

[Book Journeys](#) Author Interview – Dec. 11, 2014

Dr. Angela Lauria with Mitzi Weinman, author of *It's About Time! Transforming Chaos into Calm, A To Z*.

“When you’re writing a book, you can start to look at ways to block out time to do the writing and recognizing the best times for you to do that writing.” ~Mitzi Weinman

Angela:

Well, hey everybody! We are back on Book Journeys Radio. It's great to have you here for another show. This week, we are talking to business coach, life coach, and therapist, Mitzi Weinman. She is the author of *It's About Time! Transforming Chaos into Calm, A To Z*. And what I love about this topic, and I'm so glad Mitzi can be here to talk to us about it, is we are, like we do every week, we are going to talk to her about the process of writing her book. Because this book is about time and time management, that's one of the biggest challenges that any author has. And so I'm hoping today, you're going to get some fantastic tips on how you can transform from chaos into calm as you take the time to make your book. So, Mitzi, thanks for being here today.

Mitzi:

Thank you so much for having me on.

Angela:

Well, awesome, I've kind of tipped people off a little bit about your book. Why don't you tell everyone what is, *It's About Time* about.

Mitzi:

It's About Time is exactly about time. I wrote this book in an A to Z format so that it's easy read for folks. People who pick up the book don't have to read the whole book if they don't want to. They can choose a topic within the table of contents that is applicable to them. For example, N is for saying No, and Y is for saying Yes, which is really as important. Yeah. And L is for list and you know, A, I have two A chapters, one is about Action and one is about Anticipation. So, none of the chapters rely on any of the other chapters so, you can go to the last chapter of the book, which is Z as on Zzzz's, catching Zzzz's, and getting some sleep, ah, without having read A through Y.

Angela:

Wow! I love that. So I know your website is timefinder.net and you call yourself the founder of TimeFinder. Does that connect to your book and can you explain what the connection is?

Mitzi:

Yes. So, I founded TimeFinder in 1989. And so, through the years, having worked with folks doing one-on-one coaching, as well as doing workshops and speaking to different organizations, it became really clear that a book was in the making and when many of my

clients and friends said, “You really should write a book. You should put it together,” and I decided, “Ok, I will try to do this.” And it became quite a long journey but I did do it.

Angela:

So, what do you do in TimeFinder?

Mitzi:

So, I work with folks one-on-one or doing workshops, and I help people with, or speaking, and I help people with their time and planning, getting better organized. I do programs on meeting management, on delegation, you know, how to leverage your time through delegating. I do programs that have to do with clutter or, uhm, actually, just helping people with the overall area of time and dealing with the distractions and getting back on track.

Angela:

So, let’s talk about the process of creating your book. Once you got the idea for your book, how did you go about writing it? Did you do that yourself? Did you find somebody to work with?

Mitzi:

Well, what was interesting is that I had an idea of what I wanted to do, and how I wanted the book to come out, you know, what the outcome would be. And I started writing it and I got really stuck. And so, and I did the writing, I didn’t have anybody else writing it for me or with me. But I got really stuck with the, with how I started out doing it. And I realized I had to put it down and stop. And then, when I picked it up again, I picked it up when I had that “aha” moment, and my “aha” moment came with the A to Z. When I wasn’t writing it with the A to Z format, I was trying to write about different people in different environments, like a work, you know, working from home environment, in a cubicle environment, in an office, physical office with a door environment. And I really just, it wasn’t working. It just didn’t gel. And then, that A to Z came, and it was like, “Oh my gosh, I can really do this now.”

Angela:

That’s the format!

Mitzi:

Yup.

Angela:

Yeah, I think that’s one of the big things I tell people is once you find that formula, whatever it is, then you get it, then it just flows. But finding some sort of structure can be really the key to making it easy and fast to write. So, once you found that structure, what was your writing like? Did you work a little bit each day on it or did you do it all in a big batch?

