

[Book Journeys](#) Author Interview - August 9, 2012

**Dr. Angela Lauria with Darrell Knoch, author of *Mastering a Healthy Self-Image: The Guidebook for Real Happiness and Enormous Success***

*"I had to go do something that really meant something to the world, not just going out and stacking up some more money" - Darrell Knoch*

**Angela:**

Well hello everybody and welcome to another episode of Book Journeys Radio! Here on Book Journeys Radio, we talk to authors about their first time writing their book, going from an idea in their head to a book in their hands.

Today, we have with us an author named Darrell Knoch. Darrell is the author of "Mastering a Healthy Self-Image: The Guidebook for Real Happiness and Enormous Success". I think we all want that, so-- Darrell, thanks for being here today!

**Darrell:**

Well, thank you so much for having me.

**Angela:**

Great, and if they'd want to check you out while they're listening in, it looks like [truewealthuniversity.com](http://truewealthuniversity.com) is the best place to go?

**Darrell:**

That is—you know, obviously, [darrellknoch.com](http://darrellknoch.com) is out there, but [truewealthuniversity.com](http://truewealthuniversity.com) really has the most information out there.

**Angela:**

Terrific. So if you want to stalk Darrell while we are talking, go ahead and check out [truewealthuniversity.com](http://truewealthuniversity.com) or [darrellknoch.com](http://darrellknoch.com), which is K-N-O-C-H dot com.

Darrell, tell us a little bit about "Mastering a Healthy Self-Image".

**Darrell:**

I grew up with an extremely poor self-esteem when I was a kid, and so, as it came time for me to retire, I took a few years off, and then I decided that I really wasn't excited about being retired anymore, and I felt like I really wanted to go do something. But I felt like if I was gonna go do something, I had to go do something that really meant something to the world, not just going out and stacking up some more money. I'd had a fairly good level of success in my lifetime, and I felt like I wanted to go out and I wanted to touch the world in a positive way.

I have had kind of an unusual upbringing; at age one, I had had an accident that crushed my face, and we were on Welfare, and I—we didn't have the money to

change any of that, fix any of that at the time. I grew up with a crushed face, so that didn't help my self-esteem at all, but at age sixteen, I was able to get part of my face fixed, and then again at age forty, I got the majority of—rest of my face fixed. At age 22, I really went on a quest to start really building my self-esteem, building my self-confidence, building my knowledge base, so that I could go somewhere in life, and I look back and I said, you know, you know how to take a young boy that grew up in the ghetto of Chicago, with a really poor self-esteem, with a crushed face, and you turned him into a highly successful businessperson with a very high self-esteem, and more importantly, very happy with me. And I said, if you know how to do that, then that's your lot in life from this day forward; you need to go out and you need to write a book that takes all of the life lessons that you've learned and pass them out to the world, and spend the next twenty years teaching the world those same lessons.

**Angela:**

So, we always talk about on this show when you have that idea in your head—that first time you got that idea—I need to get these lessons out to the world. Until the moment you were sitting in your porch, or in your mail room, holding your book in your hand. How long was that process?

**Darrell:**

It took me about eight months for all of that to happen.

**Angela:**

Wow! That is lightning fast! I think you have the record on this show! I've never heard that number before! You must be really ready to write it.

**Darrell:**

You know, I've been a businessperson all my life. 35 years that I've spent on in my own companies, and so, as I decided to do this, I looked at it as, this is going to be my number 6 company that I'm gonna take national and international. I looked at it as, how would I approach it as a businessman?

**Angela:**

Interesting. Can you give us some tips, maybe give people a couple pieces [of] advice?

There are a lot of people who would love to turn their book project around from—you know, you had you holding your book in eight months is really an incredible accomplishment. What's a couple tips you might give people to reach that same goal?

**Darrell:**

Well, some of the things that I did, because I fell into the same traps that probably most anyone would fall into right at my beginning. I was doing it in my office, and then,

you know, \_\_\_\_\_ if anything that would come up would catch my attention, and I would get off track, and I wouldn't be working as diligently towards that project as I should be.

I owned a motor home, and I literally took that motor home out into the middle of nowhere, and \_\_\_\_\_, and I just forced myself, every morning, I'd get up, I'd be in that motor home, I had my computer set up, and I would get up in the morning and go right to starting to write that book.

It took me about five months to actually physically write the whole thing, and then it took me about three months of education and research and so on, to go through the process. I set up my own publishing company, and I researched the printing aspect of it. Being in business all my life, I've had lots of things printed, so I knew the printing industry pretty well.

