

Write Publish Market.Ep 133_mixdown

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Welcome to the right publish market podcast. If you're an entrepreneur considering writing a book to serve your business, you're in the right place. Or maybe you've already decided that's even better. I'm your host, Jodi Brandon, book publishing partner for entrepreneurs and 20 year veteran of the book publishing industry on the right publish market podcast. In addition to learning from me, you'll meet entrepreneurs just like you and hear about their experiences as we explore all facets of Writing, Publishing, and marketing a book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even have dreamed of yet. Our guest today is Dallas Woodburn, a best selling author, podcast host book coach and the founder of the thriving author Summit, she has helped dozens of women around the world claim the power of their voices and write the books inside their hearts. Dallas is the author of five award winning books, including how to make paper when the world is ending. And the best week that never happened. And her stories and essays have appeared in the LA Times, modern loss Chicken Soup for the Soul and many other publications. She lives with her husband and two young daughters in the San Francisco Bay Area, and uncomfortably messy house with overflowing bookshelves. So Dallas, welcome. I'm so happy to have you here today.

01:18

Thank you, Jodi, I'm just delighted to be here.

01:22

I love to be talking to a fellow book coach. That's not something we talk about very much in this podcast. So I've got a lot of things I want to explore there. But I would love to start with something that I know is one of your big passions. And mine as well, which is writing routine.

01:38

Yes, I just feel like I could talk about this topic all day. I'm so passionate about it, Jody, because I feel like it's such a kind of solid foundational component that really helps the writing process feel much more enjoyable and ease filled. And I'm not to say that it's like, every time you sit down to write, you're just, you know, rainbows and butterflies. But I think that there can be this, I don't know, if it's like pop culture, or maybe it's I feel like there is a lot of masculine energy in the creative space, but just this idea of of like, Oh, you have to, you know, just wring this book out of you. And it's just so painful and, and just that whole narrative, you know, I just don't think it has to be that way. And so yes, writing routines. I love talking about how I feel like we can actually create a routine that feels supportive and nurturing and

individual to us and our season of life. And I just think it's maybe not the sexiest topic, but I think it's so important,

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super important. Well, I mean, the consistency, I mean, we know from you know, science and all of that how important consistency is and habit building and all of that, and I agree with you, I think there's a big difference between Oh, this is going to be hard work to do versus Oh, this is going to suck the life right out of. There's a lot of in between ground there. So,

03:04

exactly. And if you're embarking on something that you know is going to challenge you, it makes so much sense to try to set yourself up for success and the best way possible. Especially I work with some clients who are writing memoir, maybe delving into some emotional territory. And so it just makes the whole process feel safer, and something that you are more willing to dive into consistently, like you pointed out when we have a system in place that we trust.

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Yes, I totally agree. I would love to hear a little bit about your own writing routine, because I know you have littles at home. And I know that a lot of people listening are in that same boat and probably looking for a lifeboat there.

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Yes, so one thing about writing routine that that I think is so important is to be flexible with it, especially with different seasons. And so really trying not to compare yourself to other routines, maybe you get inspiration from others of things to try. And also not comparing your current writing routine to perhaps other seasons of your life where you did have a different circumstance. So for example, for myself, before I became a mom, I was able to write for much longer sessions, I just had a little bit more control over my schedule. And so my routine looked much different. And so if now that I do have two little ones at home, if I was constantly comparing my routine to what it used to be or trying to squeeze that old routine and to my new life season, it just I would continually feel like I was failing. So I think it's really important to reassess, look at kind of where you are and it could be obligations, you have responsibilities, kind of your emotional state and this season and just really think about what is a routine that would feel like something that you can do consistently. So for me, I have a four year old and a six month old and when my baby was born, I said You know what I think a big win for me in this season would be if I can connect with my book project for 10 minutes a day. So really god that is my routine, sometimes I'm able to go for longer, maybe 20 minutes or half an hour, but setting myself up for you know, I have my 10 minutes a day, that's what I'm connecting with my book every day. And it just helps me, this might seem a little bit corny, but I feel like it is a way for me to connect with kind of like my inner self, I'm, when I'm writing my book, I'm not, I'm not my mom role, or my wife role, or my business owner role. It's like, I'm just kind of me at my essence. And so I also feel like in this time of postpartum, it's just been such a gift for myself to really, like have that thread, where I just kind of can be me for a little place of time every day.

05:49

Well, that's a lovely sentiment, first and foremost. But also, I think, like the thread there that I would love to pull a little bit is you're, you're setting an expectation that's manageable. Yeah. Which I think is huge when it comes to creating any sort of routine, habit, et cetera. I talk to people all the time, when they're like, oh, I don't have a writing routine. Now. I don't write it all. And then their expectation is, oh, I'm gonna sit down now and start writing for 60 minutes a day, seven days a week, and I'm probably not. So I think the importance of like understanding what's reasonable, is huge. When it comes to creating I mean, any kind of routine, new habit, etc.

