

Introduction: [00:00](#) Welcome to the Wrighter's Way Podcast where we celebrate writers who have completed their books and inspire writers who haven't. Join Laurie and her guests as they talk about writing, books, and life in between chapters.

Laurie: [00:17](#) Hi everybody. It's Laurie Wright with the Wrighter's Way Podcast here with Bridgette Bastien, who has so much great information to share with us about a book that's not actually hers. So welcome, Bridgette.

Bridgette: [00:30](#) Good morning. Thank you. It's my pleasure to be here.

Laurie: [00:33](#) Oh good. Yay. So last week I talked to your daughter who was delightful. So if anybody watched last week that was Emily and Bridgette is her mom. So I wanted Bridgette to come on today because I feel like there's gonna be lots of parents out there who have children who maybe are really into writing and maybe the kid, the parents aren't into writing, but they could do some of the behind the scenes work, publishing the books for them. So, why don't you tell us a little bit about you and then how this whole thing started with Emily. And, and just that journey.

Bridgette: [01:07](#) Wonderful. So once again, my name is Bridgette Bastien. I am married with two daughters, Emily who's nine, and Elise who is seven. I have an unconventional background, so I was a chemist for several years working with major pharmaceutical companies and I left the labs and went and got my MBA and then transitioned over to business. So I have a degree in marketing and strategy and I've been doing product work, marketing work, strategy work for several years. I write myself. I've actually been working on a book for (mumbling).

Laurie: [01:43](#) Yeah, I hear that. Yeah

Bridgette: [01:45](#) We won't talk about how long it's been, but I've been trying to fit it in with all the other things at work and being a mom and all those other things. And to be honest with you as it regards to Emily, my daughter and her writing, at a very young age, she had a passion for books two, three she would just pick up books and even though she didn't know how to pronounce the words, she would just look at the pictures and make up her own story. At the age of four she started reading very quickly, my husband and I was like, wow, do you understand those words you're reading? So she, it just clicked for her and in full transparency it wasn't even my husband and I who started her down this path. She started writing in aftercare. So the, the aftercare program at her school, I think the teachers and the high school students realized that she was so into writing that they started helping

her. So she'll come up with stories, they'll help her spell words, she'll draw her pictures and everyday she came home with all these papers. It's like stack and stack of papers for those kids like Grade K to about fourth grade, you know, you're like, oh, paper.

Laurie: [02:57](#)

Yeah.

Bridgette: [02:59](#)

So we were storing a lot of the stuff, putting them in storage. Some of them honestly we threw away because it was like, oh, there's just too much paper. And one day on the way to school we weren't really talking about anything but out of the blue she said, mommy, when I get older I'm going to be a famous author. And immediately I got goosebumps and my reaction was, oh, okay honey, I'll help you whatever way I can to pursue that dream. And that was all that was said. We dropped them off to school, I went to work and I was just gonna get out of my car in the parking lot and the Holy Spirit said, hmm so you gotta help her, right? You made that promise. Right? And I was like, Oh, we say stuff in the moment, but you just kinda like get them out the house or get them to do what you want to. You're not really thinking. It's a promise that I need to follow through on. So later on that night I spoke to my husband. I was like, listen, she says she wants to do this. She already have the content. I'm going to figure out how to put a book together. And he was like, let's do this. And we had more than enough stories. We had how many stories? I told her, this is a lot. Why don't you pick your favorite 10? We'll put it in a book. And this was her first book, Aqua Tales. See that?

Laurie: [04:17](#)

Reflecting. There we go. Yep.

Bridgette: [04:19](#)

Yep. So that was her first book, Aqua Tales.

Laurie: [04:22](#)

And there's 10 stories in that?

Bridgette: [04:24](#)

Yes, there were 10 stories in it, and it's about kids solving problems and this, she wrote this at the age of six and I was like, what do you know about solving problems? You haven't faced problems yet. But as I spoke to her and I read her story, I was like, wow, that's very deep. It's interesting to see things from a kid's perspective and some of the things that we may think, oh, it's not that important for them. It's very important. It's very important that their friend may be upset at them one day. It's very important Emily has a story on recycling and how we throw things away. We take it for granted. And what would happen if the entire, entire town was just populated with trash and everyone got sick, like what would happen? And I was like,

that's deep. Yeah, that's many of us when we try to recycle. But if we really reflect, we probably take our environment for granted. So it was, a lot of her stories were just, just very smart. She talked to a story about, (inaudible) mouth a little girl that won't shut up.

Laurie: [05:29](#)

I can resonate with that.

