

[Book Journeys Author Interview](#) - February 22, 2018

Pleasance Silicki with Stephanie Wild, author of *The Art of Forgiveness*.

“Just be right-sized, have some humility, and do your best for the person who’s in front of you.”-Stephanie Wild

Pleasance:

Hi, ev - hi, everyone! It’s Pleasance here. One of the - I’m an incubated author, my book is called *The Light: Eight Principles for Living with Joy and Ease*, and Julie, are you here? Julie? Let’s see, hold on. One minute, let’s see if we can get Julie Pierce on, who’s here today, I’m gonna talk about our - her book! Hello! Hello?

Stephanie:

Hi.

Pleasance:

Hi!

Stephanie:

Can you hear me?

Pleasance:

Yes!

Stephanie:

This is Stephanie, not Julie.

Pleasance:

Oh, Stephanie! Hi! How are you?

Stephanie:

...

Pleasance:

Stephanie Wild!

Stephanie:

That’s right.

Pleasance:

They sent me the wrong notes today, so let’s - you just - you just scheduled it, right? This week.

Stephanie:

Yes.

Pleasance:

Yeah. Okay, awesome! So, Stephanie, let me pull up your notes on your book, why don't you get us started by telling us a little bit about your book?

Stephanie:

Sure. My book is called *The Art of Forgiveness: How to Get Past It Without Getting Anyone Off the Hook*. So, I'm a spiritualist minister and psychic medium, and I went through - like a lot of us did - a difficult childhood, ... that's part of the assignment, oftentimes, when we come - when we come to Earth as humans to learn, and so, my main lesson was forgiveness, and I spent forty years figuring out how to do it, and I wanted to write a book that would give everyone else the tools so they could do it much, much more quickly, and not have to go through that confusion and pain for as long as - for as long as I did. ... we know all sorts of spiritual teachers say that forgiveness is the right thing. Forgiveness is for us, ... forgiveness is sacred, ... whatever. But very few tell us, step by step, exactly - tually - actually and exactly how to do it. And so, that's what I - that's what I've done in this book, it's a handbook. It's a handbook for forgiveness.

Pleasance:

Okay. So, let's back up a little bit.

Stephanie:

Sure.

Pleasance:

So, tell me about some of the practices that you did over those forty years of healing and some of the things that you went through, that you were able to condense and ... teach in your book.

Stephanie:

Right. Well, ... a lot of the advice that I got was intellectual, right? A lot of cognitive behavioral therapy - which was very, very helpful, don't get me wrong - and a lot of thinking about things. So, that's all great, but that is not what was really the key to peace and freedom. What I had to do after that was to - to put into place the spiritual peace, and actually, in conjunction with that, the physical peace. So, you have mind, body and soul, and it took me awhile to realize that - that spiritual peace was - was necessary and that it was a real process that I had to go through, and I - I realized that I had to stay very, very present, stay in the moment, and we've all heard that - that before, as well, that's a very important spiritual practice, perhaps the most important one. And once I started doing that, I - I could feel the pain, the past, the emotions, run through my body as physical sensations as - as - and as emotions, and I could choose to experience them and let them go. And so, that was the physical and the - the spiritual peace, so - so I - I condensed all of that down in - into the book, but ... that was - ... that was - that was twenty, thirty years of moment by moment by moment, figuring out what made me feel better and what

led to my happiness. My being able to be happy in the day, from day to day, free of the - that horrible anxiety, free of - I'll call it depression, ... this - ... there's a ... chemistry par - part to depression, but certainly, the spiritual work, so maybe I did that as well.

Pleasance:

So, before the book, were you - tell me a little bit about ... the work you were doing. Were you already a reverend, were you already connected in that way, or has it ... - lead you down that path?

Stephanie:

I was - before the book, yes, I was a reverend - I'm jus - I'm just thinking back now. But not for very long, it's not - it's not what I've always done. I was - I was working as an advertising copywriter.

Pleasance:

Okay.

Stephanie:

Yeah! Okay, let's Left turn there. And so

Pleasance:

Wow. Yeah. Left tur - exactly. I wanna hear about that transition.

Stephanie:

Right, right. ... I was just making my way in the world, ... I - supporting my kids and ... working my way up the - the corporate ladder, I suppose you could say, and trying to be happy, right?

Pleasance:

Yup.

Stephanie:

So, here, I'm going along on my - on my journey, and ... I hit the wall with the cognitive behavioral therapy, and I realized I - I really need to - to look at the spiritual and the physical, so I - I went - to improve my intuition, so I could learn to trust myself a bit more, because ... I h - I wasn't happy yet. I was happier, and one thing led to another, and I simply kept studying and practicing until I decided to enter the ministry. So, that's what happened, and then, I recently made the transition from - from that regular advertising environment to full time ministry. And that was - and the book was - I suppose that the book was a bridge for that transition.

