

[Book Journeys Author Interview](#) - February 15, 2018

Pleasance Silicki with Melissa Morrison, author of *Unstick Your Stuck*.

"You can always continue to heal, no matter how long it's been."-Melissa Morrison

Pleasance:

... Hi! It's Pleasance from - I'm the author of *The Light*, Melissa, are you there?

Melissa:

Yes, I'm here! Hi, Pleasance!

Pleasance:

Oh, yay! Hello! How are you?

Melissa:

Good! How are you doing?

Pleasance:

Good! I was so excited to see that we would be chatting today, when I saw your face and your book pop up.

Melissa:

I know! I'm so thrilled to be talking to you again.

Pleasance:

So, I am pulling up your - a little bit about your book, and I wanna - I'm really excited about hearing - today, about your process of book writing and as you know, and I've shared with you, I'm also an incubated author and someone who went through the program, and so, I love chatting about the process of writing a book, and then how it changes us and how it changes our lives, and most importantly how it changes the work that we do in the world, so ..., say goodbye, you are here.

Melissa:

Yeah, thanks for having me.

Pleasance:

So, I guess the first question I have is, why did you wanna write a book and where - what was the inspiration behind it?

Melissa:

So, I actually - I never thought I would write a book. For the longest time, it wasn't until I had a brain injury happen, back in 2012, that totally changed my life, and ... - as the events were ...

unfolding, as I was healing and getting better, and - I had to change careers, I was ..., "This would be a good book to really get out there and share my story to be able to help other people," and that's really whatever - the first inkling of writing a book came into my head. So, it hadn't been that long ago that ... writing a book came to me.

Pleasance:

Tell me a little bit about ... the process of changing careers and - ... and, obviously, the brain injury, and what you learned from it and what kind of challenges you faced.

Melissa:

Yeah. So, I used to do accounting work before my brain injury happened. And so, ... as I said, back in 2012, I was playing softball, and I was hit right between the eyes with a softball and I sustained a really bad concussion. And so, I had all of these symptoms that were coming on, that - whenever you're doing accounting work, it's a lot of - ... being in front of a computer, a lot of using numbers, a lot of cognitive work, and those were the things that I was having problems with. I had problems with my eyes, so I couldn't be on the computer very long. I used to have sensitivity to sounds and to light, and I was having a really hard time just processing information, being able to put my thoughts into words and just really understanding what other people were saying, and so, it was sad, ... there was no way that I was going to be able to go back and do that, so I had to find something else, and so, for me, that was ... I - what I call, in my book, my "wake-up call," ... what happened in my life, so it was this - I had this opportunity to find something that I could really be passionate about, because I really didn't like accounting work. It didn't light me up inside at all, so What a gift this is given to me, that I could really take this time ... in healing to find something that I'm really passionate about and just go after it. And so, that's what I did. I end up taking a leadership program, and that's whenever I found out, ... going through the process, that I wanted to become a life coach. Really help other people with where they are, and so, they could ... go through this same, exact changes that I did and find something that - that they love, as well.

Pleasance:

So, is that part of what you do now? Tell me a little bit about your work now.

Melissa:

Yeah, so, right now, I work with women with concussions. Because ... I was able to figure out my healing from - I did a lot of research on neuroscience, took a lot of classes on neuroscience as well, and just really learned the way that we can heal our own brains. And so, now, I wanted to ... help as many other people that were ... stuck in their healing journey, to help them move forward, and so, I worked with these women that have concussions to really help them get back to work, so they can either find something they know, or find ... - find something new that they're passionate about, they can't go back to what they used to do or to be able to help them get back to doing what they were doing before, workwise, so they can really ... gain their lives back and ... feel like a person again, 'cause you feel so lost after something like - like this

happens, and ... it's just like your life flipped upside-down, and I ... wanna help them ... flip their life back right side up. So, that's -

Pleasance:

Yeah,

Melissa:

That's what I do, when they ..., yeah.

Pleasance:

Do a lot of them - do a lot of them end up moving - switching careers also?

Melissa:

Yes. They do, because ... - a lot of times, because there's so many ... cognitive issues that are going on after a brain injury, and - and so - because there's so many people out there that really don't love what they do. And so, ... take that time to find something that ... - what are you passionate about? What is something that you've always wanted to do and just never took that time to find it and actually go do it, and so, that's ... what I do, and it - it feels like ... everyone el - all the other women that I'm working with are ... in the same boat where I was, where ... - it was ... - I - it was a job. It was making money, but it wasn't fulfilling.