Bridgette: [05:32](#)

She said it's because of her sister and her sister talks a lot and just not just the young lady talking, but the impact of her friends around her and the impact of her teachers when they're trying to teach and she's trying to talk or her friends and trying to contribute and she ...so it was very deep. The stories were in deep.

Laurie: [05:53](#)

So do you feel that your background - you have an extensive background then in marketing and strategy and stuff. So. So speaking to somebody maybe who's watching this, who's a parent with a daughter or a son like Emily, do you feel like that really helped you? Was it still a struggle? Was it easy breezy? Like what, what would you say to people listening to you and saying, oh, but she's, she's got all this background. So it was easy for her.

Bridgette: [06:22](#)

It was still a struggle. I literally had to start from scratch. I have never published a book before. I didn't know what it meant to be a self published author. And many people have asked me this question. Honestly, I have not. We have not reached out to any traditional publishers because when I started my research resoundly online, even different articles, I went to the library, looked at books. They were like, it's very cumbersome, it's difficult, you get a lot of rejections. It's a long process and in the era of technology you still have to do your own marketing and to be honest with you, my, our initial vision with Emily's first book, it wasn't about making money. It was about here's my daughter who's telling me, mommy, I want to do this. I don't want to. confide her dreams or clip her dreams or clip her passion. I wanted to send the message at anything you want to do is possible. Yeah. And I didn't want to come back to her. It's like, well, we sent out a thousand letters and you got rejected, right?

Laurie: [07:25](#)

Right?'Cause we all know that adults do that and then they give up. They get all those rejections, not even a thousand. You know, they get five rejections and they give up and Poof, there goes that dream. So imagine a child. Yeah.

Bridgette: [07:38](#) Exactly. I definitely, we definitely didn't want to crush her dreams. My husband and I spoke about it many a times like, you know, let's do the self publishing route. Just get a book out there, give her something tangible. For her to say yes, I have I have my book. I'm an author, right?

Laurie: [07:54](#) Yes.

Bridgette: [07:55](#) And I had to start from scratch, so everyone out there. Even with my marketing skills, I had to read a lot of books, go online, join different Facebook groups, like the one that we're in. Listen to expert like Jay, like Jonathan, like yourself, Laurie, and just learn from others. The benefits for me is that I love to learn. I tell people I'm a nerd at heart.

Laurie: [08:17](#) Me Too.

Bridgette: [08:19](#) I love to take on a new challenge. I love that uncomfortable feeling of not knowing, but knowing who to go to to find out information. I love to look back and say, wow, last week I didn't have a quote and this week I can help someone get to where they need to be. So it was. It's a process. I would say if you have a child that has a goal, regardless of what the goal is, what the dream is, what the vision is to support them in whichever way possible. I think as parents, and I reminisce when I was growing up as a child, we were supposed to be seen and not heard, right? We weren't supposed to voice our opinion. They talked about what do you want to be when you get older, when you, you know, when you graduate college. Kids nowadays, there's a lot of kids, not just Emily that have opinions and views in dreams and talents. And I think as parents, we're supposed to support that.

Laurie: [09:15](#) I agree. And I love it because her stories from six I imagine are different from her stories that nine. But it's in her language, it's in her words. And like you said, the problems to you were like this isn't real life, right? Like this isn't a big problem, but two kids, it's huge and that is their whole life. And I think that's why my books have done so well because I, I used language that kids use and I use scenarios that they face. So you know, one of my, my, my book that sells the best has one page, the boy lost his shoe, (inaudible) right? Well go find another pair or look under your bed, you know it's there. But to a child like that's huge. So I love that these books that she's doing are from a child's point of view they're in the child's language. And I feel like that would do really well. So I imagine your biggest obstacle really is getting visibility. Like for everybody.

