

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](#) Hello everybody. It's Laurie at the Wrighter's Way Podcast here today with Kristy Hammill, who I met almost a year ago or about a year ago. Right?

Kristy: [00:27](#) Mmhmm that's right.

Laurie: [00:28](#) Welcome. Thank you for doing this with me.

Kristy: [00:30](#) Thank you for having me.

Laurie: [00:32](#) You're welcome. So we met at... So your sister kinda dragged you, right? To a course that I did like a real live course.

Kristy: [00:41](#) Yeah, it was a, it was a girls' night we were having and she was like, oh, why don't you come with me to this course then you know, this author, she's putting it on on how to publish a book. And I thought, well, that sounds fun. So off we went to your course and it was actually, honestly the best thing I did. So.

Laurie: [00:59](#) Oh good.

Kristy: [00:59](#) It was great.

Laurie: [01:00](#) And now how many books do you have published?

Kristy: [01:03](#) I have the three Think for Myself books. I have We are what we eat and I have my original book translated into Spanish, and another one at the illustrator and another one about to go to the illustrator.

Laurie: [01:23](#) Okay.

Kristy: [01:28](#) So a few.

Laurie: [01:28](#) So you have seven wow. Wow. Congrats!

Kristy: [01:28](#) Yeah. Yay! Thanks.

Laurie: [01:28](#) Okay. That makes me so happy. So let's rewind a little bit. We'll start at the beginning. So tell us, tell everybody like who you are and what your life is like and we'll go from there.

- Kristy: [01:36](#) Okay. Well, I as far as my background goes, I sort of dabble in a little bit of everything. I've been everything from a flight attendant to (inaudible) Pilates instructor. I've worked in the oil industry, many years in the golf industry, the last year, so we've been building our own log house to so you can call me a contractor or carpenter or whatever you like. I'm a mother of three. I have a two year old, a three year old and a five year old and I have a blog. I have a holistic thinking blog. Very passionate about holistic living, which is where my Holistic Thinking kids books come from.
- Laurie: [02:21](#) Okay, awesome. And you came to the course and you thought, now, had you already been thinking like, have you been a writer from way back? Like you did the blog? So had you already been thinking kids books were on the horizon?
- Kristy: [02:34](#) Not really, no. I have to be completely honest and say that I haven't always dreamed of being an author. I definitely never thought I would publish a book, but I'm very passionate about a lot of things. I feel like I have a lot to share and I'm a passionate mother and there's a lot I would like to teach my kids and I think books are a great way do it. But it was really your course when I went to it and you made it seem so easy and simple and laid it out so clear. And at the end of that course you said in a month I'm doing a course on how to market your book. And I was like, oh, I want to come to that too. And you said, well maybe you might want to write a book first, but you're more than welcome to come. Okay. So that gives me a month. So I went home that night and wrote the first book and I mean I, I had some inspiration and some ideas, but wrote the book, found an illustrator. Lots of illustrations back and published it so I could come to your marketing course.
- Laurie: [03:37](#) I love that. That's my favorite story I think. Because you did it.
- Kristy: [03:42](#) I did it I did it. Yeah.
- Laurie: [03:42](#) Was it as easy as I made it sound? (laughter)
- Kristy: [03:45](#) That part? Yeah. Actually you were completely honest right from the beginning because the marketing is definitely the hard part and that's where everything comes into play. But the actual writing and publishing of the book, it's really, it really isn't that hard as long as you have an idea and I think if you're passionate about something other people will be as well.

Laurie: [04:07](#) Yeah, I agree. Okay. So let's talk about where you found your illustrator and can you give an idea of how much you paid? Just because I know people are always adding up potential costs.

Kristy: [04:20](#) Totally. Yeah. And you know, what I, I've seen how much people can pay (inaudible) maybe, you know, totally worth it in that, but for myself, being that this was something I was just jumping into and I really wanted to try it and I only had a month to get to your course so I had to do it and I found an illustrator, I looked at a few but I found them on Fivver, so a very simple site to go and you can kind of see a little sample of what they do. And I talked to a few different ones and I ended up picking Alex and he's, he was great. And so I sent him a pictures and he did it. He had them all back or send them what I wanted for pictures. He said the pictures and the images back within 30 days and he charged me just over \$130 for the whole book. So that included a cover and 13 pages.