Pleasance:

Okay, so, let's talk about that a little bit. What - now, let's talk about ... the book writ - ... the idea and the book writing process and what made you decide to write a book?

Stephanie:

Well, ... I've always been a writer, as I just said, I was advertising copywriter, so I really always loved writing. ... growing up, high school, college, all that stuff, the school newspapers, all that stuff. And so, I always knew I would write a book, it was just always one of those things. So - so, I - yeah,

Pleasance:

Did you know what it was gonna be about, though? ... what did you think you were gonna write about - write a book about, did you know?

Stephanie:

Yes. I thought I was going to write a book about - I thought I was gonna write more of a confessional book. Maybe about my - my experiences after my divorce, because that was one of the things that really impelled me to - to investigate in spirituality, because I was doing well in my career but not so well in my love-ing life, my love life, my relationships with - with - with people. So, that - that's what led me to ... I could develop my intuition, so I could trust myself more, emotionally and spiritually, so I thought it was gonna be a confessional about dating after divorce, perhaps, or my - my terrible childhood and how it affected my divorce or my marriage or something like that, Something ... confessional short stories, but it turned out that ... if I wanted to help other people, which is what I did wanna do, then it would be more - it would be more helpful to people if I - if I made that the point of - the point of the book, and actually just - just straight out gave everyone the answers that I had discovered, as opposed to writing some sort of more self-indulgent confessional and hoping people figure it out for themselves.

Pleasance:

I - did Angela participate in helping you with that? That sounds like one of the things that she's good at. How did you get -

Stephanie:

How did you get - yeah, that's exactly right, that's exactly right. I had not thought of -

Pleasance:

Inside joke, right?

Stephanie:

Yeah, right. Exactly. Yeah. I hadn't - I hadn't thought of writing a self-help book. I had definitely not - not thought about writing that, I - I thought of myself as more of a literary or ... poetic craftperson, or something like that.

Pleasance:

Yes. Yeah, totally.

Stephanie:

And - and I still am, but it just so happens that I - that I added value, Angela helped me to make it much more valuable to people, and it's still beautiful and succinct and rich, but - but it's - it's - it's - it's a beautiful, succinct and rich handbook ... that you can pick up and actually carry with you, and ... improve your life.

Pleasance:

And people are reading it. ... I think this is the biggest ... I hear over and over from authors, rather they're - so, I've ... been part of Author Incubator for over two years now, in a bunch of different ways, and one of the things that I always hear from people who - before they're coming into the process, when they're thinking about it, is ..., "Oh, I'm just gonna write this book about my life and everyone's gonna buy it."

Stephanie:

Exactly.

Pleasance:

"And it's gonna help them."

Stephanie:

"Cause I'm so interesting." ..., "I'm so -"

Pleasance:

Totally! "And my story's interesting," and all of that, you know what I mean? ... - anyway, it's so funny, 'cause -

Stephanie:

Yeah, center of the universe is a very crowded place, We're - we're all at the center of our own universe.

Pleasance:

Totally. What - so, tell me about the process a little bit, ... what was that like for you? So, you decided you - you knew you were gonna write a book, and how did you find your way to Author Incubator, and did you have any fears around the signup process, or ... tell me a little about that experience.

Stephanie:

I simply saw an ad pop up, and I was not looking for anything. I was half-asleep, I was snoozing in the afternoon, ... that really delicious ... , "Oh, I think I'll just sit down for a minute, and - and ... drift off in the warmth of the sun coming through the window." And I was just ... closing my eyes, scrolling through whatever it was on my phone, and the "Author Incubator" ... - "Author Incubator" appeared before my eyes, and I thought, "That's what I need to be! I need to be incubated!" ... because I've been writing these short stories and all kinds of things, but I hadn't

become an author. I was a writer, for sure, but I hadn't become an author, that's a different thing. And that just was exactly what I needed, I needed a little incubation. I needed to be wrapped up ... in a cocoon, and so, I could cook with my book for a little bit and then burst out with it, and so, I - I - I dunno, I - I think I went to my computer or something, I - I - I clicked - I clicked on some things, I signed up for the info session or whatever it is, and it was - so, then, within a matter of hours, ... I'd signed up, I'd gone through the whole - I've gone through the whole process and signed up and I started my book the next day.

Pleasance:

Okay, so there you are, and what were the things that you learned along the journey of writing? Was there anything that really stands out or stood out for you?