- Bridgette: [10:10](#) That is definitely the number one challenge. But I must say, thanks be to God he's been opening opportunities with her first book. Talk about not having a clue as a parent. I didn't have a clue who to go to, who to contact, you know, I may have known how to write a press release, but not in the sense that would resonate with a newspaper. My press release was more pharmaceutical focus and healthcare focus. I may have had the knowledge, but you need to kind of conform to a new industry. So learning all those things and putting it together and reaching out to my network saying hey, who within my friends, my family, you know, people from Grad school who has done this before, who have connections, who have done this before? And people have been great. I'm sure you can share people within your network has been great to say. I may not know it, but I can connect you with someone who does or here's the book. This will help you.
- Laurie: [11:03](#) Yes, and I love that you've said all this because I just hope people watching will take that in and realize the information is out there. Right? So you do have to go find it and learn it, but it's out there and most of it's just out there for free if you're willing to put in the time and the effort. It's there.
- Bridgette: [11:22](#) It's definitely there. And I would just say one of my most memorable moments from her first book, it was probably like maybe 11:30, one Saturday night maybe. And I was up and I was trying to figure out how to edit something in. At that time it was Createspace, now it's KDP and it wouldn't work. Everything I tried, every arrangement, every design I tried wouldn't upload. My computer looked great. Once I uploaded at Createspace, it was a mess and I was getting so frustrated and Emily walked in and she saw me at the computer. She's like, mommy what are you doing. are you working? I said well I'm working on your book. And she's like you are? She's like, thank you so much mommy. I love you so much. And she gave me a hug and she walked away and you know, for most parents out there, that brought tears to my eyes. But it gave me like a burst of energy to figure it out that morning. I was up until probably 2, 3:00 in the morning trying to figure out something silly in terms of making sure I had the bleeds correctly and the lines correctly...
- Laurie: [12:33](#) It's not silly it's frustrating. I pay someone now. I'm like, I cannot figure it out. I will pay you.
- Bridgette: [12:38](#) It was a tough moment, but just her coming in. Just that 30 second interaction and that love that she gave me, made it all worthwhile and I think for most parents will know you. You'll sacrifice and do almost anything for your children and

sometimes it's tough, but that made me think of okay, why am I doing this? Who am I doing this for? That it's worth the struggle.

Laurie: [12:59](#) It's worth the struggle. I love it. That's so true. I think the same thing. I would do anything for those little buggers. I have an Elise that's seven as well.

Bridgette: [13:10](#) Oh do you? Is she spunky? Because mine is spunky.

Laurie: [13:17](#) So. No, I have a boy that's older and a boy that's younger and they're spunky but my Elise has always been, I don't know where she came from. She is calm and patient and sweet and like that's not me. So I know where that came from. She was born that way. But she definitely is coming into a personality and so she's funny. She's definitely funny.

Bridgette: [13:41](#) I was about to say that switch.

Laurie: [13:44](#) No, no. She's like my calm in the storm of boys that book end her and my 10 year old oh my goodness. Yeah, we won't go there. I could talk for a long time about that. His name is Sebastien which is...and I have him in some books and I love your last name Bastien, so. So, that's a tangent. Can you share how you found the illustrator for both books? And then you did the formatting yourself, which is a process, but I'm assuming you did not do the drawings.

Bridgette: [14:21](#) No. No. I'm not an artist. I have no talent in that. For her first book, Aqua Tales her cousins actually did the drawings. So Isaiah Michael and Jeffrey Price did the drawings, the illustration and it's pretty cool. They're very talented kids. I know she showed it on her, her podcast. Some of the drawings, but it's very impressive. Just the level of detail. I'll show one of them if you guys can see it.

Laurie: [14:53](#) Yeah. Wow.

Bridgette: [14:53](#) They're all under 12. So it goes back to know honoring the talent of children and not telling them that they cannot accomplish something

Laurie: [15:03](#) Holy moly look at that one. That's so detailed!

Bridgette: [15:07](#) Yes it's very detailed. And of course the cover which I've showed before. And so once again, just supporting kids and letting them know. And then for Emily's new book, the Fearless Fantabulous

Five, that one was done by Raman Bhardwaj and I found him via the group that we're on Facebook.

Laurie: [15:27](#)

Okay.

Bridgette: [15:28](#)

So as we talk about the process, I literally sent a note out in the group saying my daughter has a new book. I'm looking for some artists. As you can imagine I got several messages offline to say, Hey, I'm an artist check out my website. I checked out several website. I actually interviewed three artists and just talked to them about their style, their vision, why they're artists, how long have they been artists, what are they passionate about, what are they getting excited about, what happens when they're frustrated with their work, what happens when the client may not be happy with their work? So I went through a very detailed process.

Laurie: [16:06](#)

Yeah you're thorough.

Bridgette: [16:07](#)

Yeah, my husband says that that's a good and bad thing. And then I sent them one of the stories and just say, Hey, can you just sketch this for me? What comes to mind when I said that? And based on what I got back, I thought that Raman was the perfect person. He just seemed to get it. And I showed Emily all the samples so she actually decided she was with me throughout the entire process. I told her that she's the CEO so nothing gets approved or out the door until she says yes. And it's funny because I say you're the CEO baby. And she's like, okay, I don't think she has any concepts of what that is. She's the CEO. She's like, yeah, I'm Chief Emily something.

Laurie: [16:52](#)

Yes you are. That's cute.