Pleasance:

Do you - tell me a little - did you want - you said you didn't - it didn't really occur to you to write a book until after the brain injury, but did you try to write on your own? So, let's move into a little bit of ... the process of coming up with the idea, and then how did you choose this program, and tell me a little bit about ... the book, what i - did you want to write a book before, and ... how that all came to be.

Melissa:

So, I did wan - I did try writing a book, ... before I did join this program. I was just - I had no direction at all, I was just ... writing out my story, it was - I probably - it was probably a year that I was trying to go through it, trying to figure out what direction to go, what to talk about, what are people gonna want to read, ... just going everywhere, I probably had forty different books within the one book that I thought I was writing at the time, before I really knew the process ... and working with the - with Angela and her - in this book program. So, yeah, it was - I wasn't getting anywhere, whenever I was trying to write a book on my own, and that's when - ... "Okay, I -" ... I was already certified as a life coach, so I knew that there were coaches out there that help in so many different things, and it was like trying to find the one that was for me. Instead, it would ... - that I thought would be good, and - and I just happened to - I was on Facebook and I saw an ad for Angela's having an - a webinar, and - ... how to write a book in nine weeks, and I was ..., "Well, this is interesting because, obviously, it's been a year, and I haven't gotten anywhere with it," and so, the webinar, I think, was starting in a half hour, and I just jumped on, and I was ..., "I don't really care what I'm doing, I'm just gonna watch this, and just see," and I was ..., "Wow,

this could really happen! Can I really get this book done in - in this short amount of time?" And ... that's whenever I was - end up just applying right there, 'cause I was ..., "This is definitely for me, I really want to ... -" I knew it was gonna be something dealing with my brain injury, and this ... the change that I made, from doing what I used to do in accounting to being a life coach. So, I - I sorta had the topic in my mind already. I wasn't sure, exactly, how it was gonna come out, and - ... so, I - I had that in my mind, so it's ... - I ... got even more focused, once I applied in the way which ... - she had that in the talk, that ... I really wanted to get this - this out there into the world.

Pleasance:

Do you think - ... you said, when you were trying to write the book, you just - there was a lot of - ... you weren't sure which direction you should go in, and there was a lot to do there. Do you think it was more on ... the time management, or more of the mindset and more of the ... - stepping into the role, the - the visualization, ... how did you know you were gonna get your book done with Angela?

Melissa:

I think one of the main things is accountability. ... I knew that I was having someone there to make sure I was staying on my deadlines, staying on - in the time frames that ... were given to me. And I was able - I knew I was gonna be able to get that feedback that I needed, that - if I was going in the right direction or not, to - to be able to ... steer me and keep me on that path, which ... on my own, I was just gonna go into which - every direction. So, it was ... really having someone there to - to keep you on that path moving forward, that - I was ... - I - I know my book actually can probably get done, doing it this way, working with someone.

Pleasance:

Okay. So, let's talk a little bit about - so, you're in - now, you found a program and you're going through it, what were some of the ... things that you learned? What was some of the ... - takeaways for you, through the process?

Melissa:

Probably one of the biggest ones for me was, really, just focusing on one person for your ideal reader, and ... having it - that be a love letter to that one person - your book, just be to that one person. Because then, it focuses everything so much, and really keeps your focus whenever you're writing the book. And then, the other things is, really, just keeping that one topic. Because ... all over the place, and so, ... I was realizing that I ... probably had ... sixty books, and just having one topic and writing to that one person, and those were probably the biggest things for me that - that I learned in there, because there was such a huge difference, 'cause it's ... - it's such a fine focus that it really keeps you on - on track.

Pleasance:

What were - what was your cohort like? ... how was it, going through the process with other authors in transformation?

Melissa:

It was one of the best parts as well, because we were all going through the same, exact thing. ... we were all go - as you just said, the transformation. We were all going through this transformation of stepping into this bigger person that we are, and into this bigger role as we're writing this book for ... whoever to read, and ... it's always better when you're surrounded by other people that really understand what you're going through in the process. And they were such amazing people, to be there, so if you ... needed something with any - you could just reach out to anyone and ... they would talk to you, and it was - yeah, the camaraderie and everything that - support that I was getting. I wouldn't have done it any other way, I'd love - I love that group aspect of her program because of that, yeah.

Pleasance:

Yeah, I found that really powerful as well. And it just helped to not be alone.

