

**Book Journeys Author Interview - September 27, 2012**

**Dr. Angela Lauria with Jamie Wolf, author of *Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to Success in Business and Life!***

*“The beauty of teaching is that you need to find seven or eight different ways to say the same thing, because it resonates differently with different people.” ~Jamie Wolf*

Angela:

Hello, and welcome to Book Journeys Radio! What an exciting last ninety seconds I have had, oh, my goodness! This is Angela Lauria, from Journey Grrr! Publishing, so excited to be here! I did not know if I was gonna make it! So, don't let your virtual assistant change your password thirty minutes before your radio show. Oh, wow! Wow! I am really excited to be here with a very special guest for me, a personal friend and a wonderful author, and, unfortunately, I have not had the chance to greet her, I usually like to greet my guests before the show begins, but I did not do that today. So, I am going to greet her here in front of our whole audience. Jamie, are you here?

Jamie:

I am, Angela, hi.

Angela:

Hi, Jamie! Everybody, I'm so excited to introduce you to Jamie Wolf and her exciting work, I think that you are really gonna get a lot out of hearing about her book, *Start Over*, which was just released, I think, within the last two weeks, right Jamie?

Jamie:

That's correct!

Angela:

Okay. So, what we try and do here every week, on Book Journeys Radio, is, I start off with the author by talking about their book, and so I want you to tell everyone about your book, and then we'll do it for the next twenty, twenty-five minutes or so, then we'll talk about the process of writing, publishing, and now, a little bit about promoting your book. So, let's just start, but why don't you introduce yourself and tell them about *Start Over*?

Jamie:

Well, thanks, Angela. So, I'm Jamie Wolf, and I wrote a book called *Start Over! Start Now! Ten Keys to Success in Business and Life!* and what I do is, I help people who've experienced unexpected or unwelcome change start over and live the life of their dreams, and the start over and its ten keys gives a framework to how to start over, and it really gives you a strategy and keys to go through, whether you are trying to start a business, whether that's your start over, or whether there are just habits and behaviors of successful entrepreneurs that you could apply to your own everyday life in places that you're stuck. So, it's a journey story, and

there's a lot of different stories in it, and examples, and it's also some very strategic mapping of "how to," how to move forward and be successful and have that life of your dreams.

Angela:

Well, Jamie, I think we had a little technical problem there but, I - one of the things that comes up with a lot of people that I work with on writing their book is that they have had something personal happen to them, a hard lesson that they had to learn, and they want to help other people, they want to teach other people. And, at the same time, they don't necessarily - they don't necessarily only want to work with people who have gone through the exact, same challenges they went through, they wanna make that - they wanna make that broader. That sort of is the case with your book, you had your own start over, that had to do with a layoff and some family stuff, but the book really applies more broadly. How did you make that transition from what you learned in your own life to helping others?

Jamie:

Well, it's a little bit of a story. I was sort of living parallel lives, so I had stuff going on in my own personal life that obligated me to start over, but at the same time, I had a wonderful opportunity to work with many, many entrepreneurs. So, I've been an entrepreneur myself, I've started a tech company, and then I had the opportunity to coach and train a lot of other entrepreneurs, and in doing that I found some patterns of places they got stuck, issues that they ran into, you know, a lot of entrepreneurs will say, "Oh, my God, I can't make payroll this week," and if there are any entrepreneurs listening, that's a pretty familiar and scary place to be. So, entrepreneurs would have trouble finding money, they'd have trouble finding good employees, they'd have trouble making payroll, they'd have trouble finding - attracting new customers, a lot of growing pains, and there were just habits and behaviors that those people could really benefit from. So, the book addresses a lot of those, and at the same time I saw parallels to those ways of needing to recover from mistakes and learn how to develop yourself, and ways of hearing messages and information that was coming to you and learning how to use that, things like learning how to network, whether you're starting over for the first time in a new town and you just don't know anyone, or you're trying to do it from a professional viewpoint. You need to learn how to know how to do some of those things comfortably. So, it was a way for me of putting all these disparate experiences together into a framework that just about anybody could use in certain situations, and it's really a way of giving back, because what I found most, when I was starting over, is the phenomenal generosity of the human spirit, and so many angels stood up for me when I had no idea what I was gonna do next, and they helped me out, and now I really wanna do that for other people.