Bridgette: [16:54](#)

But she's very involved. And she's like, yes, I like this one. Yes, this makes sense. So throughout the process she has full say into mommy, I don't like that color. I want this. I want that. Once again, I wanted her to own it. So when she talks about her book, it's not my mom or my dad did this for me, but this is my book. And I told them I wanted a yellow there or blue there.

Laurie: [17:15](#)

Oh I love that so much. Can you share, if it's not too personal, how much it cost for the second illustrations? Since you had to pay - well I don't know if you had a contract with the nephews.

Bridgette: [17:28](#)

Well actually I did and they were like, no. I was like, yes, this is business. So I had a contract with both of them. I told them to give me a price and they way under priced what they should. So

I actually gave them like an extra \$150 on top of what they asked me for because when I did my initial research as to how much it costs, like there were like, can you just buy me a dinner? Can you give me money for burgers? It was very simple and I was like, no, you need to research your worth. And of course there they're young boys so they're like, whatever, Auntie, I'll do it (inaudible).

Laurie: [18:03](#)

Yeah yeah.

Bridgette: [18:06](#)

So, so that initial one, it probably cost me about \$300 for 10 stories.

Laurie: [18:13](#)

Okay.

Bridgette: [18:13](#)

So wasn't, wasn't a lot. But then again it was family, young kids. They were happy they were, yeah, hundred dollars!

Laurie: [18:21](#)

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. That's big money.

Bridgette: [18:24](#)

For Emily's second book, it was a little bit more costly, but we wanted a professional illustrator. That's one of the lessons I learned going through the process that your illustration, your pictures, especially for children books makes or breaks the book. Like even for a lot of parents. You look at the book and you'd be like let me see, do I like that picture? Even before you read a word and so it's very important. A second illustrator was a little bit more expensive, but I thought he was he was worth it. The range that I've seen online is adding anywhere from \$30 a illustration up to a thousand plus dollars for illustrations. It could, it could really vary. We probably spent, I would say about \$1500.

Laurie: [19:07](#)

Okay.

Bridgette: [19:09](#)

If I had to total everything up, that's probably a good estimate. And he was, he was amazing. I mean, just back and forth, easy to work with. What I loved about him is I sent him the story that advance. He read through the stories and he sent me back not just a bullet point and email to this is what I'm envisioning, but a sketch and I would say 80 to 90 percent of the time he hit exactly what our vision was. So I think it goes to the point of that upfront interview, make sure you have that connection with the person, make sure you're both on the same page. So once you start the work, you guys are already going down the same track?

Laurie: [19:51](#) Yes. Okay. So he gave you individual illustrations for the stories and then you had to format it. So what program did you use?

Bridgette: [20:00](#) I used Photoshop. I used Publisher. Obviously Createspace or KDP to kind of make sure that all my lines and stuff were in order. Those softwares, for those who say, well, I have never done this before. I don't know what I'm doing ...

Laurie: [20:16](#) Had you used Photoshop before?

Bridgette: [20:18](#) I've used Photoshop before and I've used Publisher before, but I've said for those parents out there who may not have that experience, I just say Youtube. I mean, it'll take time, but Youtube it start from scratch. There are tons of videos on every single potential topic you want on Youtube. You can go to classes. So there's definitely a way. Don't let lack of knowledge or lack of experience hinder you.

Laurie: [20:43](#) Okay I love that. Okay. So you spent about 1500 and I love talking to her about what she was spending her money on last week because she said, well first there was, I'm putting it in the bank and then it was a jet pack and a horse. Which I love. So so I'm curious and I know it's personal, but I want people to, to have a really good idea of the potential so you don't have to tell me numbers, but dollar signs. Now the book has only been out less than two months, right? That in dollar signs, like have you made that money back?

Bridgette: [21:19](#) No we haven't. No, we haven't and I haven't really started marketing yet. It's interesting. Talk about research. So part of my research is like, I'm going to do this full blast marketing, but everything I read said, you know, although Thanksgiving and Christmas are times where people shop for gifts for holiday gifts to really get the impact of your dollars you needed to start two months before October, November. You can't start in November, really expect to get that lift in November, December. So just doing that research, doing that knowledge, we're just now started doing more with friends and family and then I'm gonna wrap up in terms of marketing, whether it's through facebook or through Amazon. So we have not made that money back yet. And honestly I think with this book as well, maybe on her third book we'll do more push like okay, it's a business, you know, tracking everything. The first book I tracked nothing I was just like, oh, let's spend. A little bit formal where I have a spreadsheet documented, you know, every dollar, whether it's something in KDP or something Ingramsparks or you know, an extra \$50 for something or a book trailer, whatever it is. I've been tracking the, the dollar signs. So I think

that will allow us to see the ROI or the return on the investment.

