

[Book Journeys](#) Author Interview - August 23, 2012

Dr. Angela Lauria with Wendy Lyn Phillips, author of *Naked to Knockout*

"If you've ever had a thought of a book being in you, then you deserve to have it come out."
~Wendy Lyn Phillips

Angela:

Well, hello, everybody, and welcome back to Book Journeys radio. We are here today with Wendy Lyn Phillips, the author of *Naked to Knockout*. Go right now to nakedtoknockout.com and check out Wendy's website which is all about beauty from the inside out. So, Wendy, thanks for being with us today.

Wendy:

Well, thank you for having me, awesome Angela! I'm thrilled to share with your audience and provide some help, maybe? And, uh, I know you just have a great resource for listeners and you *are* a resource! And that's something I tweeted today, what an incredible resource you are, Angela, so thank you for having me on.

Angela:

Well, I know, Wendy, your passion is helping people really find their inner beauty, and I feel really connected with you in that, my passion, which is, you know, like, just as big as yours. It's helping new authors get the book that's inside of them out. And I know for everybody, the process of going from not-an-author to being an author is a unique one, and for some people it's easy, and for some people, it's hard, but my mission with this show, and what I'm hoping you can help our listeners with today is - learning a little bit from your journey that might help people with their own. So, can you tell us a little bit about what *Naked to Knockout* your first book, and can you tell us about the process of becoming an author?

Wendy:

Yes, thank you, I, uh, some - some parts of the journey we'd rather forget! Because, uh -

Angela:

(chuckles) Yeah!

Wendy:

- it, it's, uh, you know, anything in life, I always say, if it's worth it, it usually isn't easy. And, so, I think you've got to determine, before you embrace the opportunity, before you embark on the journey, get the map, see the destination and remind yourself that it is going to be worth it. And when you have that determination on the forefront, you know, the steps and the process of what you don't know, you're - you just have to trust that you'll figure it out and you'll learn it and the right people will come into your lives, and, you know, if they have a coach, and a book coach and an author and someone like you and a great publishing company they're working with, it's certainly gonna be a lot easier, um, but it is not easy. And so, I, um, you know, I - I

don't know if it's all right to say that, but I think that that's just the truth! And is it worth it? By all means. Absolutely. Am I glad I did it? Heavens, yes! And, um, you know, the journey is part else of what continues to help you grow and be even more effective as an author. And, you know, even, maybe - I don't know, I'm just thinking of this, forget the word, "author," and it - maybe it's kind of weird, but, you know, think of it, it's "messenger!" You just said -

Angela:

Mmm

Wendy:

- there's a message in you, and and your job is to help others to get it out of them. And so, whether you begin your book journey as a speaker or not, you probably want to learn to become one, if - if that's not a skill you've developed, because sharing what the book is about, and doing things like this, you know, it's radio! To sharing it with an even broader audience and, kinda getting yourself out there on the media frenzy. Fire ... , you know, I call it, is, I liken it to being on a roller coaster, you know, almost naked! With your strap on, with your hands in the air, and you're just kind of going, "Wheee!" You know, you gotta decide if it's gonna be a fun trip. So, um, it's a little out of control, and for some personalities, that doesn't fare as well as others, but, um, like you mentioned about people -

Angela:

Tell us about, tell us about you!

Wendy:

Yeah!

Angela:

What were you doing when you decided to write a book, and -

Wendy:

Yeah! ... Right, yeah. I - it was one of those things ... where I always thought, you know, one day, I gotta write a book about this! One day, I'm gonna write a book about that! You know, I would have funny experiences in life, I would - some good, some - definitely not so good, I - I have quite an interesting - I'll just leave it at that - upbringing, and so, you know, part of my past, and what has shaped me to become who I am, and recognize, um, the incredible - value that the world places on the outside and what I, as a person, know and believe ... matters most! Was something that was hard to balance for me, and so, clearly, growing up, it was a struggle. Um, I had a lot of great successes, but even inside, I wasn't happy. I wasn't certain - you know, of who I was. I struggled a lot with image and appearance as most girls do, you know, teenage girls, you know, and going to the college age up to the mid-twenties! You know, and really, even as an older mom, we'll say, let's just leave it at that, I had two daughters. And so, now, my daughters are ten and five, and of course I'm faced, right in front of me, the very dilemma that I grew up having, is, how can I pave the way for them? To

