

[Book Journeys Author Interview](#) - February 8, 2018

Pleasance Silicki with Stephanie Zeiss, author of *Help! My Teen Is Pregnant*.

Pleasance:

Hello, everyone! Hello, Stephanie, are you there? This is Pleasance Silicki.

Stephanie:

...

Pleasance:

Hi, Stephanie, how are you? Lemme give a quick introduction, I'm Pleasance.

Stephanie:

Hi.

Pleasance:

I'm the host of Dr. Angela's Book Journeys Radio -

Stephanie:

How are you doing?

Pleasance:

I'm great! Can you hear me okay? Are you able to hear me okay?

Stephanie:

Mm-hm.

Pleasance:

Okay, great.

Stephanie:

Yeah, I could hear just fine. ...

Pleasance:

... Okay, awesome! Awesome. Okay, ... I'm one of Angela's authors and I love, love, love talking to other authors about the book process, because I know how magical and mysterious and wonderful and exciting and crazy that it can be! ... I'm super-excited, I was reading over - about the blurb from your book, from your experience, so I'm super-excited to speak to you today, Stephanie - and do I pronounce your last name "Zys?" "Zis?"

Stephanie:

Well, thank you.

Pleasance:

Yes, correct, yeah.

Stephanie:

Great. ...

Pleasance:

Okay, great. So, tell me a little bit about your book! What did you write about, and why?

Stephanie:

Well, it's a survival guide - ... as a survival guide for moms who have just found out that their teenage daughter is pregnant. I got the idea to write the book when my oldest daughter told me she was pregnant in high school, and then, it ... clinched the deal when my youngest daughter was pregnant in high school as well, at age seventeen. ... I also looked around - there were seventeen other girls in her school that year that were pregnant. ... this message was ... "Write this book, write this book," ... it was banging in my head and churning in my stomach that I just needed to get a message out there, because I saw a lot of them just going through ... some hardships, and their parents were ... dealing with the hard stuff and relationships were blowing up. ... I just wanted to get a book out - a message out there that - spread a little bit of love to the world and ... - we gotta get these girls ... staying focused on finishing school and their goals and dreams, so that's why -

Pleasance:

Yeah, totally! What's the best thing to come out of your book? ... you wrote the book ... having this - your own experience with your - with your teenage daughters, and then getting the message out there to help others, ... what is the best thing that has come out of the book?

Stephanie:

... I think the best thing that's come out of it, for me, was ... - having - ... being able to use it as a guideline when I'm helping the other moms and dads through this ... trying time, going on - along this journey with their pregnant teenage daughter ... or college-age kids, ... helping them understand the resources that are available, and then ... they can lean into this support that's out there, so I can actually give them something that's tangible, they can take this home, there's some exercises in there ... that ... talks about how to get through this struggles and ... what to do. So, they got the book and they can take it home and work on some things to - and ... keeps everybody working in a ... moving focus. So, for me, that's the best thing.

Pleasance:

Okay, cool. So, let's go back a little bit, into ... - before the book was published, and before you were - had your message out in the world and were helping people. So, what do you wish you knew, before you wrote your book?

Stephanie:

... I wished that I knew something about what they call "Einstein Time." I don't know if you've ever heard that, but it's something that I read in a book. I really needed help in the area of time management. ... trying to write a book in nine weeks on top of an already busy schedule ... helpful. So, I got my hands on this book about after I'd already done about six chapters. So, then, that point ... things started to come ... rhythm, I was able to - ... felt like I had more energy, so "Einstein Time" ... saved me from a lot of stressful evenings, ... reorganizes your

Pleasance:

Can you talk about "Einstein Time" ... - yeah, totally. Can you talk about ... - yes.

Stephanie:

.... Well, yeah, I can ... - I don't know if I'm gonna be as goo - but I'll try to. It's - it ... reorganizes your perception of time. So, it's ... - you are where time comes from, so, when you think of and believe it, it's ... - it help - well, it helps me lose that rushed feeling all the time. "Oh, my gosh. I'm not gonna have enough time to do this, this and this today." "Oh, my gosh, I'm running late. I gotta get on -" So, you know that time pressure you feel, it's like the weight on your shoulders, ... makes your head feel like it's sticking forward a little bit and it's ... pain in your neck? That's ... the time pressure feeling that goes away when you lean into this concept, that you are where time comes from. You get to create the time, and it - it ... frees up more energy, because you lose that pressure, and then it ... opens up your ... room for creative activities - ... you're taking ownership of the time instead of claiming that ... time is something that is out there. "I'm taking ownership of it, so I'm in charge." And ... it does take some practice to get to that, but once you ... really helpful.