Mitzi:

I did it in, even though I found that right formula, I still had some, lots of starts and stops because I have some things going on with my personal life where I was taking care of my dad who, uhm, you know, was quite, you know, elderly, and some other things that have come up where I really did it in starts and stops. And, but when I did sit down to write about a particular letter, I really could go with it. But when I did get stuck, it really did, uhm, it caused me to stop for days or weeks at a time, actually. And I have a friend of mine and we were having lunch and she said, "Mitzi, every day, just sit and write something. Just write something." And that was really such a key ingredient to this was that, everyday, I just needed to write something, even if it was a paragraph. So, I tried to do that and not every, everyday but I really was more focused on getting it done and once I was getting to the end, I didn't write it from A to Z, I wrote, I mixed it up. But once I had three or four letters left to do, I was like, I'm really almost there. Some of the letters were tricky for me. K was tricky, X was tricky. And so, I really had to figure out how am I going to convey and what message am I going to convey and then, what message first and then how was I going to do that.

Angela:

So, did you know, when you were working on your book, how you were gonna publish it?

Mitzi:

I didn't. I wanted to get it more done, you know, really to the, pretty close to the end of having it really written. And but I was talking to folks and people that I knew. I was talking to friends of mine who had already published. I was talking to people who had self-published. I was talking to people who were published by a traditional publisher. So, I was looking at the different ways and means to doing that and hearing what the pros and the cons were to both, and going online and just getting information, reading articles about people who did traditionally published, people who self-published. So, I was doing some of that research but I really, really didn't know which way I wanted to go.

Angela:

And when and how did you make that decision?

Mitzi:

I made that decision when I realized that I wanted to have more control over my book and how it was going to read when I talked to a friend of mine who was going to a traditional publisher and she had to turn it over to somebody else who practically or almost rewrote a lot of her book. And she said she just felt she just didn't have any control over it. She didn't have control over the title, the title changed. She didn't have control over so, so much of it. And I thought, "Well, I've taken so much time to write this and it really is my baby. I'm gonna go the route of self-publishing, with the hopes that at some point a publisher will pick it up.

Angela:

And so, uhm, so how, let's talk about how you published. You've self-published but did you work with other people? Did you do everything yourself? How did you, did you hire an editor or a designer? Tell us about that process and what you went through.

Mitzi:

Sure. I asked a friend of mine who was starting a business, a writing business. Uhm, she wanted, she was using me to coach her, to help her and to coach her but before she, when she asked me to do this, she said, "When you coach me, would you want me to edit your book?" And I said, "Yes, I would." It was like I didn't even have time to take a breath before the yes came out. I was really thrilled to do that because she has done so much writing through the years and I was so happy to be able to help her. So, that's what we did. I helped her and then, she helped me. So, she edited it and then, once we got it to a particular point, I had decided to do the self-publishing. I then, the big thing was uploading the book to the publisher. That was huge for me. That was a huge moment. That was tearful, actually. It was so emotional. But, uhm, I was able to do that after she and I had gone through it over and over again, looking at it, editing it, re-editing it, going over, asking questions about it. And then, I lost her edits when I didn't pay it right, you know. It was like really a nightmare. And then, I had to go back through again. And it was like, "Oh my gosh," I was just beside myself. I was beside myself. So, uhm, we did that and then we looked at it some more, then I was ready to get it to the publisher and then uploaded it.

Angela:

And how long did this whole process take from the time you finished your manuscript until it was available for sale?

Mitzi:

So, I believe I uploaded it to the publisher at the end of January? And I had it in my hand mid-to late June.

Angela:

Ok. So, let's talk about lessons learned. Both in the writing and the publishing the book, what do you think are some of the things, the key lessons that you learned, things that you might do differently, uhm, if you had to do it again, or advice you might give to a friend or a client doing a similar project?