Laurie: [22:42](#) Smart. I like that. Now it's a business. You have a CEO, I guess a COO. And now we're tracking everything. Well, thank you so much. If you, do you want to share with us again maybe her website and I'm just so people can check out her books and if you have one last piece of advice or something you've learned or one last thing to share with, with other parents that are in your situation.

Bridgette: [23:07](#) Wonderful. So Emily can be contacted at emilyvbastien.com. That's her website. She's also on Facebook and Instagram still Emily V as in Victor Bastien. What advice to parents, and I was sharing this with you earlier, is if you have a child that has a passion. A lot of times our kids are born with talents and gifts and we either try to steer them in a different direction or we, we miss all the cues. When Emily was a, a young child, she would always pick books up and read it even though she didn't know the words. We would have family gatherings and she'll be in a corner, reading and we're like, is wrong with our child? She's antisocial! But she was giving us all these signals to show that she loves to read. She loves to write, and we just decided to to help her along the path. We're not steering her, we're not pushing her. I think God has put that in her, so I would see as parents. So I would say look around the observant as to what is your child or what are your children geared towards? What are they passionate about? Take the parental lense off where we want them to be an Indian, a doctor, a chief. Look at what they're really drawn to, or are passionate about and then help support them in that journey. Most of us are older say, well, you know, I spent X years in corporate America working on something that I don't want to do or I spent extra years grinding because I needed to make money, but we all know that when we work on, something that we love, even if it's hard work. The fact that you love it, it doesn't feel like it's hard work.

Laurie: [24:42](#) Yes yeah.

Bridgette: [24:42](#) Right?

Laurie: [24:43](#) Yep.

Bridgette: [24:43](#) And I think for us as parents, that's what we're called to do. It's already in them. We just need to bring it out, foster it. When they fall down, pick them up, wipe their knees off, tell them not to give up. We're there for them. And when they are successful, just remind them, hey, stay humble. Remember someone

around you that needs your help and pull them up. You know your success is not just for you and for you to get a big head or a big name. Yes, success is the paved the way that someone else coming behind you could have a easier path in life.

Laurie: [25:12](#) Oh my goodness, I love that. You sound like such a fantastic mom and CEO for her. And I love to think that, you know, for a \$1,500 investment or you know however many books, but like she really could have college paid for because these books could, could pay the way. So I, that's, that's so exciting to me. And I hear you about doing what you love because I, I'm a bit of a workaholic now because I love what I'm doing so much. It's hard to stop.

Bridgette: [25:38](#) Thank you. You, you have been such a great support on Facebook giving your advice, your recommendation, your feedback, you know, thank you so much. And it's an asset for new whether new parents, new industry or self publishers just to rely on somebody, and know that you are, sharing because you want others to succeed. You don't think by helping others, you're taking away your glory or your light or your success. And a lot of people think that way. So for you to be so open minded, even this podcast, having myself on, having Emily on, just thank you. Kudos. We really appreciate it.

Laurie: [26:13](#) You're welcome. You know what, for me, writing books that sell well has changed my life so drastically. And all I want is that for everybody else who has an interest in this, it's, it's amazing. It's amazing the changes and, and how, how happy I am now, right? Because I found that thing that I really, really love and it satisfies the creative part of me. And the brainy, nerdy part of me where I, I get to learn all these new things and I get to try and experiment and know, see good and what's bad and I just feel so fulfilled. So you're very welcome and it's so fun to meet people like you and to talk to children like Emily, like she was so fun to talk to. So, thank you. You're inspiring, you're inspiring as well and Emily is inspiring to other kids and you for parents.

Bridgette: [27:01](#) The last thing to authors out there. If you're in the process of writing, regardless of your age, it's sometimes a long process. Sometime a frustrated processes like said, I've been working on my book since (mumble). But I would say don't give up. Just keep going, keep trying. You may need to take a step away. Take a break, but don't give up. You can do it. And when you get to that finish line, you're going to be so proud of yourself

Laurie: [27:25](#) Yes well...Let's have you back on when your book is done and published and then we can talk about your book. Does that sound good?

Bridgette: [27:31](#) Sounds good. Thank you so much.

Laurie: [27:32](#) You're welcome.

Bridgette: [27:33](#) Thank you have a great time.

Laurie: [27:33](#) Thank you, you too. Bye. Bye.

Outro: [27:39](#) You've been listening to the Wrighter's Way Podcast. For show notes, links to guests information, and to learn more about the Wrighter's Way check out Lauriewrighter.com. Until next week, enjoy this chapter of your life.