Angela:

Yeah, I think that's so powerful, and it reminded me when you were talking a little bit of - when you're working on with somebody on a resume, when you're working on a resume, they always tell you to look through the transferable skills -

Jamie:  
Mm-hmm.

Angela:  
- and it seems like you really found, like, the transferable lessons, and then apply them, kind of more generally so that people can make them specific to themselves, so instead of zooming in on something specific you did for one client on your resume, looking at what's the broader scale that anyone who might be interested in working with you could apply, so I think that's a great lesson. The next thing I really want to talk about is, you've referenced a couple of times .. is really important, which is the idea of a framework, especially when you are working on a "how-to" book, or a self-help book, something where you're teaching, helping people to understand that with a structure, and I think you mentioned that you have ten keys?

Jamie:  
Yeah.

Angela:  
Is that what you have with your - talk about your framework and how you came up with it.

Jamie:  
So, from the very first book that I wrote, and I've now actually written thirteen although - within the last year and a half -

Angela:  
Wow.

Jamie:  
- but that's not quite as amazing as it sounds, because there's one full-length book that's two hundred fifty pages, and all the other ones are shorter. But the - for my very first one, I was new at the game, and I thought, what's the average length of a book that I can read that's not so overwhelming that I won't pick it up and put it down and give up on it, but long enough that it gives me depth and enough information that I want, and I was looking at it and I looked around two hundred, two hundred fifty pages, and so, I'm just kind of a numbers person, and a list person, and it's like, okay, two hundred pages, if I break it up into ten chapters, that's twenty pages a chapter, I can do that! So, for me, it was segmenting. What does it look like? What's a structure that I can put to it? What's an achievable goal? If it was a little less or a little more, that still seems like something achievable. And then, as I was processing what sorts of things that I felt like were important to share with other people, I started just doing research and I actually just created piles, and for awhile my living room was a scary place to be because I had piles. And so, I created, like, ten stacks of books that I'd read, articles that I'd read, and pictures that I pulled out that reminded me of something that I wanted to say, so I chunked it out and I made it somewhat physical and tangible for me to go see, so that it would either spur my thinking or - for me, it was easier for me to pare down after I had enough

stuff, 'cause my fear, as a new author, was, oh, my gosh, I'm not gonna have enough to say and enough to share, and probably most authors will say at the end that's not the problem they have at all.

Angela:  
Right!

Jamie:  
But that's how I started.

Angela:  
That's great. And, one of the things I want to talk about is, when was the first idea for this book, and then how long did it take you until you went from the idea to holding the book in your hands?

Jamie:  
So, my first idea for it was probably just a little over two years ago. I first started thinking - I mean, probably since I was like four, I thought I was gonna write a book, but, you know, like many, many people, it was like, someday, I'll write a book, someday, I'll write a book, but it became quite real for me and quite compelling two years ago, that I publicly made the statement, "I'm gonna write this book, it's a story that needs to be told, I think I can make a difference, I think I can help people, I'm gonna write this book." And I saw a number of helping courses online saying, write your book in, like, four minutes or six days or six weeks, or ninety days, things like that -

Angela:  
Uh-huh, yeah, one weekend!

Jamie:  
- yeah, and I was like, oh, okay. And so, one friend and coach did say, pick a porch date. And I had just watched *Julie and Julia*, and in that movie Julia Childs actually gets her cookbook, her first ever book, delivered on her porch, and they made a big deal of it in the movie, and that's like, okay, that resonates with me, I don't really have a porch, but I like that idea of getting my books delivered to my porch, so I'm gonna pick a porch date. I missed that date by a year, but what I did do is, I accomplished that book and more in a year and a half. Well - like, just under twenty-four months from the first concept of, here's what my title is, here's what my ten chapter headings are, here's what my sub-headings are, to having a book in my hand.

Angela:  
Mmm. And did you have a writing schedule that you really stuck to, or how did you - how did you actually go about getting those sub-headings filled in?