embrace wanting to be beautiful, to you know, being a little girl, have - do bows, do recitals, do dirt bikes, do karate, do whatever you wanna do, and yet, at the same time, realize that that is so *not* what's most important in life. So, I felt like, oh, my gosh, I can't have, I mean, what - what's gonna happen to decide that one day I'm gonna write a book is today! And, for me, I just kind of had that little wake-up call and thought and I embraced an opportunity to become part of a, a group of other people. I didn't have a clue how to get started, I didn't know what I was doing, you know, I'm not an English major! I, um, I had built a very successful business in the beauty industry for twenty years, so I had tons of clients. I had done workshops, I've trained, I've coached, I've - you know, I've had a lot of experience. But I certainly didn't have a lot in the book in publishing arena. So, for me, it was, you know, a decision to go for it, no, no better time than now, let's do it, you know, and so that was kind of it!

Angela:

And did you have a book coach that you worked with?

Wendy:

Um, you know, initially I did not, I got one along the journey. And, um, I, you know, I've - I didn't even know where to find one, I - I don't really have any clue at that - when I started, I didn't have any close friends that I knew of that had written a book and, you know, quote, famous people write books, not ordinary people like Wendy write a book. So that's kind of, you know, where I was coming from, and, um, I'm so grateful for the group and the coaches and the, you know, resources that I was able to become a part of and take part of, so yes.

Angela:

So, when you first started -

Wendy:

Right?

Angela:

- was there, is there something, thinking back now, is there something that you wish you knew before you put pen to paper or typewriter to?

Wendy:

Put finger to typewriter?

Angela:

Yeah, yeah, typewriter, right. Not anymore. It's called easy erase and spell check, right?

Wendy:

Right. Yeah, it's a lot easier, and, actually, the coach that I used, the author coach, um, I'm happy to share her, Ann MacIndoo, is actually someone that, um, you know, if ... was interested in that specific part, I'm not sure how -

Angela:

Did you work with her on your book?

Wendy:

I did, I absolutely did, and, um, she's a big proponent of speaking your book. And - I - tried to do that, and it didn't quite work for me, I really like writing, writing, typing, typing, re-reading it, reading it out loud, sounding, uh, seeing if it sounded like it was me, because my book was really personal, it was a lot of "how-to" tips, but I also included a lot of my life stories, because, to me, the thread throughout my book is taking obstacles in life and turning them into opportunities. So while I did it kind of under a genre, if you will, of, you know, the beauty business, probably, still, the target market is obviously women, um, there are some great stories in there. I interviewed over a hundred women, um, with the same questions in a form, and that took months! You know, that really took a long time, and I learned a lot more about the things that I already thought I know a lot about by getting that feedback. That would be something I would strongly encourage anyone to do. Do some surveys, use that, you know, survey ..., do some free resources, use your list, your current client list, if you're, you know, a business and have customers, use friends, use people from all walks of life and, um, you know, conservative, liberal, whate- - you know, you need a melting pot, so to speak, of feedback. And I think that alone was the embark of a very eye-opening experience.

Angela:

How did you get the idea to do the survey? Did somebody give you that idea?

Wendy:

You know, I don't even, uh - that's - that's a great question! I don't know! I - I don't want to not give someone credit, but I'm thinking maybe it was just my idea, I'm not sure, I, uh -

Angela:

... crazy idea.

Wendy:

That's a crazy idea, yeah.

Angela:

And did you do that before you started writing your book?

Wendy:

Absolutely. Yup, I didn't even have the name of it yet. I, um, but I - you know, and it was the beginning, I felt, too, that this was another key point. It was the beginning of - for the first

time, really, technically, legally, putting it down on paper for others to see and know that I, in fact, admitted and committed that I was writing a book.

Angela:
Mmm.

Wendy:
And so, while I do that for me -

Angela:
That's a valid point.

