

[Book Journeys](#) Author Interview - March 17, 2016

Dr. Angela Lauria with Caroline Greene, author of *NEXT: How to Start a Business That's Right for You and Your Family*.

"As we grow, our perspective grows." ~Caroline Greene

Angela:

Well, hey, everybody! ... We are back, and it is another opportunity here on Book Journeys to meet an author to learn about their journey to becoming an author. We do this every week on the show, because I think it's so easy to get stuck in the idea that, "I'm working on my book. I'm trying to figure it out. I'm putting together an outline, I'm interviewing people. I'm in the research phase." And I hear things like this all the time, from people who want to have a book but they haven't crossed that finish line, so we talk to authors here who have done it. They've crossed the finish line, it may not have looked exactly how they thought it would look, and we share that with you. So, I have a guest today who I think you will enjoy hearing about her journey. She's a two-time author, and - and I think, for her, she's somebody who, maybe like you, have always seen yourself as an author or seen writing your book as something you were born to do, but there was a gap between that vision of yourself as an author and making it come to life. And so, with that, I would like to welcome Caroline Greene, the author of *NEXT* and *Matter* to the show. Caroline, thank you for being with us!

Caroline:

Thanks a lot for having me, Angela, it's great to be here today.

Angela:

Okay, so I know your new book, *NEXT* just came out recently - well, we'll talk about both of your books today. So, just to kick things off, why don't you tell people about *NEXT*, which is - the subtitle is, *How to Start a Successful Business That's Right for You and Your Family*. What's it about, who's it for, why'd you write it?

Caroline:

NEXT is a step-by-step, easy-to-read short guide, written for busy moms who are thinking about starting a business or - and don't know where to start. So, I really wrote this book because, when I started my business, there was a lot of great advice out there ... for entrepreneurs, but there was nothing specific to moms who w - really found themselves in a place where they were putting their identity and their responsibility as a mother and primary caregiver before ... their business. And there was just that hole in terms of - of, how do we buy these moms on how to build a business that they love while also still being the parent, partner and whole person that they wanted to be.

Angela:

I love that, that's great. So - so - and by the way, you guys, you can obviously find Caroline's books over at Amazon. It's Caroline Greene and she has three "e's," she's greedy with the "e's," but three "e's" in "Greene," drop one on the end, but Caroline, just before the show started, you mentioned that, if people wanted a copy of *NEXT*, wha - what do they do, 'cause they don't have to go to Amazon, right?

Caroline:

No. I'd be happy to give anyone listening, who's interested in the book a free paperback or e-copy. You'll have to wait a little bit longer, the final proof of the paperback's still in my inbox that I - that'll take about another month, probably, before it would get to them, but they - either way, they can just e-mail me at caroline - at carolinegreene, with an "e," coaching.com, with the subject "Free Books" and their mailing address, and as soon as it's ready I'll pop one in the mail.

Angela:

Fantastic. All right. So, now, we're gonna dig in a little bit about the process of writing a book. This was your - this was your second book, so if we go back to - go back to your first book, was that something that you really envisioned as a completed project before you started, or did it evolve organically over time?

Caroline:

Well, it's - it's an interesting question, Angela, because it - and the - on the one hand, as soon as I knew I was ready to write a book, I - I saw the book finished, but I didn't know what the book was or who it's gonna serve until I already got into the Diff - the Difference Proc - Difference Process. So, in many ways, I feel like I - as you mentioned earlier, I've always had this deep desire to write a book, I always knew that I was meant to write a book, but if you ask me, what I would say was, "God hasn't told me what to written - what - to - what to write yet."

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

"I'm still wit - I'm still waiting for my message." And I feel like *Matter* was an important - it was a gift, really, of me stepping in and owning what that message was.

Angela:

Hm. Was it different the second time? So, when you went to write the second book, was the image of the book clearer before you started?

Caroline:

No! No, both times, especially the - and I wrote my books in three days, with you, in "Three Days to Done," and so, when I arrived on location, I - I did have this image of this book that I thought that I was being called to create, and I was committed to it. And in no time at all, what I

was able to do, through the Difference Process, is actually release the book that I wanted to write and allowed the book that wanted to be written.

Angela:
Wow.

Caroline:
And so, ... both of those events were totally different books that I showed up with.

Angela:
All right, so, let's talk about that. How - I'm - I'm sure this is making absolutely no sense to people, so, how did you pick the topics, or how did these books ... pick you to be their writer?

Caroline:
I think the first part of the Difference Process that really, for me, helped open me up to receive the book - the books that actually were written, were really - started with the creativity temple, which is an exercise that really in - invites you to get quiet, and to go and explore - really, in the depths of your soul, the book that is asking you to write it, and i - I think, when I first heard about this, I had absolutely no idea. I had no idea of what it was or how it would work. But I'd liken it to anyone who's read *Big Magic* by Elizabeth Gilbert - tells this beautiful story about a poet, whose name has ... to me, but the way that the poet describes catching an idea, is that - is that the poem comes barreling at her, and she has to grab it by the tail before it races by and wrestle it to the ground, and if she doesn't it will go on to somebody else.

Angela:
Mm.

Caroline:
And I think that's one way to experience the creative process, that - that all of these ideas are out there, racing at us, and we have to reach out and grasp to them. But I think another, equally valid way is to get all really quiet and connect with the idea that's in place there, that's then entrusted to you. And will it wait for you forever? No, but I - I think i - it waits a lot longer than the barreling poem.

Angela:
Mmm.