Pleasance:

Could you use this in the program? ... did you talk about it in the program, ... - yeah, totally! Did you talk about it in the program with Dr. Angela or with the other participants?

Stephanie:

Yes. No, I don't think that I ever really did talk about it, in - ... this was ... fell into, and then, it ... became my ... so, I just didn't really - I don't know. ... I think I did.

Pleasance:

Oh, okay. So, let's talk a little bit about the book writing process? How did you pick the topic - you said it really picked you, ... you really figured out, with your girls, with your daughters. But why did you decide to write a book about it, and ... then, you talked a little bit about the focus after you learned about "Einstein Time," but before that, can you ... walk us through ... - the daughters come to you, they're going through pregnancies, how did you decide to ... connect the dots to write a book about it, and then get that into publication?

Stephanie:

Well, I started to talk to other moms, and I realized just how many girls were actually pregnant at her school, and I thought, "That's really odd," ... is this normal? ... Then, when you start talking with other parents about it, and then, you just ... get some stories and - ... it was ..., "Man, people are really struggling through this," and ... the girls are struggling, the parents are struggling, and ... somebody needs to ... put a path out there for this journey or something. ... I just started taking a lot of notes, and ... that message that was ... kept banging in my head, "Write a book, write a book, write a book." Well, ... - initially, you're always ..., "I don't have time to do that book," but ... - and then, ... I started to do it - started to do it, and then I found the "Einstein Time," so it was ... - all ... came together. And so - was just talking to other people and ... wanting to get something out there ... and then ... of course - and it just goes from there, community to ... United States and ... now to be in bookstores in North America ... in May, so it's very exciting.

Pleasance:

Right! So cool. Yeah, that's awesome. Have you tried to write a book before?

Stephanie:

Thank you. Thank you.

Pleasance:

Have you tried to write a book before?

Stephanie:

Have, yes. I actually have - I did, I - I've - yeah, I tried to write two, actually, I don't - I have two books that are not finished, but they're more ... fiction type books, novels. They're - ... but I have not finished them. ... now, it's just ... I'm in the genre of self-help books, totally in there now. So, I don't know if I'll go back and finish those fiction books yet. I may try to come out with another self-help book before that, but ... going through the process, not - seems like it - it might not be so daunting ... try to finish it. So, ... yeah, I have, but I - ... I just didn't get ... done.

Pleasance:

Yeah, I ... - why did you finish your book this time? ... what made it so different, ... didn't finish last time?

Stephanie:

Well, ... Angela's program is set up at - with deadlines, and I guess that's what I needed, because she has ... set deadlines. You don't wanna miss them for certain assignments, and ... of course, those assignments ... set up how your ... the flow. So, once you get through that ap - ... she approves those assignments, ... will flow, but ... I was almost afraid of the deadlines, at first, when I first signed up for the program, but then, I was really grateful that they were there, because I knew that's what I needed to really crank it out. ... another thing that really helped me finish the book, too, was going through it with the ... program, with the other ... authors in the

group. They were a huge help, They're all really supportive, ... a lot of us had the same issues, and ... we could just ... lean on each other when we were struggling and ... help each other across the finish line, so I was able to get it done this time.

Pleasance:

So, you've - you said that having a cohort was helpful, and that some of the issues that you guys experienced, you ... did together. Can you talk a little bit about, maybe, some of those issues that came up, like writer's block or what else might have been an issue?

Stephanie:

Yeah, that's a g - that's exactly what I was gonna say. Yeah, like writer's block, ... just juggling family time, but ... it's ... in the same category, I think, Writer's block comes a lot when you've got ... a lot of other distractions going on, too. But ... - I'm trying to think of other things that came up for us, but ... that - that's one that really just sticks out at me, was ... "Get me through writer's block," "How are we gonna do this?" ... really just - you would sit down to write, and then here's the writer's block. And then, it's ... "Uh, oh," ... you're looking around, "My house is a mess. Maybe if I could clean my house, then I can sit down and focus on - get some writing done," so you get up and clean your house, you come back, and it's ... "Uh ... still blocked, maybe if I run errands, I'd ..." - get that done, that nagging at the back of my mind and then I could come back and maybe sit down and write a little bit," and so, ... - or, ... call them and see where they're at and ... sometimes you can just ... call one of the friends and ... talk me through it and get your ... in and get your mind flowing on some different ideas, so that was really helpful.

Pleasance:

During the process, did you have to - or did you ever envision the project completed before you started? ... how did you ... work through, mentally, the ... mental blocks that come up?

Stephanie:

Let's see. Envisioning, yes, I did envision the finished product, and, in a way, I ... did. So, I did - trying to get my thoughts together.

Pleasance:

Yeah! Take your time.