Melissa:

I know! Yeah, 'cause ... there are times when you get stuck, ... and you have it, ... "Yes! Blocked," and to know that you're not the only one going through that, or we're going through it at different phases, helps push you through the parts where you're having a hard time and other people are better, and So, it really helps push each other along the way.

Pleasance:

Yeah. Oh, totally. Did you - what do you wish you knew, before you wrote the book?

Melissa:

Well, probably - at least, working with Angela - that - that it doesn't have to take so long to write a book. ... 'cause I h - I had always imagined ... - whenever you think of ... James Patterson or any of those other people that always write all of these books, I think - I always thought it took years to write a book, and - not really realizing that ... once you really sit down and are focused on it and have a process laid out in front of you, that you can really get it done within ... forty to fifty hours. And that made such a shift in your mindset of, "Oh, my gosh," ..., "This is actually achievable to do!" And so, before I even wrote the book, it was something that I was ..., "This wou -" it was more of ... a dream, ..., "This would be awesome if this could happen." And

Pleasance:

Totally.

Melissa:

An achievable goal.

Pleasance:

Are you, for one, in the past, who, ... every time you have a dream that you make an achievable goal? 'Cause you said that's ... your - ... that's normal for you, or -?

Melissa:

Yes. Yes. I was sure I - ... I love to take risks and go after whatever I ... - go after what I want. Because I feel ... - probably even more after my brain injury, because - ... I don't wanna take anything for granted in life, and so, there is a thing out there that I want, then I really want to go after it and - and get it, because ... so many people around me, and out there, are achieving all of these - all of their dreams, things that were once their dreams, that ... were achievable, and so, it's really possible for me and anyone else.

Pleasance:

Totally. And so, speaking of that, and ... achieving it, did you ever experience writer's block?

Melissa:

Oh, the writer's block. I did. There were multiple, different times where -

Pleasance:

Okay. Tell me about that.

Melissa:

Yeah, where I was - ... 'cause I would set aside certain times ... during the week, ... specific days, and I would set ... certain times during that - that day that I would sit down to write, and ... depending on ... other things that are happening, or even the topic that you're gonna be writing that day, you might just sit down, and I would just be ... - no words would even come out. And I noticed, even, there was one part in the book where I actually had - I noticed - and I think it was because I had this writer's block, I was ..., "Why can I not write further?" That I had to switch chapters around. So, ... Chapter Seven should have been Chapter Six, and Six should be Seven. And - and so, there were ... reasons of why I was having these blocks, and it - I really had to pay attention to what was going on inside me, in my head, so ... really feel ..., "Okay, this is what is happening," and ... once I looked in there, ... stepped away and cleared my head, and then I was able to ... move past that, but - yeah, just like I did - different writer's block coming up as I was going through the process.

Pleasance:

Yeah. Any - and then, you were able to restructure it, so, was it the - was that normal, ... I think that's one of the things that people assume, is that, "Oh, it's just very linear?" And one of the things that I learned was that the writer's block just looked - ... handling could look like going for a walk, or cleaning a drawer, or ... cleaning the floor. It looks a lot of ways. So, I'm just curious in terms of ... your mental mindset around it, would you be able to ... accept that, or was it ... a conflict, ..., "What's wrong with me?" ... how'd you deal with that?

Melissa:

I would say, probably - one of the first times I did have it, I tried to break through it, and it wasn't working, when I ... that frustration, and - but then, ... it ... - going - talking to Angela and just

hearing other people in the group and what they're doing to really help go through that, I was realizing that ... pushing through things, which is what I would usually do in my regular life, of certain things, just ... push through it, that - with this, I really had to just take a break, where I would just go out for a run and I really ... clear my head, and - or just ... - I think my house is very clean ... in the ten hours of writing my book, as well. So, ... there's ... - that's when every ... - there's some sort of blockage that you do have to take that break, ... clear your head with it. Some ..., it's not gonna work, just ... pushing through it. 'Cause then, you're not connected with what you're writing.

Pleasance:

Yeah. Totally. And that's just part of the process, that's what I mean, also, it's ... - I didn't actually realize that, and so, I was in that speed, at which point, then, I learned that, and so - and it's just more - it's like you're able to ... relax more into the identity of, "This is the writing process," rather than fighting it, I guess.

Melissa:

Exactly. Yes.

Pleasance:

Yeah.

Melissa:

Yes.

Pleasance:

So now, your book is out, right? And published and in people's hands. What's the best thing to come out of having your book?

