

**Book Journeys Author Interview - Oct 17, 2013**

**Dr. Angela Lauria with Judith Pepper, author of *Age of Sage, Extraordinary Advice for Extraordinary Women***

*“Stop trying to be perfect all the time.” ~Judith Pepper*

Angela:

Well, hello, everybody, and welcome to Book Journeys Radio. My name is Angela Lauria, I am the founder of the Author Incubator and creator of the Difference Process for Writing a Book that Matters. And this week, on Book Journeys Radio, we are lucky to have with us – author Judith Pepper. Judith is a – speaker and an author. Her book is called *The Age of Sage, Extraordinary Advice for Extraordinary Women*. Judith, thanks for being with us!

Judith:

Hey, Angela, thanks for having me. I’m delighted to be with you, today.

Angela:

Excellent. Well, tell us about your book!

Judith:

Oh, gosh, my book. It’s a – it’s a culmination of a life. It’s a culmination of my life. About – well, let’s see. On June 7, two thousand and – nine – two thousand and – eight, yeah –

Angela:

Mm-hmm. Time flies!

Judith:

– I was sitting on – yeah, time flies! – I was sitting on a private yacht in the isle of Ibiza, and it hit me that I was celebrating my sixtieth birthday, and I had become a sage. And – for a multitude of reasons, many of which have – most to do with – a tremendous amount of fantastic challenges, opportunities, good, bad, ups, downs in life, and I took that and thought, “You know, I’ve tried to write a book in 2003 and it didn’t come, and I think this is the time to write a book!” And so, I sat down at my computer when I came home to Texas – I live in Texas – and just started writing snippets about different things that happened in our – in my life, and how to help tell the story to women of how to really, really look inside, determine what they want, how – what are their desires, what are their hidden desires, what are their obvious desires, and some really great tools and techniques in how to make those happen.

Angela:

And – so – from the time you got this idea, sitting in Ibiza, until the book was finished, how long did it take you?

Judith:

Oh, it took – that is – it took from, let's see, June of 2008 – the book was published in May of 2011.

Angela:

Okay.

Judith:

It took – yeah, took three years, uh-huh. Mm-hmm.

Angela:

And so, tell me how – so, you were like many of our listeners who, for a long time, wanted to write a book and – and you weren't – you weren't able to make it happen, it didn't happen for awhile. So, what was different this time, for you?

Judith:

That is a very introspective question – because – for me, anyway, Angela – what happened for me is that I – I just kind of felt in – or fell into that place of – that inner connection, that sacred spot that each one of us have, and really took hold of that and said – I asked for my gods to help me write, and – and it happened. I – there are – that – that sounds real ooey-ooey, I know it sounds kind of out there, but at the same time – I live by metaphysical and spiritual principles, and I'm a firm believer that, when something is – is – once the timing is right, you can't stop it from happening.

Angela:

Mmm.

Judith:

And I don't think I was ready in 2003 to write.

Angela:

I love that. I think that's so powerful, and whether you – whether you believe the medical physic – metaphysical pieces of it or not, I think there's definitely a science piece of it, which is, when we try and force a – I think there's a physics principle here, is like – when we try and force our way into writing a book, you – you meet that resistance, that same amount of resistance comes back. But when the timing is right, and the book flows and you're open to it, the project seems to get finished in a totally different way.

Judith:

That was certainly my experience and – I live by a principle that says, "Don't resist the resistance."

Angela:  
Aaah.

Judith:  
When the resistance is there, I have learned, walk away. Just walk away, whether it's writing or men or jobs or moving, whatever – when it just sit – when the flow isn't there, then even when you – I love what you said about trying to force it, because we can – I can make things – I can force things to happen, but the results are never –

Angela:  
Mm-mm.

Judith:  
– they never feel – they never feel right.

Angela:  
Right, yes. And there's usually a – a cost to them that is not what we intended, I think.

Judith:  
Exactly.

Angela:  
Certainly, I'm very good at forcing things to happen, and I'm never glad when I do it. It seems like a good idea at the time.

Judith:  
Exactly. Exactly!

Angela:  
So – before you – before you wrote your book –

Judith:  
Mm-hm?

Angela:  
– what do you wished that you knew, because most of our listeners are in the middle of writing a book, they really want to write one, what do you wish you knew before you started?