Stephanie:

So, envisioning it, there's ... this exercise that you go through. Yes. And you go through this exercise in the program, and it gets you into this ... meditative-like zone of genius state of mind that ... guides you to your visioning your finished product. And so, in that way, ... I envisioned it totally - ... I wanted this heartfelt message ... that had important information for moms who are totally in shock over their daughters' announcement of their pregnancy. Now, the structure of the content of my message turned out a little bit different than I envisioned. Message pretty much stayed the same, ... the survival guide structure ... ended up coming out in the end, which

I really liked, I think it was much better than I had envisioned ... in the beginning, but - so, then, ... when it started to come out in the end, then all I needed to do, really, was to rearrange some of the information that was in the book in order to ... fit it into - ... a survival guide, like you're putting your "go bag" together, ... like survivalists do. So, ... it was ... organizing it so everything was zipped up nice and neat into my little "go bag" for it, so So, that was a little bit different, but, yeah, the message about it, ... reaching out to moms, helping them, ... being compassionate about their situation was totally dead on with envisioning it, but ... the structure of it was a little bit different, so

Pleasance:

And how did you get to the survival guide? ... was that something that you thought of? Was it something that your - that support ... how did - what was that process like?

Stephanie:

Well, it was - I did want it to be ... the title, ... the ... moms of pregnant teens. So, ... then I worked with Angela somewhat on, how am I gonna go back and incorporate ... survival language, so then, ... it's like reading a book on survivalists and what kinda language they used, so I did get it - I did get some ideas from other authors who had written survival guide books, and then just ... went back and incorporated it into ... the book. So ... it seems like a ... - "This is how you survive this! So, here's your 'go bag.'"

Pleasance:

Yeah, cool. Was that energize it? ... tell me a little bit about how it felt to ... go through that process, ... did you - were you someone who ... - you loved it and it was really fun and it was really energizing, or was it ... - did you feel like a slog, ... I know lots of people who feel different ways about it, so, what was your experience like?

Stephanie:

Abo - about what? The whole book in general, or ... -

Pleasance:

Yes! ... going through the whole process. Yes.

Stephanie:

Or the process -

Pleasance:

Yep, all of it, ... -

Stephanie:

Oh! Oh, no. Mine was ... a roller coaster, ... it was - yeah, ... when you're in the writing mojo, and ... then, it's ..., "Wow, this is - I'm totally in my zone of genius here, ... and I could just crank this out," but then, other times, ... "Oh, my gosh, this is ... taking so much energy away from

me,” so ... you gotta get away and ... go do something that energizes you to - ... I think it's mostly, though, the writer's block that ... zaps the energy, When you got the ideas flowing, you're ... and it's really energizing and ... it's fun. I ... just thought it was a great process, so - ... the program is nine weeks that ... was amazing anyway. So many times, you're ..., “No way I'm gonna finish this, nine weeks,” but ... when you're cranking it, it's ... so -

Pleasance:

Yes! I wonder, how is that nine weeks - did you think you were gonna finish, did you have times when you thought you weren't, ... what was that ... really crunch time like for you?

Stephanie:

Yeah, that ... - there were a few times when I thought, “I'm - there's no way I'm gonna finish this in nine weeks.” There was one of my assignments in the beginning that didn't get approved a couple of times, so ... then, it's ... you're back another five or seven days or whatever, and you have to redo it and so - “There's no way I'm gonna crank this out.” But ... after I saw, once you get the assignments done, and it's ... going in that forward ... - everything's in line, then it's - then the writing starts to come a little bit easier. But - yeah, and ... I don't think I'm the only one. I know, talking with people in my cohort, that they just ... didn't think they would finish it either, so -

Pleasance:

But did they finish?

Stephanie:

Everybody finished, and everybody was on dead - on the right deadline, so it was amazing. Yes, every one of them did. Yup, they all did. So, we were all on the book launch red carpet together, it was amazing.

Pleasance:

So, tell me a little bit about what - yay! So, tell me about that. What - what about the process that surprised you?

Stephanie:

Well, ... just that I could ... book in nine weeks, ... that was - that's ... scary when you sign up for something like that, at first, and So, that's ... surprising right there, but - ... and then, the red carpet launch, that was really surprising, it was just so amazing and done up, ... all the gowns and the hair and makeup people and it was just ... - that was a total surprise. It was a real treat and you feel like a movie star for the day. And then - ... I was really surprised that I ... liked being pushed that hard in nine weeks, too, to finish it, so ... it's - ... and if anybody's tried to write a book before, they know that it can drag on and on, ..., it's like my first two, that they're just ... little here, little there, and you put it away ... for years, but ... for nine weeks, it's pretty surprising. To me, it was, anyway. Crank it out, so, quite a few surprises, actually.