Laurie: [05:18](#) And then did you do the formatting?

Kristy: [05:22](#) No, my sister did, my sister, she is a graphic designer and she's incredible at that stuff and I'm lucky to have her. But she did, she took the whole book and she put it all together and prettied it up and could it put it into files ready to just put right onto Createspace at the time.

Laurie: [05:41](#) Did you pay her?

Kristy: [05:42](#) With love. With lots of love.

Laurie: [05:51](#) That's awesome. She's going to watch this and be like actually... the bill is in the mail.

Kristy: [05:58](#) She's gonna be like you owe me.

Laurie: [06:00](#) Yeah.

Kristy: [06:00](#) Especially when the books keep coming and I'm like, I have another one.

Laurie: [06:03](#) Because you have lots of ideas. You said you have lots to say. Lots to share.

Kristy: [06:08](#) I do. I have lots to share.

Laurie: [06:10](#) So what have you learned that you would like to share with people. What have you learned along the way through this process?

Kristy: [06:16](#) What have I learned? Well, like I said, the marketing is definitely be the hardest part. It's, I find it to be a lot of ups and downs and I'm a bit of maybe gambling. My husband always says, but it looks like I'm gambling as I'm sitting there bidding on keywords and trying to get things going and he just sorta shakes his head. But it works and it's fun and yeah, that's, that's pretty much it.

Laurie: [06:57](#) Okay. Did you learn anything throughout this year? Okay. Like backup. So you have seven, five out, seven soon to be out and in one year.

Kristy: [07:09](#) In one year yes.

Laurie: [07:09](#) So take a minute to pat you on the back because that's incredible.

Kristy: [07:15](#) Like I said I had the ideas there already? That's the hard part, right? And then just put them on paper.

Laurie: [07:20](#) Put them on paper, get them out. What did you learn in this past year that surprised you? Was there anything that was surprising?

Kristy: [07:29](#) That it works? Not that I didn't think it would, but at the same time, it... I mean not having a background in writing really. I mean other than my blog, but I, I just didn't think it could work. You hear of all the struggles that authors have an and all that, but what it really comes down to is the marketing and any ideas. I mean you have to have the right ideas that are going to sell it.

Laurie: [08:02](#) So talk about the ideas. So three of your books I Think for Myself books.

Kristy: [08:06](#) Yes. So when I came to your course, I was just registering my oldest for kindergarten and that terrified me because she is so creative and she's so outgoing and very think outside of the box kind of girl. And I really didn't want her to lose that. Going to school and just wanting to fit in and to myself when I was at school, I was such a people pleaser and I would say like, oh, I like that too, just to fit in, even if I didn't like that. And so eventually over time you sort of lose who you are. And I wanted her to know that it was, it's okay to think for yourself, make

your own decisions, be a little bit different and you can still fit in. So that's where the idea came from and I wrote the first one and she's actually in the book, and she's the character in the book and it started selling a little bit and I thought I want to spec... Or focus it a little bit more on school. So that's why I wrote Think for Myself at school and I put my son in that book and it took off. So that's been my big seller and I think it's because other parents out there maybe feel feel the same way that I do about school. And so I wrote that one and then I, I had a book about my daughter and a book about my son and I figured my little one was going to feel left out. So I thought I should write another one. So I wrote Think for Myself at the park and although that one didn't quite take off like the second one, I do think it's my best one out of the three, but I guess that's just me.