Going through that whole process, my advice would be, if you're really gonna be serious, and you really want to get it done that quickly, you gotta go sequester yourself someplace, so that you spend four [or] five hours a day writing.

**Angela:**

Interesting. What about the—how about the technical aspect? Did you hire somebody? Did you self-publish? In eight months, you couldn't have worked with a big New York publisher--very lucky to turn around in eighteen months.

**Darrell:**

Yeah, you know, being that I had been in business for so long of my life[sic], as I was writing, one of the things for me is I found that I could write for about a stretch of three to four hours, and then maybe, sometimes, another hour or two after I went and had some lunch. After that period of time, giving myself a little bit of a break during the day, in the afternoons, I would spend researching.

I really thought, you know, just for my purposes—not everybody has the same situation that I do, but for me, I researched big publishing houses, I talked to a few of them, and I came to the realization that for me, I wasn't about to spend six months to a year working with a variety of publishing houses, trying to \_\_\_\_\_ their end, long enough for them to decide to write—to publish my book.

On top of that, I felt like, for me, they were gonna give me fifty cents or a dollar for every book that I sold, but yet all of them said to me, how much money—you know, we wanna make sure that you're gonna spend two, three hundred thousand dollars on a marketing program before we're-- If you're willing to talk to us about that, then we're willing to talk to you further, but you're still only gonna get fifty cents to a dollar every time you sell a book. [**Angela:** Pretty much. Yup.]

I said, yeah, that just doesn't make sense. I'm gonna spend—which now has been a few hundred thousand dollars. I'm gonna spend that few hundred thousand dollars and then-- I'm gonna turn around and give them all the money?

Bottom line was, they told me, you're gonna do all the marketing. We might open a door or two for you here or there. We're not even sure, you know, in my particular genre—it was considered a self-help book, and one of the number one things that almost everybody said is, big deal, so you're another self-help telling people how to happier and healthier. There's fifty thousand of those out already—what makes you anything special and why would your book do any better than anybody else's?

After I heard that a few times, and the whole mindset of the financial end of it, I just said, I think I'll research the self-publishing industry—the vanity publishing, I guess you might call it--

**Angela:**

Although I think that title, vanity publishing, used to have such a negative connotation, and now it really doesn't. I hear people using the term “author-funded,” which seems to have a more of an empowering tone than, you know, “this book sucks, but I'm doing it out of my own vanity.”

**Darrell:**

Right. I think that's a good title for author-funded publishing, I like that.

**Angela:**

I'm partial to that too. I always feel like “vanity press” seems like, it's a terrible book, but I paid for it, so they took it on.

**Darrell:**

Yeah, I checked that industry out also, and for the most part, it seemed as if you did make a little bit more money on that, maybe two, three dollars a book each time you would sell it.

You're still in that \_\_\_\_\_ position, you're the responsible party for all the marketing, all of the distribution, all of the – you might find someone who has some connections, but just because somebody has a connection to be able to get your book listed in Barnes and Noble, does not mean any Barnes and Noble is gonna carry your book, just because it's listed through Baker or Taylor or England, or whatever it might be, you still have to go through the process of building relationships in order to get them to carry that book.

I looked at that whole process, and I said, I'm gonna start my own publishing company. I looked at the possibilities, I looked at the requirements, and I started my own

publishing company; [and] fortunately, within three months of releasing the book, I was already Number Four on the Top Ten at Amazon.

**Angela:**

Wow. That is amazing success.

What do you, 'cause obviously, you've had a lot of experiences in the process, what do you wish that you knew before you started this project?

**Darrell:**

Well, there's a number of things; without a doubt, it is a very different industry. In a sense—I'll use the words, I don't know that I mean this literally, but it's much more of a closed-off industry. There's a lot of people that will tell you in this industry that they have all the connections, they know the right things to do, they know the right processes to take. Unfortunately, about-- I know that there are some people out there that really have some legitimate businesses that do that, but I found that maybe 60. 70% of the ones that I came across were not legitimate; they were willing to take your money as long as you would continue to dish it out, but they'll give you very little back for it.

What I wish that I would've known, is that there is a whole industry revolving around the author industry that is there just to---they teach seminars, you can go spend two, three hundred thousand dollars just to own the seminars if you try—(Angela: Right, probably not even too hard.) A lot of them, they may give you some information, but when you're paying for those ten, and fifteen and twenty thousand dollar coaching fees, they're not giving you that kind of value in return.

