

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: [00:18](#) Hi everyone. Thank you for joining us. Again, it's Laurie at the Wrighter's Way Podcast and with me today is my friend Erica. Welcome Erica.

Erica: [00:30](#) Hi!

Laurie: [00:30](#) Hello! I never knew it was possible to have voice envy. I had Erica do the intro and the outro for the podcast, so she's the beautiful voice that you hear. If, if you're listening to this and not just reading it, you know, on mute, it's her voice and I never knew it was possible to have voice envy, but I do.

Erica: [00:49](#) It is me. It is I, it is I.

Laurie: [00:52](#) There you go. You can do accents too.

Erica: [00:56](#) Oh Gosh. Not very well. No, no. I mean, it's funny because I had a client of mine, he said, I need somebody who can do a British accent. Can you do a British accent? And I'm just like, if it's for something like a comedy. Yeah. If you need something that sounds legit. No. So yeah.

Laurie: [01:18](#) Okay so start off by just telling us who you are and what you do.

Erica: [01:22](#) Very good. Well, I am. Erica R Maier. I'm a voiceover talent. Just like Laurie said, I am also an author of a book called Reframe It: Rethinking Your Reactions to Life's Annoyances, which is a picture book for adults that is designed to reduce your stress level right away. So in short, I teach busy adults how simple shifts in mindset can immediately reduce your everyday stress, improve your health, and increase your happiness.

Laurie: [01:48](#) Amazing. Now do you happen to have a copy there? I don't have a copy here.

Erica: [01:51](#) I do.

Laurie: [01:51](#) Only because I feel like...

Erica: [01:52](#) Funny you should ask.

Laurie: [01:56](#) Funny you should ask. Can you open it? Like I feel like people are going to say a picture book for adults. What is that?

Erica: [02:00](#) Let me get the other, the other version because that's like the written up version. Okay. So yeah so pictures legit pictures yes.

Laurie: [02:09](#) Right there.

Erica: [02:09](#) Yeah so yeah legit pictures.

Laurie: [02:14](#) Awesome. Awesome. Okay. So tell us, to start with why you wanted to write a book and why you wanted to write this book.

Erica: [02:24](#) Well, I have been writing since I was a kid. I mean, I, my dad would bring home like little notepads from work and I would immediately turn them like landscape mode and turn them into like and just start writing and creating books and I've been writing in one, you know, one way or one way or another since I was a kid. Um, but I lost my dad to cancer in 2015 and it was through that experience that I became curious about positive mindset and how positive mindset may have changed things if that was something that was active in, in his life. And so, it just sent me on a path about exploring, you know, what positive mindset does to your physical body. And I just kept getting this idea of I would love to create something simple that people can implement and practice positive mindset on a day in and day out basis, but make it super easy to absorb because we're all busy. And that's why I created it as a picture book because you can sit down with it for a minute or two and get something out of it. And then, you know, move on. And so it was through that experience of losing my dad that the idea for the book came out and then everything else took off from there. So yeah.

Laurie: [03:37](#) Okay. And can you give us, can you tell us an example of one of the pages like you, when you were flipping it, you shut a toilet page. So what are you reframing exactly?

Erica: [03:46](#) Hang on, what's that?

Laurie: [03:49](#) The kids peeing on the seat. That's what I would need to whoooo. Find out about.

Erica: [03:53](#) It wasn't that one. The one thing I failed to mention is that the book is divided into 25 scenarios, right? So you have, I present a life annoyance, what I call a life annoyance, which is basically an everyday frustration that is out of our control, right? And so, I present 25 different scenarios. And so what that particular one

was, was you going to the grocery store intending to buy toilet paper and let me find, I don't need to get the scenario and you come home and have everything else. You bought all these other impulse buys and then you forgot your toilet paper. And so

Laurie: [04:30](#) Anyone can relate to.

Erica: [04:33](#) Yes. And so I said, look, you're going to have to embrace that return trip, so deal with it and so you... And so I presented the possibility because you know, we hear about these kinds of things happening all the time. Who's to say that when you return to that, you know, that you're, you know, frustrating return trip, but you don't run into somebody of influence like all of a sudden you cross paths with a friend you haven't seen in 20 years or a business contact or something like that where that would never have happened if that life annoyance had not occurred. So I love to think of things like that and like delays and, and, and just little things. I always wonder what, you know, there could be a bigger thing at hand and if we just kind of lay aside the stress of the annoyance itself, we kind of, you know, allow, we invite those, those possible little divine connections to occur.