Jamie:

I did put on a calendar block time, and the idea of, come Hell or high water, this is gonna be the time I write. I didn't do that, it just - my schedule just doesn't - I'm not good at sticking to stuff like that, so I really found that I would write early in the morning, or I would write late in the evening, sometimes, or sometimes I would just get really lucky and have two or three days when I didn't have anything else to do, usually that was when my level of panic was kicking in, when I wasn't making enough progress, and I would kind of try and clear, like, a Friday plus a weekend, and start maybe Friday at five and finish Sunday at, you know, late, and write for that whole time. So, although I did try to visit it regularly, one of the things that actually took me the longest time is actually, after I created all the piles, so I created sort of a basic framework of what I wanted to do, and I had ideas of what the headings were gonna be, the chapter titles and the sub-headings, and I had gathered all this material together, it took me a really long time to write the first couple of sentences, and I just got to the point where, okay, I've just got to start writing something. And then, once I got past that, I just set a date that I wasn't gonna - and I - I promised my - okay, I probably shouldn't say this out loud. I'm a Dunkin Donuts junkie and I promised myself I could ...

Angela:

Oh, you're a Dunkin Donuts junkie! I didn't know we shared that!

Jamie:

I promised myself a special trip to Dunkin Donuts if I could get through the first page. And I did that, and I got to go to Dunkin Donuts, and after that it was easy.

Angela:

Wow! I - I mean, another terrific takeaway, to really just - coming up with rewards that don't - I mean, Dunkin Donuts coffee doesn't have to be, or Dunkin Donuts donuts, you know, it's not a big expense, and it's not a big splurge, but it's really something that motivated you, and tapping into that, I think, is the key, I mean, Dunkin Donuts might not motivate somebody else, it might be Starbucks - personally, I think Starbucks ... are beans, and I don't like their pastries, but that's ... I'm from New England, so that's what happens, but I think, great idea in terms of building rewards into the process?

Jamie:

Right.

Angela:

And so, I think that - that - that process, or that experience where you talked about where it was hard to kind of get the first sentence or two on the page - would you describe that as writer's block? What would you describe that - that as?

Jamie:

So, my - my description for it, and maybe it is writer's block, and I don't recognize what that is, but my description was more a lack of confidence, and so, periodically, throughout the course of writing the book, I would - you know, some days your energy is just lower, and I would go, who the Hell do I think I am? What could I possibly say that someone hasn't already said before on this topic in some ways, entrepreneurship, if you looked at it from that ..., has been covered ad nauseum, I don't have a Ph.D from Harvard in entrepreneurship, so who am I to tell anybody anything, especially since I screwed up and I have this huge failure in my background, it could be perceived as that, who am I to tell anybody anything? And so, on those days when my confidence was very low and the messages that friends and - I have to give a big shout out to my daughter, she was one of the people who really pushed me a lot, said you just - you know, people learn in different ways, and the beauty of teaching is that you need to find seven or eight different ways to say the same thing, because it resonates differently with different people. So, maybe, somewhere in your two hundred pages, there will be one sentence or one concept or one thought that will hit one person on the day they need to hear it, and it will just be the right thing, so who are you to deny them that opportunity? So, get over your ego and get over your being not very confident and put it out there. It doesn't have to fix everything for everybody, but if you can change one life, you've made a difference. And so, that - it wasn't a writer's block, it was a confidence block for me. I did learn not to write on those days -

Angela:

... Go ahead.

Jamie:

I was just gonna say, I did learn not to write on the days that I was feeling particularly shaky, I did learn not just to let it go on those days and just do something else.

Angela:

Mm-hm. Yeah, I have to say, the - the concern that you brought up, the fear that you brought up, of who am I to write this book, I have coached over a hundred life coaches that have lots of tools for how to deal with self-esteem and confidence, and some of them are very successful, and most of them are very - very confident normally, and they all, the number one thing I hear, and there has not been one client that I worked with that hasn't said, "Who am I to write this book?" I believe it is the number one thing that holds people back, and I wonder what books I haven't gotten to read, because somebody was thinking, "Who am I to write this book?" One of the most powerful books I - I have a large collection of books on weight loss, and you talked about entrepreneurship, I don't think there are many people who buy books on entrepreneurship that only buy one book in that category, right? So, I probably have twenty books on entrepreneurship, and God knows I've got twenty books on weight loss, and one - the one book that was the most powerful to me wasn't from a Harvard nutrition guru who has always been on the insurance chart weight limit, the most powerful weight loss books are from people who have gained a lot of weight and figured out how to lose it and keep it off. So, the