I wish that I had known a little bit more about that, that piece of the industry, because I did get caught up in a couple of those, and realized how little they really provided for those big dollars they were asking for.

**Angela:**

Right, and also, keeping in mind that in your case, you do have more business experience than a lot of authors, so in some cases, there might be information that would be more valuable to some people.

**Darrell:**

That's true. I'm not saying that any of the information that I gained was not from value, 'cause there certainly was, but I definitely ran into several people that told you that they could get you on every stage, they could get you listed in every book, they could get all your books carried in every bookstore in the country, you just pay them ten thousand dollars a month, and they'll make all that stuff happen.

**Angela:**

They'll tell you what to do.

**Darrell:**

Within a certain period of time, you start asking questions, hey, you know, I'm paying you ten thousand dollars a month, you promised all of these things, when is any of that stuff gonna happen? They say well, you know, they're not accepting your book. It's just another self-help book.

They definitely were in the business of charming people that have a few bucks to spend, get 'em in, talk to 'em, tell them all the exciting things they're gonna do for them, and then, as soon as their money runs out, or they find out that you're really not doing anything, they expect that they're gonna keep charming people and bringing 'em in, and getting money for two or three months, and then, somebody's gonna get wind of what they're not doing, and then they're gonna leave them, and then they get the next one.

They go to trade show after trade show after trade show, just looking for people that they can turn, two or three months at a time.

**Angela:**

Yeah, I've definitely seen that too. It is the \_\_\_\_\_ of this industry, it's for sure.

So, why don't we talk a little bit about, I think those are some of the--some of the horrors and some of the surprising lessons when you go into writing a book so often it's from this...sort of pure and helpful place. There's definitely some seedy sides, and some hard things you have to get through, in any case as an author, but there's also a lot of upsides. So, what is the best thing to come out of having your own book for you?

**Darrell:**

I really enjoy meeting people, talking with them. But even more than that, I get excited every time somebody says to me, I read your book, it really touched my life, it's made such a difference with my son, my daughter, my granddaughter—you know, whatever the case may be.

I have, also along with my book—you know, with any business, you gotta have some marketing materials. Just like I did with the other companies that I took national and international in my lifetime, I always have marketing materials. I have a couple of them that I use very heavily; I look at them as more than just marketing materials, they really are pieces that really truly help people, but yet, as a businessperson, I can also look at them and say, these are marketing materials.

One of them is a Gratitude Coin that I've designed about seven years ago; it's about the size of a half a dollar, and it says on one side, "Gratitude Coin", and the other side, it says, "I'm grateful for..." and then leaves the question, you know, for each of us to answer every day. I've started passing those out about seven years ago, long before the book ever became part of my daydream, and I was just doing that because I wanted to touch people in a positive way.

When I would go to a restaurant, when I'd go to a store, when I'd go get my car serviced or whatever the case may be, I would always give Gratitude Coins out and say, I want to give you this Gratitude Coin as a way of saying I really appreciate what you've done for me. You've taken good care of me, you gave me a great smile, you had a great attitude.

I try to point those kinds of things out, and then I'd give them that Gratitude Coin, and I'd say, every time you'd touch this Gratitude Coin, you're going to remember that I said you're special. Every time you touch it, it's gonna bring you back to this moment of feeling good about yourself because somebody told you you were special. I've given out about twenty—I'm going to say maybe 26,000 of those Gratitude Coins in the last seven years.

**Angela:**

Wow, that is amazing. What I love about this is so many authors say to me, they hate marketing, they don't wanna do marketing, marketing feels yucky, or somehow unpleasant to them; to think of, I mean, this—I totally have chills, absolutely everywhere.

It's a great story; it is marketing, but it sure doesn't feel like marketing. It feels like a gift to give it or receive it, and as a way of making people remember you. I bet a lot of these people, I don't know if you have your web site on the coin or something, but it would make me curious to go check you out.

**Darrell:**

Well, you know, obviously, as a businessperson, which we all, as authors—we have to start thinking of ourselves as a businessperson if we really, truly wanna be successful, I have to have my website on that coin.

So it is there, and then the second thing that I do—in fact, I had the good fortune of giving that Gratitude Coin out to a lady at a restaurant that was taking care of me about six months ago. As I went through that little story with her, one of the things that I tell people about that Gratitude Coin also as they give it out, is I say, this coin has magic in it. If you touch it every day, it reminds you to be more grateful. Being more grateful makes you a happier person, being a happier person changes your life. If you want the magic, you've got to touch it every day.