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I am so glad that you that you bring this up, because I agree, I think that's so important with really setting ourselves up for feeling confident and, and being able to keep this promise to ourselves. So if you were able to set that for me that 10 minutes a day, that the day but I'm able to do it consistently. It's like day after day, I'm showing up for myself, and I'm proving to myself that you know, I can trust this promise, I'm keeping my promise to myself where you're so right, if I were trying to promise an hour a day, that is just not realistic. And then I would start feeling bad about myself. And then often what happens is we put it off even more, because it makes us a little fishes cycle.

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Yeah, yeah. becomes that big rock at the top of the mountain that is like just gaining a whole heck of a lot of momentum as it's coming down. Then with the you mentioned, feeling like a failure, the frustration, the overwhelm of it all just sort of, you know, gets momentum and gets bigger and feels bigger and harder. And then it's easy to like you said, avoid.

07:34

Yes, yeah. And I think too, is one thing that I hear from people when I mentioned my current 10 minute a day routine is sort of like, well, how does that even make much of a difference, but I really would challenge any one listening who wants to try it out, I've been surprised and amazed by how much even 10 or 15 minutes when it's done consistently. I think also it's thinking about maybe you're someone who has more time, but you might want to play around with, you know, do you want to write a little bit every single day versus having, you know, a few writing sessions a week that are longer, but for me, I find with it every single day, it helps me when I'm getting into a writing session, since I was just working the day before, it's easy for me to get in much more seamlessly. In the same way. If you imagine reading a book, if it's been a little while since you read it, you have to kind of remind yourself where you were. So I've just been amazed by how much I'm able to get done even in those short writing times. And something else I like about it, Jody is that it puts less pressure on each individual writing session. So if it's only 10 or 15 minutes, if I'm kind of having not a really inspired day, or just the rights are coming the way I want. It's like well, okay, I'll be back again tomorrow, as opposed to playing like versus my writing social. We haven't so much pressure on it.

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You know what, that's a great point, too, because not every day is going to be the day that you that the ideas comes quickly. The words come smoothly. Yeah. It's just that's not realistic to think that every single writing session is going to be that way. So I think that that's a great attitude to have about it.

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Yeah, it's working really well for me. And that might be something that I carry through even when my kids grow up a little bit. And I'm able to put in more time I think, for me a big question is, what is an amount of time that I can do consistently every day and feel really good about and like, right, like,

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I mean, I think this is a great way for us to transition into book coaching a little bit because I'm sure that this is the case for you as well. One of the things that I work on with my coaching clients is developing that writing schedule and all of that and it's so much easier. If they have a writing routine developed to to create a schedule, we can create a schedule, but if they don't have a writing routine in place, then we're really sort of just picking numbers out of the air is how I describe it to them. They're like Well, I think I can write you know this many minutes a day. I think I can write this many words. is a week, you know, but if you don't have a writing routine in place, that's where you have to start. Because otherwise, again, we're just pulling numbers out of the air. And that schedule might look awesome on paper. Yeah, but who knows if that's even remotely realistic until you're sort of into it, if you're just guessing at the beginning?

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Yes, exactly. And I think that's also why it's so wonderful to work with a coach and to have someone who is able to ask you questions and kind of help you like we're saying Be realistic, but get to a place where you feel good about it, you feel like it's doable over the long haul. It's not like just for a few days, or maybe one week, but it's something that you actually can become a consistent part of your day, one of my, I felt so happy one of my clients shared with me that her writing is now as just integrated into her day as her morning cup of coffee. And I just thought, yes, you know, that's just so wonderful. It's like you don't have, I think, to one wonderful reason to create a writing routine. And to really have this as part of your day is it eliminate some of that decision fatigue? So if you imagine that you don't really have something solid. And so you're thinking, well, am I going to write today? When am I going to write me go right after lunch? No, maybe do it? How long am I going to write, and it just becomes all of these decisions, as opposed to if it's something that you have in place, it's not even a decision, you just know, when you're gonna sit down, you know, you know what you're going to do to get into the writing and get out of the writing. And it's just, I think you kind of can remove some of that emotional drama around it. And then when you're working with a book coach, you're able I do a lot of mindset work with my clients, sometimes. It's surprising how much comes up, we think, Oh, it's so simple. I just sit down and write the words, right? A lot can come up around that. So having someone to talk through that with and kind of be a mirror for you and figure out well, why are you resisting this? Or what can we do to make this seem more nurturing? Or just ease filled for you?