Judith:  
Oh, tha – well, I wish I'd known how long it took. (chuckles) And I wish I'd known how – what the process is, and once it's written – I had – I had the book, it took me six months to write it – what the process was in finding a publisher, and feeling like that publisher was – was someone I could trust with the manuscript, and – because one of the things I did before I

found a publisher was research self-publishing, and – quite frankly, I – I know there are a lot of people who do that, and maybe they have a lot of time, it just felt too hard for me. It felt like I – i – it was like another area in my life that I was – I needed to go to school for! You know what? I did. I even – I even took the class, a community college class at Rush University – on self-publishing. And I set in there and looked and listened. It was a day long and I thought, “This is too hard. I don’t want to do this.”

Angela:

Mm.

Judith:

And so, I – I – I did –

Angela:

And it’s a class on publishing?

Judith:

Oh, yeah, it was on self-publishing. Uh-huh. ...

Angela:

It was on self-publishing?

Judith:

Self-publishing. Mm-hm.

Angela:

And so – so, oh no, you got a finished manuscript and you don’t feel like publishing it, so what – what did that mean? What – what did you decide to do?

Judith:

Well, here’s – here’s what – here’s what happened. I – i – I didn’t know – ... decide to doing things, but here’s what happened. And here’s another piece of me that is in the book, and – is very – it – it’s who I am. I have used a psychic for a number of years, and – she, too, by the way, when I came back from Ibiza – Ibiza, she said, “Oh, yeah, you’re ready to write that book.” She called me one day from Miami, and she said, “Judith, I’m standing in front of a woman I think is gonna publish your book.”

Angela:

Mmm.

Judith:

“May I give her your name?” And I said – because I trust her – I said, “Oh, sure, give her my name and my phone number,” and – her name is Joanna Francis, and she owns – Nora

Press, and Joanna called me, and we had a long visit, and – she like the idea, she like what I had – written about, and I sent her a – a little part of the manuscript, and she reviewed it, and she called me back and she said, “I would love to publish your book,” and I said, “Okay.” So, I sent her the manuscript, and that’s what happened.

Angela:

Wow! And so, w – what was that – was that a – did you pay for that service, or was that – h – how did that work?

Judith:

Oh, yeah, I pay – of course. The – the – the review – the – the – the review of the – I think – I think I sent her a c – a couple of narratives – no, but – because she wanted to make certain she was the appropriate publisher, because Joanna does a – Joanna’s publishing is a – a – spiritual, sacred books – self-improvement books – m – many of which are for and about women, and – then, when we decided that I would engage her, and – and sign a contract with her, she – then I paid her. And – what Joanna did, what she provided for me – I had also had the book edited – that’s – it’s been awhile ago – edited by a woman that I found on shewrites.com –

Angela:

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Judith:

– ... that website, I found Christina Baker-Klein, didn’t know her from Adam, sent her an e-mail, said, “This is who I am, this is what I’ve done, and would you consider editing my book?” And so, I engaged Christina, and she edited my book, read it, edited it, and I paid her, so I had the edited manuscript. Joanna took the edited manuscript, and – did a little – a little more editing, but nothing in depth like Christina did, and then she – did the layout – did all of the – the graphics – I – well, I hired someone to do the graphic front cover and back cover, and then she found the printer, and what we’re doing with the book for printing is print-on-demand.

Angela:

Mm-hmm.

Judith:

When I need – when I need two or three hundred books, I call her, and she gets them printed and has them shipped to me.

Angela:

Got it.

Judith:  
Mm-hmm.

Angela:  
So – so, in the end, you – you worked with somebody who had done it before, you'd wor – you worked with a – a professional, and for you, that helped get the book out. Now, the book came out, I think you said, in 2011, right, so it's been a couple of years?

Judith:  
Uh-huh. Yes, that's correct.

Angela:  
Let's talk about what promoting the book has been like, and have you worked with people to help with that process?

Judith:  
Boy, that has been hard. That's ha – that's hard, because it's very expensive. I also hired a woman by the name of Lynn Seraphinn, who is a best-selling author as well as a god, she's a – a – god – literary god, marketing god. She lives in the UK, and I hired Lynn to help me learn how to market.

Angela:  
Mmm.

Judith:  
And, boy, what a process. And Lynn would have marketed for me. She would have rolled out the book, marketed for me – h – her fee is ten thousand dollars for all of that.

Angela:  
Wow!