Wendy:
- is - it is, it really is, and, you know, when you commit and say it out there to people, you know, then, of course, what begins to happen is the good, but - but, at times, frustrating cycle of, "Well, is your book done yet?" "Is your book done yet?" "When is your book coming out?" "Where can we get your book?" Blah, blah-blah, blah-blah, and you get so tired of hearing that it drives you nuts, it - but it makes you totally determined to get the darned thing done.

Angela:
So, what were some of the other things you did before you actually started writing? Did you do an outline, did you do your book cover first, what did you do before you wrote your book?

Wendy:
'Nkay, that's, I - I actually, again, I, um, I joined, um a networking group, I joined a, um, mentoring group, part of a "quantum leap" type of program, I know you're familiar with that, and I surrounded myself by other experts who had already done what I was about to do. And so, I have an athletic background, and, perhaps, if your listeners can relate, you know, in sports, you always want to play tennis with someone better than you, because it makes your game, i - it makes you play up a level. And I love that in sports, and of course I love that in business, to be challenged, and I've always known to surround myself, you know, by someone else that's doing it better than me, doing it longer than me, um -

Angela:
Love that.

Wendy:
- you know, I don't wait around to get a mentor, I just go find one. So, if that's not the kind of personality you are, I would encourage you to, you know, strongly consider that you find someone to mentor you that's already been down that road.

Angela:

That's great. That's a great piece of advice. And, um, when you did start writing, did you bump into any experiences of writer's block or, um, maybe just things in life that came up and just slowed you down on meeting your deadline? Or when you wrote, did you just sit down and write and bang it out without a problem?

Wendy:

Oh, no, no, no. Um, as, perhaps, most people, there's, you know, what we call multitasking and, you know, this was something I was doing and, I don't even wanna say my part time because I literally had no part time, I'm, uh, I happen to be in the central Florida area and I'm married to a very successful homebuilder, however, two years ago, that was not a very happy profession to have in Florida. And so, we kind of agreed that, you know, that was part else of that this was a reason for me to go ahead and, although I already had two businesses I was running, um, to go ahead and write a book on top of that, and he would assume some of the Mr. Mom roles. And so for me, you know, that was my situation. It was just incredibly challenging, finding the time to be uninterrupted. And, um, really, the only time that happened was either after nine or ten pm and before seven am. So I remember countless nights I would write from ten to midnight, go to sleep, get up and write from five to eight in the morning, and then go get dressed and go to work, you know, and do my other job and then come home and do Mommy and do this and that and dinner, and so - it was, um, very challenging, and I had to really, really control my self-talk. Um - I guess that's, you know, a summary, but probably, if there's women they can definitely fill in the blanks there, so, yes, there was a lot of, um, you know, just challenges that you - you don't believe in yourself, and then, you know, then you begin thinking, halfway through this thing that's so challenging, wha- who in the world is actually going to buy this? I mean is anyone gonna buy it? I mean, why would anyone want to buy *this*? And so, you begin having those thoughts in your head, and I'm telling you, you know, that can either make or break you.

Angela:

... gonna buy it?

Wendy:

Absolutely, absolutely.

(...)

Wendy:

Go ahead.

Angela:

One way you were able to come back from that, one thing I hear all the time, every single client I've coached, no matter how successful they are, will say to me, "Who am I to write this book?" Or, "Who's gonna buy this book?" Like you said.

Wendy:
Right.

Angela:

So, what's something that you told yourself that you may offer as advice to our listeners? To help you overcome that?

Wendy:

I - I think that - I'm either ... - what, let me give two answers. The *initial* answer is: I was determined to be true to myself, and that beca- - you know, well, for a lot of reasons, but it was a goal, I'm a woman of integrity, I said I was gonna do it, and gosh darn, I'm doing it, you know, I will focus on finish. I will focus on the finish line. You must absolutely become a bulldog about focusing on the finish. And so, number one, that would kinda help me not even allow myself to get into the emotional, you know, spin of - wah, wah, wah, you know, the crying about it or whatever. we do with ourself. But number two, I would say then on a practical sense, when you say, "Who's gonna buy it?" well, hello, let's get a marketing plan here. So, that was part two of what else I did, is that I was smart enough to, you know, get myself associated again with those group of people who really knew a whole heck of a lot more about what they were doing and tau- - in terms of marketing a book and, as you well know, hopefully anyone that begins the journey of writing the book knows that only writing it is half and marketing it is the other half. So, I did know that, I wasn't completely ignorant about that. I do have, you know, I've marketed plenty in my other businesses, so I actually have a bit of a strong suit in that but, with all the changes of media and what you do with books and the social network and, you know, two years ago it - Twitter and Facebook were popular but perhaps not quite at all like what's happening today. So, um - my gosh, I mean we didn't even have Pinterest two years ago, so, you know, it's pretty incredible what else I've learned and how my head has been so expanded. So, all these fabulous ways that you can market your book, and all you have to think is, you know, the *world* is my potential customer! And the Internet helps me connect with the world! So I - you know, the rest is just filling in some blanks there, about being strategic, but, um, I think that that's - you know, that's what worked for me, I did reach bestseller status on Amazon. Um, we did a book launch and, um, you know, it was - it was as successful as I could have expected it to be, being what I m-minimally invested, I guess, financially in the launch. Now, I invested, you know, quite a bit in doing, um, the book, the cover, the editing, the - you know, quality type printing and whatnot that I - I used two-color print in my book, I have an eight full color section insert that I put in there and a lot of those were obviously extra charges, my topic is image, so I wanted my book to reflect quality image, and so, to me, that was important. Um, and, you know, that was costly, so I didn't spend quite as much on the marketing and the book launch, and without even hiring a big firm we were able to reach the top one hundred on Amazon. So, that was very exciting.

Wendy:

Angela?

Angela:

So, Wendy, uh, can you talk a little bit about what get - what being a bestseller has gotten for you, what's the best thing to come out of being a bestseller for you?

Angela:

Oop, I think we may have lost Wendy. Are you there? Oop, there she is. You're back.

Wendy:

I don't know what happened, I'm so sorry.

Angela:

Well, I'm glad you're back, I've been prattering away, but, um, what I was saying -

Wendy:

Yes!

Angela:

- was, can you tell us, if being a bestseller is exciting, but what - what comes out of that, what are some of the tangible results of having a book, having a best-selling book? Um, that have helped you, um, in your - in your career, in your businesses and as an author?

Wendy:

Great question. Well - and I don't wanna - you know, I don't wanna minimize the goal of that, and, uh, minimize the others' great successes, it is something, again, I'm goal-oriented, I set a goal to do that, and, um, it was great to learn and to make connections with a lot of people and the team spirit and the buzz and the camaraderie of pulling something like that off is certainly fabulous, um, obviously, as a result of that, you can use that to, um, for instance, ask for higher fees for speaking! And you can use that a - you know, as a title when you go to the second reprint of the book, and, you know, people tend to be a little more interested, perhaps, in a book that's actually a bestseller, you know, not always, some people are simply, um, interested in the topic, some are more interested in the author, and, you know, but some are interested in that. It's the same as some might be more interested in who really endorsed it and some of those ... -

Angela:

Can you give me a "before" and "after" in your personal life, what's different, now that you have a book? ...

Wendy:

Oh, yeah, that's good. After the book, clearly, I am - the book is your business card, and so it is created endless open doors of opportunities to speak, um, which is ultimately, ultimately

that was my goal, which was that I wanted to speak more as a profession and be able to command higher fees, and so, absolutely, that's what happened, and people are calling me every week. I'm completely booked from now until Christmas and even into - I just had someone last week, um, already pay a deposit for February 2013, you know, it's just crazy!

Angela:

Wow, that's exciting!

Wendy:

Yes! Yes, it's very exciting, and I've been able to create sponsorships with large companies, Cadillac has sponsored me, uh, you know, a resort here, uh, locally, we did a huge Mother's Day contest that part included their - their giveaway, it was a twenty five hundred dollar package that I secured to give away to *my* listeners in audience. And, um, so, you know, there's a lot of - there's no way to gauge that, you just need to do it, because the credibility and the other people who will want to connect with your success are really priceless. I mean, really and truly, the, um, I - I don't know, I always have a saying, you know, that people always want to get on a train that's moving.