Stephanie:

I had to learn to write more words, because I've been trained so - for twenty years, in my profession, to write headlines, to write really quick, fast ads that - that - that got the point across in - in no time at all. And so, that's what I did, ... I got my point across in no - in no time at all, and, in fact, I had to go back and put more in, because the spine wasn't even ... wide enough to - to put the title on. And ... so - I ... - but I've said everything that I can say, ... - this is it, ... this is a handbook, this is the answer. But my editor said, "Well, ... let's do this and that," and I said, "Well, ... that's just saying the same thing over and over again," and she says, "Yes. Sometimes, people need to hear it in different ways or with different stories, or from a slightly different point of view, or -" ... something like that, which - which - which was very, very - which is very, very true. So - so that was something I learned that was - something very different about writing a self-help book than writing ads or writing poetry or writing some ... thing like a novel. ... if you wanna help people, then this is the way to do it,

Pleasance:

What about when you were picking the topic - I know we talked a little bit about what that process was like, but once you started to get into the flow, did you find that it was - you were able to pull out more ideas and start to see ... the structure of it, but was there anything else about... focus with the topic or the framework of it or anything around the creation of the book?

Stephanie:

I think there was just some need for - for me, for some deep meditation, so that I could bring it out of the - my very personal experience of my recovery and growth and into a very - more earthly, practical - and ... that just required some - that just required some meditation and - and some - and some careful thought and editing. Yeah.

Pleasance:

So, did you - what do you wish you knew, before you wrote the book?

Stephanie:

What do I wish I knew before I wrote the book? I wish I knew that it would - ... would be this easy. It really wasn't hard for me, and that made the difference, because I wa - I'm a writer, but I think, maybe, if I'd known that, just to follow the plan of action that Angela they - gives us, would be - would be so easy. I would have done it sooner, I think, ... because there's this notion that to write a book - I shouldn't be saying this, but to write a book is so difficult, and it's - and it's a monumental task. It was not, actually, if you have the right instruction, if you have - if you have someone helping you, ... siding you, being a mentor and a coach. If ... - if - if you do what the expert says, ... it worked. ... I wish I'd known that, I would have done it sooner. Yeah.

Pleasance:

Was there anything you had - that she had, like a plan of action, what was ... one or two things from that plan that were really powerful from you - for you, that you remember?

Stephanie:

She start - we start with the end in mind, and I think ... conversation, we keep saying, "What - what - ... what - we wanna help people, this is how we do it." So, I think, starting with that, starting with the end in mind, what result do you want your reader to have, ... after they've read the book? And you start with that and work backwards, so that means, then, that you structure it, ... then you can put all of the - the lovely icing on it, ..., the presses or ... your - your story, ... you can indulge yourself after you've served, and that's just not - not a - a metaphor or a nice thing to do, that actually - actually is the plan, that actually is the plan of action.

Pleasance:

Well, I think, also, it draws everything together, right? ... in my experience, I think, a lot of us, we love what we do and we love to serve, and so, we can get a little bit - have a lot of ideas and ... a lot of directions - I don't know if that resonates with you, but a lot of these creative service open - ... very open-hearted, wanting-to-do-good-in-the-world, you have just a lot of ideas, and so, being able to hone in on the book 'ables you to be able to home in on what you're gonna offer after, which is really - does help them, 'cause if you're doing all the things, it's just diffusing all - so much of that energy,

Stephanie:

That's right, that's right. Yeah, there's so much more I can help people with, there's more I can tell people, there - ... there's - there's details within details, ... the Universe is infinite, ... we're talking about spirituality here, in your ... I'm sure that, ... everyone has their own version of this, but yeah, it's infinite, and so - so, to - to pare that back is - it takes some self-discipline, because, yeah, it is very tempting to want to - to want to tell everyone everything. Share everything, because yeah, we're open-hearted, but maybe that's just

Pleasance:

Totally.

Stephanie:

You just have to write

Pleasance:

Exactly! Well, I also - I think that, going through the process, and tell me how you feel 'bout this, is ... I actually don't think I even realized how many ideas and different directions I was in until I sat down to do the process and go through ideal reader and start to home in, then I realized how many ideas I had in play, ...?

Stephanie:

Yeah. Yeah. And ... all of those - all of those ideas - ... and - and they're all related, too, so it does take some - some careful planning and ... some judicious editing to - to make sure that you're really doing the best you can to serve your ideal reader and not fall into the trap of wanting to serve everybody at every moment.

Pleasance:

Yeah.

Stephanie:

'Cause we can serve - we can serve other people next week, or next year, or with the next book or ... our friends can - maybe the best person to serve that client at that time and - and ... we're not - we're not omnipotent, we can't do everything. We can't be everything to everyone. Yeah. Yeah. So, ... - and that takes some humility, too, ... that's part of the lesson, too. Just - just - ... yeah, just be right-sized, have some humility, and - and do your best for - for the person who's in front of you, and the person who's in front of you, when you're writing the book, is your - your one ideal reader, your perfect client, that person whom you can most help, and who most needs your help at this time.