As I said all of that whole spiel to this young lady that—she had a great attitude that night, I had somebody touch me on the shoulder, and she said "I'm a third grade school teacher, and I just watched what you just did. I'm always trying to teach my third graders acts of kindness and saying 'Thank you.' Showing that gratitude. You just did both of those things wonderfully with that coin, and the way you talked to the lady that took care of you."

From that happening, we chatted a little bit, I gave her a couple of gratitude coins, she started using them in her classrooms and her school. Then, her whole school started using the Gratitude Coin.

The local NBC station in Phoenix, Arizona, where I lived for a number of years got wind of it, did three different stories on me, and the gratitude coin and the schools. Now, because of that one thing, I got more than a hundred and thirty schools from coast to coast using that Gratitude Coin in their classroom. Not only was it something that I was doing that touched the world, but now, if you think about it, I got school teachers all over the country buying my book to continue to further their education on how to have a good, healthy mindset, but they are using that Gratitude Coin in schools from coast to coast, which the kids get Gratitude Coins, they take them home to their parents, and their parents see my website on that Gratitude Coin, and so, I get a double bang out of that because I'm really touching some people's lives in such a positive way. Every one of those people that I've touched-- like I said, 26,000 and more, they see my website on that coin when they get it.

**Angela:**

I just think that's such a beautiful, beautiful example of how Marketing can feel great; there's nothing pushy or used car salesman about it. You're making a difference and spreading your message in a way that's just a Win-Win all around.

I think it's a great example of some of the creative thinking that can come out of having your own book, that can lead to making connections you would never in a million years expect.

We're almost at the end of our time together, but my last question for everyone is always just, is there any advice you would wanna leave an aspiring author about their journey from wanting to write a book to holding a book in their hands for the first time?

**Darrell:**

Well, my personal opinion is [that] the facts of life are that more than a million people write books and release them each year, but unfortunately, 97, 98 per cent of them sell less than 500 copies of their book during the whole life of the book.



If you're writing, and you just feel like you have a story that you wanna get out, and you wanna get it in a book form so that you feel that sense of accomplishment, and that feeds you, and this is okay, then do whatever you need to do. But if you want to be successful and you really want people to hear your message, look at it as a business, and you do have to do some creative things to market yourself.

I'm gonna take thirty seconds, if you'll allow me, to tell you one more piece to give somebody else another idea.

I have an affirmation card. It's four inches by six inches, and I give it to people to put on their mirror in their bathroom. It simply says I like myself. I love my life. I'm excited, I'm happy, I'm healthy, and I add brightness to the life of everyone I meet. There again, I'm touching people's lives, that they put that on their mirror in their bathroom, they see that, they say that to themselves every day, but right below that is my toll-free number and my website.

Again, I'm doing something that really touches people's lives, but it also is a marketing piece.

**Angela:**

Wow, that's beautiful. That's absolutely beautiful. Darrell Knoch—I have to say that when I saw the notes from my producer about this interview, I really did expect to be interviewing just another self-help author, and you have definitely proven to me what is different and unique about your approach; I love what you do, I appreciate your time. I know you have touched our listeners, and I thank you for your time.

**Darrell:**

Well, thank you so much Angela. I really appreciate you allowing me to be on.

**Angela:**

Terrific. We have next week coming up, we have another great author who'll be here. I am super excited about that...let's see. We are here every Thursday at three PM, and we talk to authors about how they got their first book written.

If there is an author that you would like us to talk to, please feel free to send suggestions to us; we're at Journey Grrl, which is spelled Journey-G-R-R-L, at gmail.com. if there's an author you want us to interview, by all means, send that over for sure, and if you're working on your book, and you would like some help or some guidance, go ahead and drop an email as well. We can send over our free audio class on removing the obstacles to writing your first book.

We have the Book Circle Live event coming up in Phoenix, Arizona in October. That's October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> in Phoenix, Arizona. You can go to [bookcirclelive.eventbrite.com](http://bookcirclelive.eventbrite.com), or drop an email to [journeygrrl@gmail.com](mailto:journeygrrl@gmail.com), and we'll let you know more about that. You can write the book that's in your heart. You can remove the obstacles to being an author, and I think we've gotten some great suggestions from our guest Darrell Knoch today. Please check out True Wealth University, and we'll see you here next week, at 3pm on Thursday! Buh-bye!