Judith:  
And I thought that was a little expensive for a first time, where I'm learning the process, where I really don't have a big house behind me, and so, I took everything she taught me. I – I – I – I signed a contract with her, Angela, for – it was about a six-month contract, where we Skyped every week and talked about Twitter, talked about Facebook – Facebook, I have a website – that I hired a web designer to put together, and – and not only is the book on there, and it's marketed from there and to there, then my speaking is also marketed on there, because I – one of the things that Christina – begged her client – the editor said to me, i – behind all of this was the impetus to have a book for – to also market myself as a published author as a – and speaker, okay?

Angela:  
Mm-hmm.

Judith:  
So, that has been – so, to get back to your question. Lynn helped me learn how to market, and then I've been marketing with my Face – I have a Facebook page, I have my website, I've done – gosh, what – all I've done to market – advertised in the local newspaper, I've had several book signings, I created some really swell postcards – mailing postcards, and mailed out – I don't know how many – a thousand, three thousand. I didn't do the ten thousand or the twenty thousand because the purpose of this is more to use a – w – in my speaking now, that – that – that's become part of what I do – where I sell the book and – and I – and I use that as marketing me as a speaker, as a published author.

Angela:  
And so – so, what was – what was ... – what has worked the best to sell books? To actually sell actual books.

Judith:  
Mm-hmm.

Angela:  
And then, let's talk about the other – the o – w – w – what's been the most effective way to earn revenue from your book, which may not be book sales.

Judith:  
Exactly. Exactly. The most effective way to market has been via the social media and the – local – book signings.

Angela:  
Mm-hmm.

Judith:  
Social me – I really had to work on the social media. I – I – the – the company that the wha – web design company that I hired to – design my web – my Facebook page and my website, Market Me – I – I hired them to send weekly – bi-weekly updates on my Twitter page and on my Facebook page, with all kinds of clever icons and graphics, et cetera, et cetera, that – that – that pushes that into the social media audience.

Angela:  
Mmm.

Judith:

A – a – and it's – and it's very time-consuming, that's why I hired someone to do it. And the other piece, the – the revenue piece, is when I – when I present, I talk about the book, and I have book sales. That's where my revenue comes from. I have my book in several bookstores, I just go in and say, "My name is so-and-so, and I'd like to talk to the manager about having my book in your – in your bookstore," and – and one of the things I've learned from that – in – in Houston, Texas, where I am – I'm – I'm – I live forty-five miles from Houston – is that local bookstores want local authors.

Angela:

Mmm!

Judith:

They have special sections for them, yeah! And they love it! And – I've had book signings at the local bookstores, because they like to invite local people in. And – that's not been a big revenue producer, but it's really gotten me out in the public, with people.

Angela:

Right. And has that helped with getting – with getting – what was I gonna say – speaking engagements?

Judith:

Absolutely. Absolutely. You can tell, from just talking with me, that – I'm – I'm – I'm a chatty calfy, and – I – I – I can – I can engage a couple women – in a conversation and – and – and ask them some very pointed questions about where they are in their life and what are they looking for, and they j – you know how we are. We love it when somebody pays us attention! (laughs) You know!

Angela:

Right. That's my favorite topic, me.

Judith:

Yeah, yeah! And – and then, from there, I've been invited to speak at different organizations in Houston and – and points thereyonder.

Angela:

And so, ho – how do you think having a book has helped you get speaking? Do you have more speaking work, or – how has it affected your role as a speaker?

Judith:

Well, when you are a published author, you're an expert. That just is – it's on automatic. It doesn't matter what your topic is, doesn't – it does – doesn't matter. There is a – there is a literary respect that is gained when you – when you are a published author. And – more than



anything, now, people see me as an expert on talking to women about transformational process – from – going from ordinary to extraordinary. I'm –

Angela:

Mmm. What does mean to you, going from ordinary to extraordinary? What – w – when you say you're an ...?

Judith:

Uh-huh. Uh-huh. What that to me is going from that mindset of, "This is a – this is my life, this is always how it's gonna be –" that's – an ordinary mindset, to the extraordinary thought of, "I can really have what I want and desire. Here are some tools I've learned how to use." And then, we go about getting it.

Angela:

Mmm.

Judith:

You know what? Angela, there's nothing wrong about being ordinary and staying there if you're comfortable. I just don't think there are very many women who really want ordinary.

Angela:

Hm. And so, h – how has – how has having this book – so, was – were you passionate about helping women to be extraordinary before you had that – this book?

Judith:

Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Angela:

Okay. So, how has having this book helped you – fulfill that – that – almost miss – it sounds almost like a mission.