Mitzi:

If I had to do it again or if I was doing it again, I think one of the lessons I would look at or I learned was to really understand the package that I was choosing from the self-publisher, and what it really meant. You know, you get these contracts that are overwhelming to read and to figure out what it all means. And I think that some of what is part of your package, I got one of the higher end packages because I really wanted it for business and it needed to look a

certain way, and to feel a certain way when it was picked up by somebody, ah that, to really understand what I was getting and really what I wasn't getting. And, uhm, one of the things that I would recommend is I actually had the book re-edited again by the self-publishing editors. And that was really a really good decision to make because they made the book as good as my friend was in what she did and I'm so grateful. There were inconsistencies in how my bullets were set up and how I indented those things, or how things were, what was bold. It just kind of, the look of the whole book needed to have that professional look and I think they used the Chicago rules of...

Angela:

Manual of Style. Yeah.

Mitzi:

Yeah. And so, I didn't know anything about that. So, I probably would look at that particular style of writing is even before I started to edit. But I don't think I could have done it myself and figuring out how to make it look as professional as it does or have people have told me because people will pick it up if they can't tell it's self-published. So I would...

Angela:

So how did you find, are you comfortable sharing who you worked with and maybe how you found them?

Mitzi:

Sure. I use iUniverse and I found them online. You know once you put in, the funny thing is, once you put in a search for like a self-publisher, then, every time you go online to something, the ads that pop up are all self-publishers. And so, I just kind of kept on seeing them and I would click and so I contacted probably about five self-publishers and then, made a choice based on how they approached working with me. And the person who I talked to as my, quote, salesperson, she, it was kind of, I mean, it was really nice that she referred to me as an author right from the start and, and that I was her author, and so, always treated me always professionally and always really wanting what would be seemingly the best for me even though I know she was kind of selling stuff. But her attitude towards her authors is amazing and she was probably one of the best people I worked with there.

Angela:

Wow! And so, what are some of the other tips you might give to working, either finding someone to help you publish your book, or working throughout the process? What were some of the things you learned or the lessons learned.

Mitzi:

Well, one of the things I wanted to make sure was that my book, and this was one of the decision-making of who I decided to use that, uhm, I wanted to use a publisher that did do business publishing as well as more than just sold self-help books. I wanted to make sure that

my book had a returnability policy, which meant that if some bookstore buys my books from iUniverse and they don't sell enough, they can, they have the option to return them back, as opposed to, uhm, if they don't, then they're not gonna buy the books. So, that was important and that was kind of a key decision-making for me, decision maker as to when I learned about that.

Angela:

Yeah! So, you published your book about six months ago, it came out?

Mitzi:

It came out in June. Yes.

Angela:

Ummm. So, let's talk about what the last six months have been like for you. What are some of the things for you that have been most beneficial, exciting, or positive about being an author?

Mitzi:

So, what's been really exciting is, well, firstly, my son just being proud of his mom. And so, yeah, I know. But he's been with me the whole, he's fifteen, he just turned fifteen a couple of weeks ago. He's been with me through the whole journey. He helped me make decisions about my headshot on the book, my cover, all these other stuff. So, that has been something really positive and what I've been hearing from some of the reviews as well as from people who have read the book, how helpful they're finding it, and motivating. And that's really fabulous. I've been doing a lot of radio interviews and trying to get that word out. So, that's been, uhm, that's been helpful as well as really now, all of, kind of now just starting to use it more as a business card as well as getting into the hands of some companies that I've done work with in the past and to kind of re-, kind of, look at a way to get it, uhm, get the book or me into more of a corporate setting. So, that's where I'm kind of at right now, doing that, but what's been exciting is I've been meeting a lot of people through the radio interviews and uhm, hearing from people signing up for my newsletter and getting more and more of sign-ups for that and just doing like I'm helping people.

Angela:

Mmm. That's awesome. Talk to us about radio interviews. How have you found shows, are you working with someone, do you have a publicist? What can you tell about your experience with getting PR for your book?