Pleasance:

Yeah! I think - was there anything around the writing or the publishing - ... what was different than you expected? ... something that you thought was gonna be a certain way, and then it turned out to be different?

Stephanie:

Well, with the writing, ... it was different, because, since I had tried to write ... before, it was just ... chapter after chapter after chapter, and then you have to go back and redevelop characters and ... timelines and - but this one, she had specific exercises, ... writing ... to do, which really helped ... set up the book, it's a - set it up, ... you just get the assignment done, and then the chapter will ... that. So, that was different about the writing. The publishing was a breeze, One of the biggest reasons why I never really pushed ... other books done because, to me, ... publishing would be ... such a daunting and time-consuming ordeal, trying to ... get people to look at the book, hire manager and go through all these ... time consuming things, and then ... with this, it was just ... step-by-step, here we go! We're off to publishing! ... it was - that was super-easy, ... and different from what I had expected.

Pleasance:

The actual ... logistics of the publishing process, ... the technology piece? Is that what you mean?

Stephanie:

Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Yeah. And just ... getting everything together for the ... - for publishing, Just - it was just ... all in the program. Now, we gotta do - ... get your book cover pictures, and - and ... - gotta do your flat copy, ... and I mean - and ... it was just - step by step, instead of looking at it all at once, going, "Oh, my gosh, I don't know where to start." So, yeah, it was broken up into nice, little, easy steps.

Pleasance:

So, what advice would you give someone who wants to write a book? And maybe they haven't been able to finish it, or they've just been really struggling with the idea?

Stephanie:

Well, ... there's a reason why they're not finishing their book, and ... they may need to get some help or they need a new perspective in writing it, and ... I have, and ... I also will continue to recommend Angela's program because I think it would help a lot of people get their messages out to the world, ... and it's a process, and they need - and it's different than writing ... the - a lot of people are used to writing it, so they need to trust the process. It's nine weeks, you gotta ... dedicate yourself to it. But ... Angela really knows what she's doing, getting these books out there and ... she's - does a fantastic job to get you to a finished book that you're happy with, so I would definitely give them the advice to get help if they're having - if they're ... get their book finished.

Pleasance:

Cool. So, tell us a little - in closing, around what your life is like now, what your business is like now, and ... share with us a little bit about what your - what that all looks like?

Stephanie:

Well, I have ... phased out the one business that I was in before - or, I'm still ... - I'm still in it, I'm in the phasing out one and building another one, so I've been building up my coaching - ... so I help the moms who ... - down this journey with their daughters so they can ... turn and help their daughters get through school and stick to their goals and dreams and stuff, so that's the coaching program that I really enjoy doing. And ... other things, other issues there, ... life issues I have coached other people on ... out of my vending machine biz. So, ... it's really busy, and of course, now, I have two grandkids, so all awesome and fun and ... they're just adorable and bring a lot of joy to the house, so I get to spend a lot of time with them, and so ... yeah, it's still busy and crazy, but ... it's a lot of fun, I really feel like my life took a really good turn with these - with my daughters getting pregnant at such a young age, because I'm just ... with these - with the other moms ... and making a difference makes you feel really good, so ... it's such a blessing.

Pleasance:

Well, that's awesome. That's really beautiful.

Stephanie:

Yeah. Well, thank you! Thank you. Really nice.

Pleasance:

Is there anything else you'd like to say to ... thinking about - yeah, of course! It's super-fun to talk about the book process. Is there anything else you'd like to say to anyone who's thinking about joining the Author Incubator or writing a book? Any inspiration you have for them?

Stephanie:

Well, if they're thinking about writing ... and joining the Author Incubator, they just ... go for it. ... it was a blast to get to know everybody, the process is ... wonderful, you make life-long friends ... from that - from the Author Incubator, I've made friends all over the world now, because that was some of the authors that I - that were in my cohort, ... they have friends in Sweden, in Germany and Columbia, ... and so, my friendship circle has ... gone world-wide, and it's ... really amazing and fun, so if they're thinking about it, they just need to go for it and ... then trust the process, so

Pleasance:

Awesome.

Stephanie:

It was a lot of fun. I'd do it again.

Pleasance:

Thank you, Stephanie! Thank you so much for chatting today, yay! Awesome. Thank you so much, I hope you have a great afternoon!

Stephanie:

Oh, you - thank you so much for having me!

Pleasance:

Thanks! Take care!

Stephanie:

Oh, yeah. You, too.

Pleasance:

Okay. 'Bye!

Stephanie:

Uh-huh. You, too. 'Bye-bye. Okay. 'Bye-bye.