- Laurie: [09:41](#) But after practicing on the first day you feel like you're writing maybe sharpened up a little bit or?
- Kristy: [09:45](#) I think so. And I mean you get, you get reviews too. So as much as those bad reviews sometimes aren't fun, you can learn from them. So you get a little bit more insight. And like I said, I mean the first one, I wrote it pretty quick too. You like the idea was there, but I wrote it quickly and then as I read over it and read some of the reviews and it was like, oh, you know what on my next one, I should try this. And so I did that and then same thing, got some more feedback on it and tweaked it, tweaked the third one a little bit more.
- Laurie: [10:18](#) So I'm curious. I have to review said that you applied that approved the second one and I think that might be helpful for people as well starting out.
- Kristy: [10:27](#) Totally. So I'm the first one. It's almost as if it wasn't quite focused enough. Like I said, my daughter being creative and you know, making her own decisions. She also thinks outside the box. So that was in my head when I wrote the first one and so it wasn't totally consistent, you know, there's pages where she, she just does something really creative to get something done. You know, like she's, she's thinking outside the box but it didn't quite go with the rest of the book, like as far as the consistency. So I decided to stick more with like here's the situation and here's what well Kale my son likes and he's Kale so he thinks for himself. So it's just more consistent.
- Laurie: [11:19](#) Yeah.

Kristy: [11:20](#) The latest review I got was on, I forgot an apostrophe in a word, which totally just, I, I missed it and I obviously I haven't used an editor. I am the editor, my family is the editor. So if the main thing, how easy it is to miss those little things, but maybe getting more people to look over the next one before I actually publish it might be a good idea.

Laurie: [11:47](#) But you were able to fix that.

Kristy: [11:49](#) Yes. You can fix that. So, which is great.

Laurie: [11:53](#) Big bonus. Yes. Get Jackie to put the apostrophe and...

Kristy: [11:59](#) Definitely yeah.

Laurie: [11:59](#) And it's interesting how little things like that. Like I think I'm pretty easy going so if I'm reading a book and there's a spelling - or the newspaper, there's mistakes all the time. So it does pull me out of the reading a little bit, which people com... Like reviewers complain about if it pulls you out of the reading because your brain goes, oh, that's not right. Then it detracts from the story.

Kristy: [12:19](#) Right, oh exactly.

Laurie: [12:20](#) You know, you could have 10 editors and you know, it still might get missed just because it happens.

Kristy: [12:29](#) Exactly. Yeah. Well, in the review, I think that particular review, she had said, you know, it's her kid's favorite book. She reads it to them every night and... But she couldn't get over this apostrophe and I was like, oh my gosh,

Laurie: [12:45](#) Did you send her a new book?

Kristy: [12:48](#) I didn't, but I should, I should. It's a good idea.

Laurie: [12:52](#) And it's nice because I don't know about you, but after I print, after my first one was published, like I don't read my other ones as often to the children. Like it's weird for me. My husband reads them and so he will point out if he has a mistake, but I don't know if you're like that and if you just sort of published it and you read it through a couple of times and then it's gone. You need people to tell you if there's a mistake.

Kristy: [13:12](#) You really do. But Amazon reviews are great for that. People are very honest.

Laurie: [13:19](#) When they're motivated enough to leave a review yeah. Either love it or hate it usually.

Kristy: [13:24](#) Yeah, totally. Totally.

Laurie: [13:27](#) Cool. I think about this like what do your kids think? And what does your husband think?

Kristy: [13:31](#) I think. I think they think it's pretty cool. My kids are pretty young still, so they don't think too much about it. They just know they all have a book about them, which is apparently normal, but they think it's pretty good. I went to a preschool and read. They asked me in the local preschool to come and read one of the books, so I did that and so all of those kids are now in my daughter's class. So that's. That's kinda neat too. But it's been good.

Laurie: [14:01](#) Is your husband supportive and happy?

Kristy: [14:03](#) He is very. He's very supportive. Like I said, he thinks I'm gambling a lot of the time, but he. He does (inaudible). He actually wrote a book shortly after called Alligator Daddy and I published it for him. So it's out there. It doesn't really sell, but it's in the holistic thinking, kids publishing umbrella and it's it's a very cute little story. That was kind of fun too.

Laurie: [14:29](#) Is he a creative person like that? He was motivated to go do that or was it more like, I want to see what's going to happen or? That's interesting.

Kristy: [14:36](#) He's pretty creative. He is a reader. I think he was reading before anybody when he was young and he, if he could, if he hadn't had the day off, he'll sit and he would read all day so he's big into books. So that's pretty good. He reads a lot to the kids and definitely supportive of books. His mother is a librarian.