Mitzi:

Well, that was the interesting decision too. I decided to hire a publicist and uhm, I, and they've been great and the decision though whether, and I've gone and listened to a lot of shows or tele-classes on when you publish your book, how to get publicity for your book. I listened to a lot. I took notes, notes, notes, copious notes, pages and pages of notes on what to do, how

to, you know, all of this stuff. And I was, "Ah, I can do this. I can really do this." But I also have a business too, but I thought, "I can do this. This is, I can, I can go do some of these media outlets, and I can contact people and tell them, you know, and find best times of the year to approach people like making a story out of, for example right now, New Year's, either being less stressed for the holidays or looking at New Year's... resolutions which are a whole big topic. But I said, "I can do this. I really can." And as I was getting closer and closer, I thought, "I can't do this. I just can't." I was like, "The book is gonna be in my hand and then what am I gonna do? What am I gonna do?" And the "aha moment" for me there, because I get "aha moments" a lot, I guess, was when I realized that this could be my one and only book and if, I will never know what could have happened with my book if I actually don't use a publicist. And this would be my opportunity and I should take that opportunity to make the most of the book by using a publicist. And so, the folks I'm working with have been terrific. They've gotten me a lot, a lot of radio interviews. We're working on now on getting some television interviews. I was cited in Money Magazine in November and...

Angela:
Wow!

Mitzi:

Yeah, yeah. So, that was really exciting. And so, I've been responding to a lot of media queries on HARO, H-A-R-O, which is a great way to get your name out. And uhm, and so, the publicist and I, she's helping me find those HARO media inquiries and I'm finding them too. And we're working together to get information out to folks who are looking for, to write stories about various topics that I cover. And so that's how Money Magazine happened and uhm, so that was, that was great. And so using a publicist...

Angela:

Well. Sure I wanna, this feels like a perfect time to talk about the thing you're actually expert in, uhm, with time management. So, you have mentioned and I love this sort of "aha moment" is that "This could be my only book and if I don't really give this a go, I'll never know. You can't come back to this moment in time," like, "This is the time." And I do get that but I also, you mentioned earlier, kind of knowing when to delegate and how to deal with time because coming up with media hooks is definitely not hard, like you're smart enough to write a book, you're smart enough how to tie in New Year's with time management, uhm, but it takes a lot of time. So I wondered if you could give some tips when it comes to writing a book, publishing a book, promoting it, what are some time management tips that you would give people to decide when do you do it yourself and when do you hire someone?

Mitzi:

Well, I think one of the things that is important is understanding what your priorities are. And so, if your priorities are that you have a business that you're running as well as trying to write a book, if you've got family that you need to be focusing on and you're trying to write the book, is to really kind of look at what's going on in your life and deciding what needs to take

precedent. I think when you're writing a book, you can start to look at ways to block out time to do the writing and recognizing the best times for you to do that writing. Many times for me, writing in the afternoon is a disaster because I'm just too tired. So, writing needed to happen in the morning when I was really fresh and ready to go and having thought about what I wanted to kind of, how I wanted to attack my day and having that time blocked. I think that whether you, uhm, you have to really do a, almost a project plan, a project plan for your book and figuring all the different steps that are gonna take to get the book written without overwhelming yourself by seeing so many steps. And decide, and then, what you do is once you've kind of outlined those steps, you have to put some time frames as to when you're gonna do those things and not to be afraid that you need to re-adjust those time frames. I had to re-adjust them quite a bit. And so, but that you do re-adjust them and that you keep going, and you just persist.

Angela:

What are some of the other big takeaways from *Its About Time*? And I'll just remind people, we are talking to Mitzi Weinman, the author of *Its About Time! Transforming Chaos into Calm, A To Z*. So, give us a couple more of your favorite A to Z's about time.

Mitzi:

Alright. So, one of the first things is that you actually aren't managing time. When you're trying to manage time, because that's such a phrase that's used a lot, uhm...