Melissa:

One of the best things to me is, I have so many more opportunities now to really connect with other people. I've been doing a lot of speaking engagements, and just to be able to talk to different people and connect with them on different levels that I probably - I would have never had that opportunity, probably, beforehand, or probably not as fast as I had been, now that I have my book out. And so, it's that - 'cause I love going and speaking to different people in different places and groups, and ... just getting in front of them is - is - it's so fulfilling for me, and so, that's one of the best things that - that I love, that came out of ... having this book.

Pleasance:

Did you know that you was - words - did you know you were gonna use it to speak from, as a speaking platform?

Melissa:

No, I didn't. ... I use it ... - I - it's for getting - ... I was - 'cause I have clients in my business, that it's ac - that's just one of the - the things that I like to do. ... this to just go and speak to other - other groups, 'cause that's - ... whenever - there's so many different brain injuries support groups around. So, to be able to go and talk to them and just really connect with them and have them understand that ... I've gone through a lot of the same things that they've gone through is - it's pretty powerful, because, a lot of times, after you have some sort of brain injury, you feel alone, and so, ... I'd like to get out there and talk to them as much as I can.

Pleasance:

So, now - again, now that the book is out, is there anything that surprised you, either about writing or the publishing - either the writing or the publishing, that - anything, now that you're on this side of the process, that surprised you?

Melissa:

... the biggest thing as - as ... mentioned before, is that it's - it doesn't take a long time to write a book. ... you have that structure and really take you through the process that Angela takes us through. ... pretty easy to get it written, and ... having that ideal reader to really focus on, and just that one topic that ... could be written in a week's time, if you want to just ... sit down, nine to five, and get it written

Pleasance:

So, you're saying that the process that she created and that you go through in her program is what created the container to make it not so challenging.

Melissa:

Exactly.

Pleasance:

And that's ... a surprise, yeah, cool.

Melissa:

Yeah.

Pleasance:

Yes. Totally. Totally, I agree. So - okay, so, let's say, someone's listening and they're thinking of writing a book, what is the advice that you would give them?

Melissa:

I would say - ... thing that I've been saying this whole time is for us to just - focusing on th - that one person for your ideal reader and writing a love letter to that one person, because that was such a game changer for me in writing my book, to really keep that person in mind with every word that you wrote. Then ... it's - just makes the process so much easier.

Pleasance:

Yeah. Okay. So, any final thoughts or ideas, because I'd just love for you to be able to ... tell us - you told us a little bit about the work you're doing now, and tell us a little bit more about - so, you're doing some speaking and some coaching, is it one-on-one or groups, and how can people ... who might be interested, where can they find you and what are you doing?

Melissa:

Yeah. So, I do one-on-one coaching with people, ... mainly women with concussions. ... I have a Facebook page that people can go to, [facebook.com/theconcussioncoach](https://www.facebook.com/theconcussioncoach), and ... I've - just really help people that ... they've - concussion survivors ... to - a lot of people end up losing their job or not being able to go back to work, and I really want to help them get back to work or find something new that they're - are passionate about, if they can't go back to work, to really ... start loving life again, because we lose who we are, and I really want people to gain back their lives, to really take a hold of it and - and gain their power back, because this - ... we do only have this one life, and I will say ... "Never give up," because you can always continue healing in your journey. ... even people that have had a concussion or brain injury twenty years ago, I still meet people who are healing, even after that long, so ... there's - you can always continue to heal, no matter how long ago it's been. And so, if anyone wants to contact me, I would love to speak with them, just to go - ... hear about their stories, and they can contact me at melissa@melissasmorrison.com.

Pleasance:

Yay!

Melissa:

Pop on the phone, yeah. I love hearing other people's stories and ... what they're going through.

Pleasance:

Well, I just really wanna honor you, Melissa, because ... - I know a little bit of your story and you shared some more here, and taking something that was ... - had the possibility or the potential to be something that really held you back or something that prevented you from going to your dreams and your goals, and instead took the situation and you created a book, you've created a message, you're speaking, you're helping people get to the other side of this. I know that that's - the injury and all you had to learn and all you had to go through was not easy, ...? ... that's not an easy, simple, always joyful situation, but you've really made something out of it, and so, I just really want to honor you for doing that and for spreading and sharing your life. So, thank you so much.

Melissa:

.... Thank you so much. Thanks.

Pleasance:

All right. Have a great afternoon! Take care, Melissa.

Melissa:

All right. You too, thank you.

Pleasance:

All right. Bye! Bye.

Melissa:

Bye.