Judith:

It – it is a mission, absolutely. Well, it – it's helped in a – it in a number of ways. Anytime I talk to a group of women about what I am doing, put the tools and techniques out that they can use, I – I'd – I – I pull from that book – sentences, ideas, notes, et cetera – and say, "Use this in your life. Take this and use this in your life." And one – not too long ago – and by the way, just because I had written this book, and I have these tools and techniques, not every area in my life is perfect, o – okay? Every area in my life is a bit extraordinary, but there are days that I get up and think, "Well, crap, I – I ... can't do this today." And I get my book, Angela, and I read, I'll – I'll open it u – I'll find a chapter on –

Angela:

Your own book, wow!

Judith:

Absolutely! And be reminded that, when I meditate on something, when I meditate with positive thoughts and action, positive results occur. I have to be reminded by that.

Angela:

Yeah.

Judith:

Otherwise, I am not – I am not authentic. If I say, “Oh, here, go use this, and go away, and everything’ll be swell,” that has not been my experience. My experience’s I have to practice what I preach.

Angela:

Right. Yeah, and it – I like – Mary Williamson talks about being reminded, but – to be – given your mind again, because –

Judith:

All of – it is, I love it!

Angela:

– ... lose our minds, yeah, she’s like, you’re re-minded, and not especially ...

Judith:

It is. I think – oh, Angela, that’s a blog! That’s a ... Yeah!

Angela:

A good one, right? ... Okay, so let’s talk about your process of actually writing. Did you experience writer’s block, what was hard about writing, what was easy? Let’s – let’s talk about that part of the process.

Judith:

Yes. Yes. When I first started – when I first started – it was – it just flowed. And then – oh, I don’t know, two, three months into it, I woke up one morning and got in front of my computer and nothing came. And that went on for about eighteen days.

Angela:

Mmm.

Judith:

And, I – and – and I – what I would do, when it wouldn’t – ‘cause I’m a walker. I get up at ... and I walk, whether I walk in the morning, walk in the evening. And I’d walk, and it was cold. I was li – at the time, I was living in Amarillo, Texas, which is up in the Texas panhandle, and

it's cold. And the wind blows and it's ugly. And I would go out and I'd walk and I'd talk to my higher power, and I'd say, "What the hell is going on here? I feel like I've got this mission, I feel like I'm – I'm doing what I'm supposed to do, and nothing's coming!" And so – I got – I – I just kept doing that – and nothing would come, and I woke up one morning and I thought, "I have the blahs. And I've been walking away from the blahs. I haven't – I haven't welcomed them in, I haven't said, 'Hello, blah, come on in today.'" And when I star – when I started inviting in, rather than out, what I was feeling – when the resistance is there, don't resist the resistance. When I started inviting it in, the writer's block went away.

Angela:  
Wow.

Judith:  
Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

Angela:  
That's powerful stuff! Is that – i – is that one of the techniques that you teach in the book?

Judith:  
Uh-huh. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, I – I – yes. Yes. Yes.

Angela:  
Yes, that's so powerful!

Judith:  
I tell women, "Do not run away. Do not run away s – w – w – when things aren't happening the way you want it to, don't run away. Invite it in. Say, 'Oh, hello, you're – oh, so, what's your purpose? How – what is your purpose?'" You know what I think that purpose was, for me?

Angela:  
Mm.

Judith:  
It is in every area of my life. It's so that I don't get so damn smart.

Angela:  
Mmm.

Judith:  
So I don't get in my own way. And – so that I can say to women, other women, "You know, I've experienced that, too. Here's – here's – here's where I'm vulnerable, in this area, one, two, three."

Angela:  
Mmm.

Judith:  
“And here’s what I did, and here’s – here’s what – here’s how I got through that.”

Angela:  
Yeah! So, that’s – I – I think that’s a really – interesting – interesting point, interesting position to be in. Was there something good about – about writer’s block, for you? ‘Cause I’m sure it didn’t feel good at the time.

Judith:  
(chortles) No, it was just horrible. But what came from that is that – anything worth doing – sometimes – ts – ts – sometimes it takes a lot of time.

Angela:  
Mmm.

Judith:  
And – just because it’s not easy today doesn’t mean it won’t be ea – easy tomorrow.

Angela:  
And you just stuck with that? You stuck with that ...