Laurie: [05:24](#) Oh, I love that. The divine connections. I'm going, okay. So how long did it take you to do this? But because that's a ton of work.

Erica: [05:33](#) It took about 18 months. It took a long time because it, it went through various title changes it went through, I mean it, I probably was documenting and scrapping and documenting and scrapping, like I went through maybe 100, 125 plus annoyances possibilities until I'd narrowed it down to 25. And so it just took a lot of time trying to figure out, well, you know, what exactly is this going to be? And it took a while to arrive that it would be a picture book. It took a while to arrive that I, that I would, like instead of having a whole bunch of different scenarios with one category, for example, like having a whole bunch of scenarios about tech or technology, you know, or you know, family or jobs, you know, having one particular scenario for each kind of situation. So there's one about travel and there's one about technology and one about, you know, car problems and that kind of thing. And so it was just all of that trying to develop how I was going to narrow it all down. And then of course finding an illustrator to do the book. And then finding an editor to, to, you know, clean up the dialogue and everything. So it was, it was an 18 month process by the time I was finally off the ground.

Laurie: [06:50](#) Okay. And how did you find your illustrator just out of curiosity?

Erica: [06:53](#) Through Upwork. Through UPWORK is actually how I found her and I did an extensive search on upwork. And on Fiverr I, I narrowed it down to a few people and what I ended up doing was sending them a, like a test. I said, how would you interpret the scenario in a drawing and send it to me. And I ended up using a woman named Brenda Brown and she is the one, if you're familiar with the series, the Worst Case Scenario Survival Series. She's the one that illustrated all of those.

Laurie: [07:22](#) Oh Wow.

Erica: [07:23](#) Yeah. Yeah. So yeah,

Laurie: [07:27](#) Wow!

Erica: [07:27](#) I was just floored that she was even there, she does a lot of ebooks herself. She writes a lot of ebooks herself and that's what she's really on Upwork for. And so when I came across her, I'm just like, wait a minute, you did all the drawings for the Worst Case Scenario Series? That's crazy. Like, okay, do my book.

Laurie: [07:46](#) That is cool. Okay. So talk to me about. I mean that's a long process. Eighteen months. So talk to me like was there ever times where you were ready to scrap it or you thought it was never going to happen or did you just, you knew it was going to happen?

Erica: [08:03](#) I knew it was gonna happen. I don't think I ever had the, the, I'd never arrived. I've scrapped so many projects. Let me just say in my, you know, 42 years of life, I have scrapped more writing projects than I'll ever like probably admit. So I knew because this one was just gnawing at me so much and it was just like, to me it was God's way of saying, you better get this off the ground because I'm not going to let you. Like I'm not going to let it go. I knew that it was going to happen, but I knew that knowing my history of scrapping projects, I'm just like, I can't, this has to, this is just weighing on me too much. There's a reason behind it. I need to get it out there. And even though it did take a lot longer than I anticipated it, I, it was one of those things I knew that, that yeah, I had really, really just kind of like that peace that you just can't explain. That was, that was I knew that I could let it go.

Laurie: [09:04](#) Okay. And then the feeling afterwards you hit publish and it's out there and it's on Amazon. Tell us about the feeling.

Erica: [09:11](#) Surreal, surreal, and just strange and it just, it felt... I felt so almost disconnected. Like that's mine? Weird. That's so weird. And everyone, you know, of course friends are just like, wow, that's so cool. And I'm just like, yeah, that's and it just felt like it was someone else's experience, which is so bizarre. But yeah. Yeah, it's been, it's been, it's been, that's been a journey. That's been fun.

Laurie: [09:36](#) I think I remember feeling that way too. It's been about two years, but it was like, ha, okay. Press publish. Okay.

Erica: [09:41](#) And you've done what? Like a dozen plus at this point?

Laurie: [09:45](#) Just eight.

Erica: [09:46](#) Oh, okay. It feels like a dozen because you put one out what? Like every six months or so?

Laurie: [09:52](#) Yeah, yeah, about there, it hasn't really been scheduled. So I'm planning like four a year. But...