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Yeah, I think to just writing a book is it's such a, it feels so huge to people, especially when they haven't done it before. They're just having somebody kind of, you know, like, in their corner, who knows the lay of the land? I think it makes such a big difference for people mentally and emotionally as they're going through the process. Especially if their writing involves their story. Yes, because there's such a personal connection to it. And there's so many I just, there's more fear, I think around it around, you know,

putting it out there and all that. So I think that mindset pieces is so so, so huge. And you work if I'm not mistaken, with a lot of people telling their story.

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Yes, I do. Yes. Yes. So it's really amazing to see the the ways in which owning your story on the page can have ripple effects throughout your life and really beautiful ways. Yeah, it's just amazing.

12:58

Let's talk a little bit about because like I said that we don't talk much about book coaching itself on this podcast. So talk to me a little bit about the process that you when you're working with someone as their coach, what does that process look like for somebody who is new to the world of book coaching?

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Yes, so great question. And I do have some people say to me, what is it but Coach, have you heard of that metaphor, an analogy that I sometimes use is if you had a health or fitness goal to like get stronger and so you went to the gym and you signed up with a personal trainer or to kind of help you figure out a plan to get where you want to be and you know, show you how to work the different machines and like encourage you and cheer you on hold you accountable, I kind of see myself as a bit coaches similar in that way. So definitely a big part of it is the providing, like the structure and the accountability with we have usually weekly meetings to check in about those mindset things and just have someone that is, you know, wanting to hear how you're doing. I have some clients say, oh, gosh, I don't think I would have written much this week if we didn't have our meeting, you know, on this module. And so I think that is a big part of it for people and also someone cheering you on. And then the kind of the resource the kind of would I say like knowledge education component is you know, having someone who's who's been there and done that and is really in that world and is able to help so with my clients, we usually start with writing routine and then we work on an outline for their book and kind of get a solid roadmap in place so they know where they're going and then really kind of work through the first draft and then we go into editing and and beta readers and all of that you know, that's such a so many different parts of the process and so but I think also with a book coach, it's helpful to kind of stay present where you are in the process. So the good thing about where we are right now with the with the internet, have you there's just like so many resources available, but I think sometimes it can get overwhelming absolutely clients who like sign up to work with me and they have Don't even written their book yet. And they already have all these concerns about like publishing and your opinion. And yeah, which it's good to, you know, that's great to be aware of that and to think about that, but I, often we can distract ourselves. We're in the drafting process if we have all these concerns about Yeah. So I think a coach can also sort of keep you in your lane. Moving forward. Also, a common thing that I've witnessed and also heard about writing a book is, it's really, really common to give up like, halfway through, I call it the muddy middle. And when you're working with a book coach, it's someone to just help ensure that you don't do that, you know, keep you on the path to the finish, you don't get distracted by a new idea and jump ship partway through. And so yeah, for me, it's really rewarding to get to cheer my clients on and for me, as a writer, too, and my writing, it helps me kind of practice what I preach. And, you know, like, stay true to being the writer that to me as well.

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Yeah, I don't know any. I don't know that I know anybody in the book writing community, honestly, that doesn't write in some capacity. And I think, edit the editorial people I know, in what, whether they're copy editors, or production editors, or book coaches, or whatever we all write in some capacity. And I totally agree that that really, that helps you because it really you understand where people are coming from with their, their fears and their struggles and their worries. And I like that you say, the muddy middle, I call it the sausage making part because there's, there's so many moving pieces. And it's it is that struggle. I try and remember what it was like the first time I did it, writing and publishing a book. That is there's so much that has to be on your radar, but not that you need to be worried about right now. And it's so hard to know. When should I start worrying about a God? Like? Yeah, yeah, it's a lot to manage. I think the education and the accountability pieces are the things that when people come back later, or the or the pieces that they say are, you know, were the most helpful. Yeah, so yeah, I totally, totally agree with you about all of that. What would you say to somebody who was asking you like, what should they ask a book coach, when they're thinking about working with one?

17:13

Great question? Well, there's something different but coaches and you know, different styles and different flavors. And so I think a big thing I always say is, like, get to know that person, I definitely have a meeting with them. Absolutely feel like you maybe even if they if they're an author, as well maybe read one of their books, just to get a sense like, because this is someone you're really partnering with them on the creative journey. And it's, you know, it can be it's a vulnerable process. And so you want to make sure it's someone that you really connect to that you trust that their style of coaching, because we all have different styles and right, you want to maybe know like, kind of asked about what does the container the coaching container look like? Like, what are the nuts and bolts of it, and just making sure that their style really is something that would be motivating to you. Like, for example, I am kind of more of a gentler, Coach, I call it I provide gentle accountability for my clients. Whereas it's not for everyone. Right? There may be some people that really want kind of more of like, I don't know, I just stricter. Yeah, sort of tone. So I think just really understanding Yeah, that particular coach's style and what the meetings look like, for example, I my coaching container is a group coaching program, which is, I feel like it's just wonderful and a great community is created from the women in the program who are writing their books. But I also understand there are some people that really want like that one on one relationship. And so just knowing that, you know, you're in the driver's seat as someone, there are so many different, there's so many wonderful book coaches out there. And so I think it's just being patient to find the book coach that you really resonate with, and that you would be really excited to meet with every week, because there are going to be a process where, you know, you might not be feeling that great about your book, and is this someone that can get you kind of back on the horse and you at least look forward to spending some time with them every rights.