Angela:

True.

Wendy:

And I'm not saying - if you don't have a book, it doesn't mean you're not moving, it doesn't mean you're not valuable, you're not a pro, you're not an expert, you can be all those things, but I think, if you're already those things, then you should have a book! Because we need to hear how fabulous you are! You know, the world needs to know, and whether you do it in e-book form only, which is obviously only a very small, small financial commitment, um, or you do an actual, you know print and e-book format, you know, I - you know, of course, do the Kindle and the Nook version and all of that, so, um, the money from the book is not the reason to write a book. The reason to write the book has to be bigger, and it has to be, again, going back to our original, that you have a message that you believe is worth hearing. And that the stories are relatable and that you're authentic about having lived out your message, that you believe will, in fact, help someone else in their journey of life!

Angela:

Right.

Wendy:

And so, you do that - you know, the book, like I said again, it's just part of your bigger plan and purpose.

Angela:

Yeah.

Wendy:

And whether that's speaking, coaching, or, you know, in your own job, it may be as an attorney that, you know, you, um, do that, and, of course, are able to, not only com- - you know, com- - not only attract higher-end clients, but that your office staff becomes - um, you know, they step it up a level. Everybody that's connected to success gets some of the success.

Angela:

Yeah.

Wendy:

And, so, I you know, I ... - yeah, team spirit is huge.

Angela:

So, what - what was different than you expected, or maybe, uh, harder, some of the challenges that came up that you didn't know about?

Wendy:

Oh, it takes longer. My husband has a saying, even in homebuilding: "Everything costs more and takes longer." And guess what: not only is it true in homes, it's true in the books. It's probably true in many facets of life, but I would just say, you know, it - it would be better to adopt that attitude than try to think you're gonna be the exception to the rule. It's probably gonna cost more even than what you think, and it's probably gonna take longer. It's just the way it is. So, you know, that's frustrating, and when you can't do anything about it, and you got some ripple effects, um, you know, you just gotta deal with it.

Angela:

And, in our final minutes, what advice would you want to leave authors, future authors, people who would like to write a book? What advice would you leave them, having been there, having taken your own journey?

Wendy:

Well, that - just like we started. If - if you've ever had the thought of a book being in you, then - you deserve to have it come out! You know? There's so many people - actually, there's many people who've never considered that, perhaps, like me, because they thought, you know, "Oh, only famous people write books." But, no, you know, any unique experience, um, of life, any area that will really add value to others and give steps that will provide a - a resource that will be a tool and a tip, that will help people save time and money, you know, that will help their pain go away, and whatever that is, and what area you have had successful experiences in overcoming in life, you should consider how you could monetize that, perhaps, how you could share that, how that can strategically be part of your legacy.

Angela:
Mmm.

Wendy:

And that's probably how I'd like to end, is, you know, all of us do have our days numbered. And so, if there's any desire to have a legacy that really will live on, long after you're here, this is a way to do that really effectively. And, um, you know, there's certainly a lot more that I wanna be remembered for than just having written a book, and certainly even just what's in that book. Um, but I, but I know I would like to be remembered for going forward in life, I'd like to be remembered as being a passionate mom, as a passionate woman, a community involver, um, you know, a person that helped inspire and pull people up instead of being the naysayer that tore 'em down, and so, you know, hopefully my book is certainly a way that replicates that with my life's story in terms of what I'm accustomed to, you know, I've been in the beauty business, so I wrote about what I know, but I sprinkled in my life lessons and nuggets of truths that I believe, um, will help everyone, you know -

Angela:
Yeah.

Wendy:

- just live a better life.

Angela:

Well, I think that is absolutely true, and a great way to leave it, your book journey is a key part of your legacy, um, it may not be your whole legacy but it's definitely a key part, especially your first book journey.

Wendy:
Mmm.

Angela:

We will be back next week on book journeys radio and we'll talk more about how you can create the book, uh, that will be a part of your legacy. Meanwhile, uh, check out Wendy Lyn Phillips at nakedtoknockout.com. Thanks for being here, Wendy!

Wendy:

Thank you, Angela! Take care.

Angela:
Bye-bye.

Wendy:
Bye.