challenges you faced and gone through are precisely the thing that, for somebody, might take them somewhere ivory tower perspective might now. Not to say that the ivory tower perspective is wrong, but that brings something else to the discussion, but there needs to be a lot of voices in the room, and I'm definitely so glad that your daughter pushed you that way. I think everybody needs - .. as a coach, but if you've worked with a book coach, or whether it's a friend or a family member or a combination of all of the above, but you really need a champion to hold your hand as you go through the process because, as you said, I mean, it took you a year to two years, probably a year of actually working on on your book to finish it. And, not a marathon, you know, that's not - if it was easy enough to do it a weekend and crank something out, maybe you can do it without having support, but for a year-long project you really do need support.

Jamie:

Absolutely. I would strongly encourage everybody to - probably hiring a coach is just a really good idea as well, because, as much as I appreciate my daughter, for me, and having a family member, sometimes they give you permission to wiggle out of a commitment, and sometimes they tell you what you wanna hear because they're being nice, whereas a coach will probably push you a little bit more, and keep you accountable, and because it is kind of a marathon journey, it's hard to always keep moving forward, so having that person there for you in a professional sense really will let you finish the project, and I really, really, really encourage people, if you think you have a book inside yourself, don't sell yourself short and judge yourself before you get it out there! Go ahead and write it and get someone to help you do it.

Angela:

Yeah. Yeah. So, lets turn a little bit to how you're getting your book into the world. A lot of people come to me - one of the things I offer is a "Should I self-publish" decision toolkit, because so many people came to me and said, "How do I know? Should I self-publish, or should I get an agent? Should I try and find a publisher? Do I work with one of these companies that charge you, but you get to keep the rights to your book but you pay up front?" Vanity publishers or author-funded publishers, so how did you go about making a decision for publishing your book and how did you publish it?

Jamie:

So, I self-published, and I came to that decision because I wanted to keep learning. So my first part of my learning journey was how to write the book and how to put it together and how to pick a title and how to write the back cover copy, and then my second part of learning is, I really wanted to understand how do you do layout and design? How do you get a cover designed? How do you buy an ISBN number, and how do you understand all the copyright things, and how do you get the book out? So, I did self-publish, I did use an editor, I did use a professional layout and design people, I did have someone design a nice cover for me, so I put a team of contractor outsourced people together that brought their level of professionalism to it, so that the finished product would look really good, and then I used lightningsource for the paperback, and then I used bookbaby for the digital. So, I actually became a publisher in

order to work with lightningsource, and I did go ahead, because I had some family members over in Australia, and thought, "Wouldn't it be nice if they can actually buy this book and have it printed over there?" I don't have to mail it all the way from here. So, I signed up for all the different opportunities with lightningsource, they get it published in different geographical locations around the world, and then with bookbaby they work with - they distribute with quite a number of different digital publishers, frankly, some of which I've never even heard of. But now, it's out there, it's available in those forms.

Angela:

And did you consider, like, working with an agent or trying to get a publishing contract, 'cause that's something that you thought about?

Jamie:

I did think about it, and one of the reasons I chose not to pursue a publisher is, I was a little hesitant on the whole book proposal, it felt like I would be writing another book plus a business plan -

Angela:

Mm-hmm.

Jamie:

- and I wasn't really sure that I was ready to do that. If you talk to me again in six or twelve months, I may have changed my mind. I was not ready to do that quite yet, and I was also a little cognizant that, maybe I don't yet know enough about all of the publishing rights issues, and so, I just wanted to have - I'm a little bit of a control freak - I wanted to have it all under my control for now. So, I didn't decide to go with a publisher for those reasons.

Angela:

And it - and when you said, "Talk to me again in eight, ten months," does that mean you're actually considering going to a publisher now, even after your book is out?

Jamie:

No, but I am a firm believer that we need to be open to feedback, and if, a year from now, I'm not satisfied with what I've managed to do with marketing and promotions and sales - I have talked to a couple of mid-tier publishing houses that have looked at the book and they say the quality of all of it is really good, but maybe they could help me reach a wider audience if I were interested in that. So, it's in the back of my mind, that I need to stay open, I can't - I can't be so directed that I'm positive I'm right in my approach, we'll see how I do, and if I'm not doing well, then, in order to get the book out to where it needs to be, perhaps I will need to reconsider, going forward. I don't know yet.



