never finished.

Maggie:

This would be the twenty-first century equivalent of ... the half-finished novel in the desk drawer, right?

Cindi:

Absolutely.

Maggie:

So, was it - for - for you, I'm hearing that the ability to finish was predicated on coaching, on accountability and deadline, and - and I'm glad you mention it, on having a group of people who are going through with you.

Cindi:

Yeah. ... and it was - ... the group that I had with me, my cohort group of other authors, I wanna say there's probably about ... eighteen, maybe, in my specific group? But the beauty of the way the program works is, you're ... - you're with people who are already a ... - a month into their process and you're ... - as you get into the process and there's new people added to the process that is just starting. So, it was a really great three hundred sixty perspective of what happens in the process and how you write your book, and so, people had the same questions as someone who's ... a couple of weeks away from having their manuscript completed was asking questions and they were getting feedback and answers, and then, I came into that same question, I was ..., "Oh, wait, I already know the answer, because I remember that Stacy had asked it ... three weeks ago." So, it was just a really comforting and - just having people there that you felt accountable for and - or, that having people there to hold you accountable, but also having that support from people who genuinely knew what you were going through. And that ... - the process and ... - there were so many times that I remember ... - Angela sometimes can be the tough love person. And I remember her saying, "That's not the problem." "No, I promise, this is what the issue is," and she's ..., "No, it's not." And I remember ... being frustrated, ... "Wait a minute! No, that's the problem." And the reality of the situation was, that was the problem that I was creating to not solve the actual problem that I had. And ... so, there were some of those weird things that ... came up and - and unless you've really been in that process, I think it's ... hard to understand, but just knowing that, at any given time, I completely felt absolutely supported. I felt like people genuinely cared and were invested in what I was doing. And ... - it was just an amazing process for writing my first book. And I really - I'm looking forward to writing a second book through the same process.

Maggie:

How awesome. So - so, so far, what's - what's the best thing that's come out of having your own book out there in the world?

Cindi:

Well, I have a - I have a published book, for one. I have a deal - I have a deal with Morgan James to print - to do the print copies, and then they will be for sale in ... bookstores, which is fantastic. It's a bestselling - a bestselling book, so these are some of the things that are really awesome about it, and I'm just now getting to a place where I feel comfortable saying, "My guess! I do have a bestselling book! I am an author." And - and it's exciting, No matter what happens in my life, I will never not be a bestselling author again. And to be quite honest, sometimes that's a lot to wrap your head around.

Maggie:

Right? Or the idea that after - long after you're gone, your words will still be out there, somewhere,

Cindi:

Right?

Maggie:

That' weird to me anyway.

Cindi:

Yeah. Well - and I will also tell you that some of the cool things that have happened is, it really has also ... - really helps me launch my coaching business, so I have a great tool to - an awareness tool to get the message out about my coaching business that I do. I've converted a lot of clients, which, I think, has really helped. The other thing is just knowing and reading some of the reviews of my book. Some are good, and I actually have a bad review on my book on Amazon. And when I first read it, I was ... upset, because it was ..., "Hey, wait a minute! That's - this person didn't actually even read the book." I have since found out that it's written by one of the guys that I wrote about in the book.

Maggie:

A-ha!

Cindi:

That's - that's gonna happen, if you're gonna be a dragon. Don't get ... don't get upset when I tell the story. And so, when I read the - and - and I really didn't know what to do. I had this bad review and I was ..., "Oh, my gosh." So, I went back to ... a lot of my cohort group, and I was ..., "Okay, I have a bad review! What do I do?" ... And I got some really great advice on how to do and what to do with it. And so, I was ... mulling over what to do. And then, I went back to ... address the review, and I thought I should just comment something. Even if it was just to say, "Hey, I'm grateful that you took the time to take a review - ... to write a review. Thank you." But then, I got back into the reviews, and there was another review from someone commenting on the bad review, who said that they read the book, and whoever wrote that review never wrote the book, and they didn't understand, because if you read the book, you would understand that it's about this journey, and it's this and it's that. And so, I just had this crazy awesome moment where I was ..., "Holy crap!" Someone that I don't even know wrote - ... came to my defense as a writer to say, "Hey, listen. This is a good book, and it's helped me, and it's helped ... the people around me, and - and I did this journey and it was amazing." And it was ..., "Holy crap!" ... people read it, and it mattered. And ... they listened. ... it touched them,

Maggie:

Awesome.

Cindi:

Their perspective. And that, quite honestly, Maggie, has been one of the most phenomenal moments, it's just knowing that I actually do have an outlet for my message to share what it is I'm passionate about. And I'm passionate about love, and most - even moreso than love is about finding self-love and ... finding that within yourself. So -

Maggie:

That's a great story, and that - that is very cool. The - the Universe and another reader came to your defense.

Cindi:

Yeah. It was amazing.