Angela:

I was like, I feel like that's what I'm doing. That's not what I'm doing?

Mitzi:

No. Well, I'll tell you why. I'll explain. So, when you're, time can't actually be managed because you can't stop it, you can't slow it down and you can't speed it up. But what you're really doing is looking at and kind of changing the thinking to how you're managing yourself and how you approach situations. So, you're really self-managing versus managing time because you, like I said, you can't manage the time. The time just happens but how you approach the situation and how you plan your day and how you look at how you're going to be productive in that day. You're really managing yourself. So, a couple of things that are really key which I kind of call, "low-hanging fruit", is that you plan at the end of each day. So at the end of each day, take five minutes or less and plan your next day. It puts closure to your day, it reduces your stress in the evening to remember, you have to keep remembering that, "Oh I've gotta do this, I gotta do that, I gotta do this," and waking yourself in the middle of the night, and trying to leave yourself a text or a voicemail or an email or something.

Angela:

(Laughs) Yup!

Mitzi:

So, and then, when you've done this at the end of your day, you can be in the moment with wherever you are -- at home, or with family or friends or with your kids or whatever it is because you've planned for the next day. And then when you come in the next day, you begin your day, you wanna start off doing a priority -- something that is really the most important thing in your day or the thing you dread most. You want that, to get that done earlier in your day and the more you work from higher priority to lower priority, it means that at the end of the day, you can stop work and not have to spend extra, extra hours, because if you start doing a priority, let's say, at three or four in the afternoon, and you're not done with it, you're gonna feel really compelled to try to get more and more done and you end up staying later and later to try to finish that. And you have more competing demands later in your day as well. So, if you're working from higher priority to lower priority, at the end of the day you should be working on something less important and it's easier to stop. And the other thing that's really helpful is to tie your to-do's, your actions to when you're gonna do them. So, if you're using some sort of a planner like Outlook or Google Calendar, or even a paper planner, it's to get those to do's, those action items into whatever you're using, whether it's electronic or paper, because you want to tie your to-do's to when you're gonna do them. And then, really, you know, look at that and how you're strategizing for your day. Uhm, one other thing that's really important and key is to anticipate. When I do my workshop, I actually carry a crystal ball with me because I do believe we can predict the future. We can anticipate things that are gonna happen. We can anticipate traffic, we can anticipate when we're coming back from vacations, when we're gonna be busy, you know, busier trying to catch up when we've just come back. We can anticipate even people who don't meet their deadlines that we're working with on projects and we can then adjust how we're working or what we're doing because we can anticipate. We can almost anticipate that if we have a child and they start coughing the night before, that there's a good chance they're either not going to get to school the next day or the school nurse is gonna call and say, you know, "You gotta pick up your child." So, there are telltale signs and so, for things like that, it's really good to have some alternative solutions, you know, things in, tell there that you know you can do if something like that happens. But you can start to predict those things and you wanna be able to look at the things that you can anticipate. Anticipation is huge in helping kind of look down the road, look into the future, and really see what's gonna be happening. You can anticipate busier times of the year. You can anticipate, like right now, for folks who are running around, trying to do a lot of stuff for the holidays. That can be anticipated months ahead and start putting actions in to help maybe alleviate some of that from building up towards the middle to the end of December.

Angela:

Love that. So much great advice. Mitzi Weinberg is the author of *It's About Time! Transforming Chaos into Calm, A To Z*.

Mitzi:

Weinman.

Angela:

What I love is her website is timefinder.net. I definitely want someone to find time for me. And she's got some stress buster tips that you can get when you sign up for her newsletter. So check out timefinder.net if you need more time to write your book or whatever your goals are. Obviously being able to manage yourself and make time work for you is gonna be a great way to help get your book done. Mitzi thanks so much for being here.

Mitzi:

Thank you so much for having me on, Angela.

Angela:

Terrific and we'll be back next week at Book Journeys Radio.