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Yeah, I think that fit is huge. I mean, anytime you're hiring somebody for a long term or longer term relationship versus just like a one off, I'm hiring you to provide this and then we're done checking the boxes checked. Done. This is not but coaching is not that. Yeah, so I think fit is yeah, really, really important. And I mean, people get a good sense when they, I say the same thing about having meeting phone call at minimum. If you can do a video meeting even better, because you can tell usually, if you're you know, have a good vibe with somebody, a good rapport with somebody, and that you're

going to be able to you know, yeah, trust them with your work, but also like you said, had to you know, course correct which does happen when you're writing a huge or any big project but you know, a book for sure fits into that. That's yeah, good. Good advice. Good advice. Okay, I want to shift I usually end the podcast by asking guests for reading recommendation but I'm going to ask that first because we have something else to talk about. Yeah. So so my book people always have good recommendations so well although you have a six month old so if you haven't read anything recently to recommend you get a pass

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Yes, I have often been reading little by little sit with my writing like my little joke me so I recently finished a really stunning novel called afterword by nine a Skyler and it she actually began writing it many years ago. But a main component of the plot is AI. So one of her characters is actually an AI program. And it's just so relevant with wellbourne today. Yeah, it's really really interesting read. I actually read that book and I sacrificed a sleep to read it, which when you have a six month old is saying something

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right? I would think so.

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I'd love to that one and then I'm currently reading delightful queer rom com called all the right notes by Dominic Lim. It's his debut novel and it should be a Broadway musical. I just really enjoyed it. It's perfect summer really like light and fun summer.

21:29

Okay, Those both sound fantastic. I honest to Gosh, I really was not sure you'd have a book, right? What I was remembering how old your youngest child was, I was like, There's no way. So good for you for prioritizing a little reading is self care. First of all, I love it. Yes. Yeah. Oh my gosh, that's fine. Those are fantastic. I'm going to check this out. I'm always looking for especially in the summer, like a good sounds like that. Second one, especially is like a lighter BHK. So Okay. All right. Well, let's, uh, let's talk a little bit about a very exciting event you have coming up that I am very excited about.

22:07

I am so thrilled to have you part of it, Jody. It's called the thriving authors Summit. And it's a virtual Summit. It's, we're starting as the week of August 21. It's entirely free for people to sign up and get access to talks by gosh, I think we have close to 30 guest speakers everything through the writing and publishing and marketing process, from mindset to, you know, craft to getting visible and marketing your book and kind of everything in between. And yeah, I'm just I'm so I'm really enjoying my conversations with the speakers in the summit. And I think it's going to be a super inspiring event and a way to really feel part of a community really, we talked about habits and routine, I think you can really start to think of yourself as an author and part of an author, community, and help so much with ingraining those habits and so this would be a great way to cement your identity as an author is Come join us at the thriving authors Summit.

23:09

I'm so excited about all of the education that people are going to be able to gather in the summit, we're going to include all of the signup information and everything in the show notes. And I yeah, I'm thrilled to be a part of it. But I'm thrilled for everybody that can take part and learn every single thing they need to know. Just be surrounded, like you said by all of these people within the community, I think is hugely important. So so we're happy, happy to share that information in the show notes. And we're gonna put your podcast in the show notes as well, because that's another fantastic free resource for people you know, in this space. So thanks.

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I just love your podcast so much. And it's yeah, it's just so fun to be connected with you.

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This was a fantastic conversation. I feel like we could talk about routines like all day long, but, but you probably have to get back to your your regular life. But thank you so, so much for taking the time, Dallas, I really appreciate it.

24:10

Thank you so much for having me. This was a blast.

24:13

Thanks for listening to today's episode of the right published market podcast. I know just how busy your schedule is as a business owner. So I'm grateful you've taken some time out of your soul journey into the world of book publishing with me today. If you are looking for even more book writing, marketing and publishing information and support, check out my mentorship membership at the author entrepreneurs lab where each month we take a deep dive into one element of the book world with education, a q&a session with me your book publishing expert resources, co writing times and so much more. You can learn more at the link in the show notes. I hope to see you inside the lab