Judith:  
I did! I did. I just stayed there. I just stayed there, and I just stayed – I just kept thinking, “Okay, I don’t know what’s going on. I don’t know what’s going on.” And – and, eventually – well, here’s what was interesting is, the day that I began to write again –

Angela:  
Yes.

Judith:  
– I titled the narrative, “I Left the Bed at Night.”

Angela:  
Hm.

Judith:  
And – and h – and the reason – and – where that came from, I was sitting in front of my computer my – i – i – i – and – and the – the townhome I was living in at the time – my – b – big master bedroom and this – office nook. And everytime I would turn around, I would look

over and I'd notice the bed was unmade. And that's this old broken rule in my head that you can't do anything 'til bed tonight. And – y – okay.

Angela:

Right. I think I got one of that in my house, too.

Judith:

Oh, yeah. Okay, okay. And so, I – and so, I likened that to – not being able to write. I left the bed at night, it's okay. I couldn't write, it's okay. It's okay. Stop trying to be perfect all the time.

Angela:

Hm.

Judith:

'Cause when I started writing again, there was a different – it – I – I – there was a different experience, because it wasn't easy to just sit down – well, I had taken it for granted. That's it. I'd been taking it for granted.

Angela:

Mm-hmm.

Judith:

And – and I tell you, have you – oh, I can't think of his name – the – the – *The War of Art*? Oh, what is – what's the auth –

Angela:

Yeah! Steven Pressfield?

Judith:

Yes! Steven Pressfield. He talks about – writer's block, and he writes about writer's block, and when he had it, and how long it went on. And – and I – and I read that book after I had experienced my own. And I thought, "You know what? The – everybody who tries to write experiences that." They have to.

Angela:

Mmm.

Judith:

They have to. And I thi – this is what I think – dig – dig down really deep into that inner, sacred spot, I think that is a – a – a spiritual principle that we have to really embrace and say, "Letting go of being perfect is a very painful process." But we c – nothing's perfect.

Angela:  
Right. Right.

Judith:  
Nothing's perfect! And so, why would my writing be perfect?

Angela:  
Right. And, I mean, especially with art, it – it's – it's never done.

Judith:  
No.

Angela:  
You can say it's done at any time, but that's all on you, 'cause you can iterate until the cows come home.

Judith:  
Exactly. Exactly.

Angela:  
So, what is – what is the thing that surprised you most about the process of transforming into an author?

Judith:  
That I could do it.

Angela:  
Mm.

Judith:  
That I could actually sit down, write a book, get it published, have it printed, people buy it, people call me, people e-mail me and tell me they like it –

Angela:  
Mm.

Judith:  
– or they – would like to have another one for a friend. I had a – an e-mail from a woman – two days ago that said, "Judith, I had lunch with Sally and Ruth" – these are people that I've known forever, Angela – "and I told them about your book, and – I'd like to buy them a book."

Angela:  
Wow.

Judith:  
It's – I – see – you know what? If I – I – I – I – m – I had a desire to be a best seller on the New York – best selling list, New Yorkers –

Angela:  
Mm-hmm.

Judith:  
– and – and – the – a – that's probably not gonna happen, but it feels really good to get these e-mail from people that say, "I – I – I practiced that technique on – prosperity, and it worked."

Angela:  
Right.

Judith:  
And – and that feels rea – that just feels really powerful to me.

Angela:  
Mm-hm.

Judith:  
I had a – the book is for women, and – but – but every principle in there – men can use, too, and I had an e-mail from a man that said, "You really ought to call this – Extraod – ary Advice for Extraordinary People, rather than women –"

Angela:  
Mm.

Judith:  
"– because this applies to men, too."

Angela:  
Wow.

Judith:  
Mm-hm.

Angela:

Well, Judith Pepper is the author of *The Age of Sage, Extraordinary Advice for Extraordinary Women*, but if you're a man, you pick it up, too, because it's extraordinary advice for extraordinary people, even if that's not the name.

Judith:

I love it.

Angela:

You can learn more about Judith at [judithpepper](http://judithpepper.com), p-e-p-p-e-r, [judithpepper.com](http://judithpepper.com). Judith, thank you so much for being my guest!

Judith:

Oh, Angela, I'm delighted. I'm so happy to get to know you on the airwaves. Thank you!

Angela:

Excellent. I hope lots of people read your book and learn more about being extraordinary.

Judith:

Me, too. Me, too.

Angela:

And – mm-hmm. We will be back next week, on Book Journeys Radio, where we're changing the world one book at a time.