Maggie:

Has there been anything about the - ... we've talked about the things that were - you wish you'd known. Was there anything that was ... really different or surprising about this whole - whole ..., this whole process? ... "Wow, that's crazy, I wasn't expecting that!"

Cindi:

Yeah, honestly, I think it's just that it - truly, the ease of the process. Everything going back to that 1950's version of how you write a book, the - the typewriter and the long nights and the not changing out of your pajamas for four or five days, and that may or may not have actually happened while it was ... stay in my pajamas for several days. But it just - I think the fear of writing the book, of just how monumental the task would be, and then, to get into the process and not have that - ... have a real comfort, have a lifeline, have a way to ask questions when you don't ... - don't necessarily know where to go or ... - but also have my own ... unique experience and my own opportunity to use my words and say what I wanna say, because when I - actually, when I told my dad that I was gonna work with the Author Incubator and a book coach, he said it sounded like someone was gonna be ghostwriting my book. And he's ..., "Sounds like someone's gonna write your book for you." And I was ..., "I don't think that." And he's ..., "Well, so, I don't understand, then." And so, I was also very pleasantly surprised that ... I got the encouragement to write my own words and to deliver my own message the way that I wanted to do it. It wasn't someone coming back in and saying, "Yeah, this isn't gonna work. You need to tell this story." Or, "Say it this way." It was a very open, creative process, yet structured, and I know that sounds very strange, but there was ... a process and things in place to help me be successful, but also enough space for me to create whatever it was I wanted to create in that same environment. And for that, completely blew my expectations, and I was so grateful for that opportunity.

Maggie:

Well, the nice thing is that, it's - it's ... all chunked down into manageable mini-goals and tasks, right? It's not like it's just, somebody throws you in an empty room with a laptop and says, "So, write a book, good luck with that!"

Cindi:

Right. Absolutely. The assignments were broken up, and - and things that you don't ... - there were - there are things about - ... spending a lot of time, I think, up front, identifying your ideal reader and then really finding a way to connect with them and - or - I actually still have a basket that I created, and in it, has the things that connect me with my ideal reader. So, no surprise, I have the movie *Rapunzel* and ... I have *Beauty and the Beast* and I have flowers and chocolates and teddy bears and things that are very ... romantic and very ... supery-duper in love ... over-the-top hopeless romantic kind of things that I have to hold on to. And I still have that ... - I actually still have the basket sitting in my office as a connection to keep me to my ideal reader. And so, even when I was writing, I had those ... tangible items that I could go back to, that I had ... gathered up. I had a great inline of ... what's in line with my story, and what am I talking ... - what makes sense? What's good to have in there? It's just - there were so many ideas and so many activities that really helped lay an excellent foundation for the creative process to happen that it was ... a manifesting miracle or whatever, just how quickly things all came together.

Maggie:

Way better than the empty room and the typewriter.

Cindi:

Right. Right. And I'm trying to write a book for everybody

Maggie:

Right. So, I know that people listening, there is at least - at least one or a - a thousand people listening who wanna write a book or have started to write a book, they can't finish it, what - what would the wisdom be you have for them?

Cindi:

For the people who really wanna write a book, do it. Absolutely, do it. You will not regret it. And then, for the people who have been working on it for awhile, rather that - years or months, honestly, scrap it. Because, if it's taken you that long and you haven't been able to complete it, you have probably changed as a person from when you started writing the book. So, I would say, start fresh, get some really good perspective on writing. If you're not in a place to join the Author Incubator, at least get Angela's book, *The Difference Process*. It's an excellent tool, and it'll guide you in the steps that ... she worked with us on in our book process. And then, once you really know who you're writing the book about, it's so much easier to flow through that process. Hold yourself accountable and give yourself an end date. Don't - don't stretch it out over the years. Way too difficult. Too difficult, too much editing, too much confusion. So, if you're gonna do it, do it.

Maggie:

Start and keep going 'til you finish. Write forward, correct?

Cindi:

Yes. Keep writing forward, absolutely.

Maggie:

Keep writing forward. Good advice for everybody. Cindi Laree is the author of *Flipping the Fairytale*, currently available on amazon.com and out in bookstores - do you have a publish date yet, Cindi?

Cindi:

I don't. I actually have a meeting with them tomorrow, so looking forward to getting that information.

Maggie:

That's awesome. So, *Flipping the Fairytale*, currently on amazon.com, and at some point in the not-too-distant future, available at your favorite bookstore near you. Personally, I'm - I'm hoping for the airport bookstore. That - that's when I know I'll have made it.

Cindi:

How cool would it be.

Maggie:

Once you find my book at an airport.

Cindi:

Yes.

Maggie:

Cindi, thank you so much for being here, I really appreciate you.

Cindi:

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Maggie:

Can't wait to hear about what Book Number Two is about.

Cindi:

I love Book Number Two, Book Number Two's all about loving yourself

Maggie:

Awesome! Awesome, can't wait. Thanks for joining us, and everybody, thanks for listening, and this has been another episode of Book Journeys Radio! Talk to you next time.