Erica: [10:00](#) That's awesome. And you see that to me is very inspiring to me because that is one thing I've learned now that my book has been out since my book has been out for, you know, for most of 2018, it came out January 30th of 2018. But the thing that I know that I've learned is that people want something new, you know, there's going to be a time when that starts to fade. Like for example, I got the book in some local independent bookstores. They like put it on display and they had it, you know, just prominently featured in some of their psychology and self help sections. I return, you know, six months later and it's, you know, put away, it's in a different area. It's not as visible because they're making room for new stuff and I'm like yeah, ya gotta, keep on turning out the new stuff because you have to stay relevant. So to me seeing you do that so much is like inspiring to me.

Laurie: [10:55](#) It's when I published my fourth, I believe, that all of a sudden there was a (whoop!) in sales so you know, hard to say if it was maybe something else, but I, it was when I did the fourth one that it really took off. And I feel like your book is so good. People will read it and then they'll be like, give me more like those worst case books or chicken soup or you know, whatever. They love it. They consume it and then they want more. So on Amazon they say there's a real cliff as well. As far as newness,

Erica: [11:28](#) Yes. I see that.

Laurie: [11:30](#) If you want it to be your business, if you want to maintain it and have it be your full time income, you do need to keep. Keep at it.

Erica: [11:37](#) And it makes sense why authors come out, like, you know, ones that are traditionally published. It makes sense that they come out with something new a year, once a year, every two years. It makes total sense. And in fact a buddy of mine who works really closely with a high profile author, he was just like, he's released his, his most recent book I would say about a year ago now. And he said, Oh yeah, he last month he just sold 20 books and of course he's a New York Times best selling author and in a month he, you know, after the wave had died, you know, he sold like 20 books, which is not a lot obviously. And so, especially for somebody of that, you know, high profile. So it makes sense that you need to keep rolling new stuff

Laurie: [12:17](#) Those readers out there. They're insatiable.

Erica: [12:22](#) Yes. Yes.

Laurie: [12:24](#) Works for us. Works for us as authors.

Erica: [12:26](#) Exactly.

Laurie: [12:27](#) Okay. So talk to me about, the learning that happened. Like what, what are some of the really cool things that you learned along this journey?

Erica: [12:37](#) Self publishing is not for the faint of heart. That is one of my biggest takeaways from all of this. I mean I really learned it was a really fascinating process to understand and learn and just realize man it when you're in control of all of the creative elements. While that's good, that's also, that's daunting at times. And so I learned, you know, obviously how to, how to ride that wave for when the next thing comes out and how to you know, what best tools to put into practice when the next one comes out. And so that was the biggest learning thing and of course, you know, along the way just obviously as I was doing the research on that positive mindset, just how legit like everything that I was talking about in the book and teaching is, is founded and there's a lot of scientific basis for what positive mindset does to your physical body. And so while there's not a whole lot of scientific basis published in the book, the more that I researched it, I'm like, gosh, that's. I love that. What I'm talking about isn't like total bull. You know what I mean?

Laurie: [13:41](#) You're not plucking it out of the air. It's actual science.

Erica: [13:44](#) Yes, exactly. Exactly.

Laurie: [13:45](#) But people don't want to necessarily read that. Right?

Erica: [13:47](#) Right! Which is why I left it out. In fact I have, I created an online course that was an offshoot of the book so that way people could, you know, have kind of like an intensive better way to implement those, reframe it principles into their life and it's in the course that introduced them to the science behind it and I'm like okay, this is you know proven that if you, you know, extend kindness and reduce your stress, these are the positive effects it can have on your physical day to day life. And so that's where I kind of like I tease the science part of it

Laurie: [14:20](#) Really. There's proof.

Erica: [14:23](#) There's proof. I promise.

Laurie: [14:24](#) Okay. So do you have any great advice for authors or writers I should say, you know, like going through the process, they want to write a book, they want to publish. They're not quite there yet. What can you share?

Erica: [14:36](#) I mean, the biggest thing I can just say, just just don't give up and don't let the idea of escape you. Have you ever read Big Magic by Elizabeth Gilbert and she talks about the concept of an idea coming to you and then you not acting on it quick enough and that idea is just like I'm leaving, I'm taking a hike and I'm gonna go find somebody else to bring it to life. And so that is like, to me, that's kind of like the fear of God thing. Like if you're hesitating to, to write the book because you think the idea isn't fleshed out enough, you better start and get it rolling because that idea will leave you and go find someone else. So that's the thing.