Angela:

Well, that's a great point. So, what is - what is your goal with your book? What is your metric you're looking for? Is it book sales, or how are you using - is your book part of a bigger strategy?

Jamie:

My book is part of a bigger strategy, so I am looking at it as, yes, it's a tool to get out there to really help people, but it's also a measure of credibility. Now, I am a published author, and that was one of the things when I first started writing, to get - to practicing that phrase, "I'm an author of an upcoming book.'

Angela:

Mm-hmm.

Jamie:

And, you know, the first ten or twenty times that I said that, I felt so hollow. (laughs)

Angela:

... on that a little bit?

Jamie:

Yeah! It just, it seemed a little weird, but you know, now I really am. I'm an author, not only of one book but of many books. So, having that credibility, having the book is a - to show that, first of all, my ten keys worked, because I followed them, and it allowed me to finish and accomplish something that I had set out to do, and it has really altered a lot of different things that I'm doing, but it's there for credibility and it's there for part of a larger plan, so the idea of launching some online courses and some online teleseminars series to reach more people and really start pushing the whole marketing end of it.

Angela:

Mm-hm. Terrific! And you did some companion books, which is a little bit different, and do you - do they come with the book, or do you buy each one separately, how does that work?

Jamie:

So, they are available as part of a bundle, and actually, because I really feel that people learn - have different learning styles, the - everything that I've done, created, is available in print version, in digital version so it's easy for people to get in audio and in video. Some people just absorb information differently, I've become a real junkie of things that I can listen to in my car, when I'm taking long drives, so I really appreciate information that's available on a CD.

Angela:

Mm-hmm.

Jamie:

So, all of my material is available in different formats, you can purchase each thing differently, so there is a workbook that accompanies each of the ten chapters in the book, and part of that is because people, again, really learn by doing. So, what I'm doing here is, you know, talking too much, but a lot of people will get information better if they can interact with it, so if they can fill in the blank, or they have to come up with questions, or they can match things, or, or just do interactive storytelling. I've created workbooks that allow people to do that, so the information hopefully makes more sense and stays longer. So, there's a workbook for each chapter in the book, so people will get it, but they can also listen to it, or watch it. And so, you can buy the whole package, or just the book, or some additional pieces that I've - resources that I've put together, and that's all available online, that people can get to.

Angela:

Well, I - if people wanna check out - if people wanna check out how you have set that up, what's the website they can go to?

Jamie:

The website is [thestartover.com](http://thestartover.com), so that's all one word, [www.thestartover.com](http://www.thestartover.com).

Angela:

Excellent. Well, in our final minute or so, I'm wondering if you wanna leave our listeners who are thinking about writing a book or in the early stages. What - what last piece of advice would you leave them with?

Jamie:

I would say, go for it and start today. One of the - the things that helped me in validating what I was doing, and this is always important for entrepreneurs, is to validate the market a little bit. As I was writing, I did share what I wrote with colleagues, so friends and family was good, but also with other people who knew the space that I was talking about, a little bit, so that I could get their feedback. It was scary to do that, you are putting a piece of yourself out in public, but it was good practice, because it was really on, and I could incorporate their feedback, and that let me ultimately create a more solid, valuable product for people, now that it - it's really out in the open, so I would say, absolutely, if you wanna do this, don't give up, just get started, do get a coach, that probably really helps a lot, and be willing to share parts and pieces of it, if not the whole thing, along the way, because the feedback that I got was encouraging, and a lot of people, even some of those - you know, some of, you know, the stuff that was, maybe, hard to hear, it was still very valuable, and people, I think, overall, really wanna help. And it's amazing how much help you get once you finally ... ask for it. Yup.

Angela:

... Absolutely. Well, Jamie, we're all sorry, we had some technical difficulties at the beginning of this call, but it has been wonderful to have you. Everybody, check out *Start Over* by Jamie Wolf!

Jamie:

Angela, it's always wonderful to talk to you.

Angela:

And see you for next week's book journey!