Laurie: [14:59](#) So just kind of in his -

Kristy: [15:01](#) Book family.

Laurie: [15:02](#) He just had to try.

Kristy: [15:04](#) Yes. Yes.

Laurie: [15:05](#) Time for the super personal question. How much have you made and what is, what's the best thing you've used the money on?

Kristy: [15:12](#) Okay, well this year...

Laurie: [15:17](#) You can tell me dollar signs.

Kristy: [15:17](#) Okay. So this year in royalties I have brought in just over \$32,000. But I have spent over half of that on marketing and advertising for sure. And just tweaking with that. So I've sold over 8,000 books, which is 8,000 more than I thought I would sell. So I'm ...

Laurie: [15:42](#) Wow.

Kristy: [15:42](#) It's coming. It's coming. I did take about, you know, five months off of doing it all, like the books. Some of my ads are still running but I didn't have internet so we were camping and whatnot. And so it didn't get a lot of attention for awhile there. So I'm hoping this year we can get on a roll and get going with it a little bit more.

Laurie: [16:05](#) Okay. So I know what you spent the money on but share with everybody else what you used it for.

Kristy: [16:10](#) All of the money and every last penny has been spent and poured into our house. So we built our log house this year. It was an adventure but hopefully... Well we're living in it now. So hopefully the money that's coming in soon we can spend on maybe a little holiday, something like that.

Laurie: [16:33](#) I'd love a picture on the front of the House and then we can put that up with the podcast and like you too can publish a book and build a log house.

Kristy: [16:41](#) Sure I will send you one. Yeah. Why not, right?

Laurie: [16:43](#) Why not why not. Right? I think...

Kristy: [16:45](#) I was thinking of writing a kid's book about that actually,

Laurie: [16:49](#) Like going through the process of building a house or?

Kristy: [16:51](#) Building. Yeah. You know, like all the kids, the kids were here and we were, like I said, camping and building the house and we, my husband took the trees down and peeled them and we did everything. So it was a lot of fun. It was an adventure it might make for a book.

Laurie: [17:07](#) Yeah. That's really neat. Well congratulations. That's, I think you've done really, really well and I'm super proud of you and super happy you Jackie drag, dragged you dragged you? I don't think that's right. Drug you? Didn't drug you.

Kristy: [17:23](#) Yeah, it's pretty great doing it with her. I do everything with my sister. So we we both published books and we we get together and work on them and do all of that together.

Laurie: [17:34](#) And one day maybe she'll come and talk to me on the podcast.

Kristy: [17:38](#) She, might.

Laurie: [17:40](#) She said she would, but I don't think she likes being on video.

Kristy: [17:45](#) I know we'll get her out there.

Laurie: [17:46](#) You can, you can drag her for me. Okay, so any last words of wisdom or advice for people who find themselves in your situation?

Kristy: [17:56](#) Just do it. If anyone can do it, I can do it. I have no background in writing and you know, I just have a passion for, for something and a drive to make some extra money and you can do it. So that's the beautiful world filled with Amazon and all of that potential. Right?

Laurie: [18:15](#) That's right. Why not work with it?

Kristy: [18:18](#) Yeah. Excellent. Well thank you so much for doing this with me. I really appreciate it. And how can people find you? Let's end with that. How can they find you? If they want to look for Think for Myself books?

Kristy: [18:30](#) I have my blog which is holisticthinking.org.

Laurie: [18:37](#) Okay.

Kristy: [18:38](#) And my books are on there, but they're really just links to Amazon.

Laurie: [18:46](#) Okay.

Kristy: [18:46](#) So on Amazon you can find me on Amazon.

Laurie: [18:48](#) They'll find you on Amazon. I like to say Google me because it's fun to say that.

Kristy: [18:53](#) Google me. Who knows what else you'll find?

Laurie: [18:59](#) Awesome. So I'll put a link to your books as well. Okay, well thank you so much. Enjoy your beautiful log house.

Kristy: [19:07](#) Thank you very much. Thanks for having me.

Laurie: [19:09](#) You're welcome. Bye bye.

Kristy: [19:12](#) Bye.

Outro: [19:12](#) 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.