Laurie: [15:17](#) Something else.

Erica: [15:19](#) Yes. Yes.

Laurie: [15:20](#) You'll later wonder what happened to that idea.

Erica: [15:22](#) Yeah. And it's just like you'll see somebody else like put it out in development. You're like, hey, that was my idea. Like, and the idea basically like living in oblivion. Like, Hey, you didn't do anything with me. So I, I took a hike.

Laurie: [15:33](#) I love that book. That book was so good.

Erica: [15:36](#) Yes. Yes.

Laurie: [15:37](#) One that I own for sure. Okay. So this is the too personal question. Which you don't have to answer. How many dollar signs has your book made and, or if it hasn't made any, what's the plan for the money? Like what's the best thing that you, that you're planning to use the money on?

Erica: [15:59](#) So the dollar signs have been low because I'm an unknown, you know, and that's, that's the other part of doing a lot of this on your own. Is you're your own marketer and everything. So I've like put myself out on social media, you know, and as much as I can every single day I've developed the online course to go with it. And in the next six to eight weeks or so I'm launching what's called Reframe It, Story Meditation. And I actually haven't said that to anybody.

Laurie: [16:30](#) Oh Yay!

Erica: [16:30](#) So Reframe It Story Meditation, which is basically a meditation service subscription service that you. I dropped the listener in the middle of a scene or a story where I guide them to practice positive mindset. And so it's a very non traditional way of doing meditation, but it's like it's a spin on, on the tradition, which I really liked. So I'm excited about that. So in all of those ways I've developed like the Reframe It brand and I'm kind of like kneading it and molding it and developing it and that's all come from the book. And so when that, you know, all of those elements take off collectively paying off the debt and hoping to retire my husband and move my mom closer to me is like, are the biggest goals.

Laurie: [17:17](#) Those are big goals.

Erica: [17:19](#) Those are big goals. Big goals.

Laurie: [17:21](#) Those are very big goals. I can't wait for the story meditation because I have tried the meditation and almost without fail I fall asleep. And so maybe it's, you know, working its magic while I'm sleeping or something like that, but I can't do it. So the idea of a story that will keep me interested and paying attention and then listening to your voice, I can't wait. So where will I find that? Like where should I follow so that I know when that comes up>



Erica: [17:45](#) Well, for now you can go to [Ericarmaier.com](http://Ericarmaier.com) and you can get on the email list there because that will be where I'll announce all of the developments and all of that stuff. But eventually the website, Reframe It Story Meditation will be fully fleshed right now it's just like a blank page, but it will be fully fleshed and eventually where that will be, where you can go to, to sign up for the subscription. But in the meantime and [Ericarmaier.com](http://Ericarmaier.com). Will like take it everywhere you need to go. Where it be, you know, my book, my course, voiceover or what have you. So it's [Ericarmaier.com](http://Ericarmaier.com).

Laurie: [18:23](#) And is that what you are on Facebook and Instagram too [Ericarmaier](http://Ericarmaier.com)?

Erica: [18:25](#) Yes.

Laurie: [18:26](#) Okay.

Erica: [18:26](#) Yes.

Laurie: [18:27](#) Okay.

Erica: [18:27](#) Across the board.

Laurie: [18:28](#) That's smart. Okay. So I'm going to share those as well. I can't wait for that story Meditation. I think that's so cool. You started with a book and that it's grown and it's going to be a movement.

Erica: [18:43](#) Yes. Yes.

Laurie: [18:44](#) I love watching and I can't wait to see all these different pieces.

Erica: [18:48](#) Yes I'm excited.

Laurie: [18:50](#) Thank you.

Erica: [18:50](#) You're welcome. Thank you.

Laurie: [18:55](#) Thank you. We'll say goodbye. And thank you again.

Erica: [18:58](#) You are so welcome. Bye bye bye.

Laurie: [18:59](#) Bye.

Outro: [19:04](#) You've been listening to the Wrighter's Way Podcast. For show notes, links to guests information, and to learn more about the

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