Pleasance:

Totally. Totally.

Stephanie:

Interest - ... interesting process, yeah.

Pleasance:

Let's talk about your ideal reader a little, and ... move into - okay, so, now your book is out in the world, living and breathing, ...?

Stephanie:

When was it published? End of June last year, I think? June ... - June 2017, it'll be out in bookstores in print in July - this coming July.

Pleasance:

Awesome.

Stephanie:

And it's available on Amazon in print. You can order it from Amazon in print. But - but yeah. So - so, official publication was - was June 2017.

Pleasance:

Awesome. What is the best thing to come out of having your own book?

Stephanie:

The best thing. Well, I think it - it - it - it serves, as I said earlier, that bridge between my - my more normal life and my - and my new, expanded, spiritual life of service. I think that's the best thing - yeah, I think that's the best thing to come out of it. Yeah, ... it has to be - my entire life has turned upside-down, not simply because I now have this book, ... it's just a bunch of pages, right? But it's the - the process, the growth, that I went through, shedding - shedding this things that no longer served me, so I am able to expand and - and - and - and serve others in a more full - full capacity, ... that's - that has to be the best thing, is - it's a huge thing. I'm very, very grateful for -

Pleasance:

What are some of the ways ... - do you have anything specific that comes to mind when you think about the shedding and the service and ... what that was like? Anything specific, or an example?

Stephanie:

Yes. So, what - what I - in a nutshell, I think, what I - what I do is, I connect people to the - to the spirit world. I ... a spiritual minister, ..., that's - that's the point of the religion, is that we are all spirits having a human experience, as the ... little saying goes. And so, whether it - someone needs to or wants to forgive a wrongdoing, or anything else, I help by connecting them to their spirituality, and literally to the spirit world. So, I connect people to their spirit guide, to their higher self, ... to help them expand their consciousness, so I can get the wisdom of the Universe, and even if they want to, I can connect people to loved ones who've passed over to the other side, just to have a chat. So - so that's - that's what I do at the core of it. Now, if people have read this - with this book, *The Art of Forgiveness*, and they would like to address something specifically, then, well, I can do that in the context of spirituality, so it may be that someone who's come to Earth to go through this specific kind of betrayal or abuse or violence and they're now having the experience of trying to forgive, and I can - I can connect them with the spirit world to find exactly what the purpose is, of this experience, so that they can get through it more effectively, work off that karma, and ... go on ... free from it, having learned the lesson and being happy I can talk to their guides, I can - I can tune in and - and give them advice to - to make the process less painful and smoother.

Pleasance:

And that was some of the more - you had to do some work through the process, the Author Incubator process, in order to get out of the other side and be able to serve in this capacity, is that right?

Stephanie:

That's exactly - that's exactly right, ... that's exactly right. I - I had to, myself, learn to trust my guides, ... I had to, myself, to render more to - to the Universe - God, if you wanna call it that. I had to cultivate faith that it was going to lead me to the right place, because - because my job fell away. I - I became less popular at the office, I started to seem a little weird, I started to seem like I ha - well, I had a whole - I had another life, ... I was becoming this - this author, ... and people were hearing about it, and I was - I was even changing m - the way I dressed, the way I held myself, the way I had conversations, ... the - my conversations became much more overtly spiritual in meetings,

Pleasance:

Yeah. Right.

Stephanie:

And so, that was uncomfortable for people. So, ... that job has to - has to fall away, and - and other relationships, too, had - had to fall away, because - because I was expanding and so, yeah, I had to ... and to cultivate - cultivate faith throughout the process, yeah.

Pleasance:

Well, Stephanie, it sounds like you're doing really, really amazing work in the world. I'm really grateful to have been able to have a conversation with you today and learn about your journey, and there's links in the show notes and on the website to - where to find you, and I'm just really grateful to have had this time with you today, so, wishing you the best of luck with the print book.

Stephanie:

Thank you.

Pleasance:

And any final thoughts?

Stephanie:

I would say to anyone who just has that little - little voice, that little inkling, that little - that little itch, just jump right in. Like I said,

Pleasance:

Jump right in.

Stephanie:

It's not as hard as you think. Just go for it.

Pleasance:

Oh, awesome! I love that. "Jump right in." I just took a note of that in my desk. Thank you Stephanie! Have a wonderful afternoon!

Stephanie:

You, too. Love to chat.

Pleasance:

Sorry for the confusion at the beginning of the episode, but I'm glad we ended up making the magic.

Stephanie:

Absolutely.

Pleasance:

Thank you, my dear.

Stephanie:

All right. Take care.