Caroline:
And so, the - the creativity temple, for me, was really about allowing myself to get quiet and escape all of the "shoulds" and the - all of the voices telling me what - what I should write and what I should do, and really allowing myself to connect with my own suffering, my own journey, my own evolution to the problems that I faced in my own life, the things that I was still struggling with, and tap into that - to that true narrative already inside of me, crafted through my own life,

and really alchemize it in a way that served - that would serve my ideal reader. That was a really long answer, probably not very ...

Angela:

You know what? I - I think it was - I think it was called - I - what is it, if you could go back and talk to yourself ... before you'd written the book? What is it that you wish you knew that would have made writing it easier?

Caroline:

I wish that I had knew to trust the process - by "the process," I mean the Difference Process. I think - I think that I had a lot of fear around what was gonna happen, was it gonna be good enough, was it gonna be the right book, was I gonna show up for myself - just so many fears that were floating around, and I spent - I wasted - if - 'cause - to the extent that I wasted time - I wasted a lot of time and energy wr - wrestling with myself and fighting myself along the path and finding that soft, slow voice inside of me that told me what it was that I was m - meant to be writing. So, the number one thing that I tell any author, especially one who's going through the Difference Process is to just trust and to see that book completed and to choose to believe that the book's gonna get done and that you're gonna do the hard work to make it happen with the right support.

Angela:

And why do you think it is so hard to - ... whether it's the Difference Process or another process someone might be following. Why do you think it's so hard? What are some of the - the things that you feel like hold you back, and now that you've done this a couple of times, what do you think is really holding people back?

Caroline:

The things that we think are holding us back are the things we think are holding us back in all ... of our life. "I don't have enough time." "I don't know what to write." "I don't have enough experience." "I need more credentials." "I don't have enough money." "I don't -" ... the - the lack is black, all the things we lack, all the things we don't have.

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

And - that really come out of what I - what's ... inner city mentality, right? This belief that we - we live from this place of lack and see everything that we don't have. I think what - what's really holding people back is - is fear, and ... what comes up for me, as we're talking about it, is - it - is - some people call it overuse, I don't. The Marion ... quote that says we're not - we're not really afraid is of failure, we're afraid of - is our own greatness, which she said it much more eloquently

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Angela:
Mmm. Yes.

Caroline:
- but that - that's the gist of the quote. We're actually afraid of our own power, and I think that - I think that, for those who are really, truly called to write and - and you know that you're called to write, the only thing that can stop you is the fear of actually having written a book, right? What happens then? What happens after you've ... the book? What happens when you are an author? What happens when - I mean, even if you have a best seller ... of any kind? Are - are you gonna match that success, are you gonna be able to do it again?

Angela:
Mmm.

Caroline:
Are you gonna move out from behind your writing and start serving in the world, ... w - what's next? And I think, for so many of us, we focus so much to our time and energy on, "Oh, I'm gonna write a book, what are you doing?" "Oh, I'm working on a book right now," And - and - and w - we have to be willing to do -

Angela:
That sounds so good!

Caroline:
Yeah, it sounds so good, very impressive!

Angela:
Yeah, I'm feeling ... for us right now, that's a great answer.

Caroline:
Okay, I ... behind the answer for years.

Angela:
Mmm.

Caroline:
It's very effective, especially in - in ... scenarios. ... Especially for - ... for moms like me, when I - I'd taken a step back in my career and I had this vacuum in my life ... "Oh, what do you do?" And I had one of two answers, one was, "Oh, I'm working on a book." And the other was, "I'm thinking about starting a business." ... Both of which were - w - in other words, where I'm doing absolutely nothing, but I'm really interested in ...

Angela:

But it doesn't totally feel like nothing. There's so many people I talk to that - ... the one I hear the most for sure is, "I'm interviewing a lot of people for my book."

Caroline:

Uh-huh.

Angela:

That seems to feel really good. And I don't think you think, "Wow, people are falling for this."

Caroline:

Yeah.

Angela:

I think you genuinely think you're interviewing people for your book.

Caroline:

Yeah, well, you caught me on that one, because I interviewed a lot of people for my book. So, I was, "But I was interviewing people for my book. Are you saying that I was stalling when I was doing that?"

Angela:

Right!

Caroline:

What do you think is true of work?

Angela:

... how can somebody know - 'cause, looking back you can probably see the places where you were hiding. How can someone know if they're hiding, or if it's genuinely ... required for them to get their book ...?

Caroline:

So, nothing's required for getting a book written, other than writing a book. Right?

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

And - I mean - and I - and I don't mean to be smartassy about it, but I ... do it, 'cause really? I guess there's a lot in business ... - I - I'm researching my business, it's ... "No, go - go out and sell something." ... There's certain things businesses require you to sell something and books

require you to put words on a page, a - and I think that if - if what you're doing, if the activity you're undertaking, whether it's interviewing people or something else, is actually in service to that objective, meaning, you've actually - let's say you've identified a question that you want answered, you don't have enough life experience or personal exp - anecdotes in order to - to tell that story in a compelling way, you've identified the problem that you wanna solve through interviews, and you're using those interviews as a tool to fill in that hole, as soon as you have enough information to fill that hole, you're willing to go back to put words on the page, I - I think that that's - that's good evidence that you're not hiding, 'cause you're serving your ultimate outcome, which is to actually get words on a page and get a book written.

Angela:

Mm-hm. How is that different than the interviews you did or thought about doing?

Caroline:

Yes, so, the interviews I did - yeah, I did not follow my own advice at all, that way. ... sound like I know exactly what I'm talking about, because, of course, we all make mistakes along the way, and I - I'm very, very human myself. So, as I look back on them, actually, what - what those interviews were about for me was confidence -

Angela:

Mm-hm.

Caroline:

- so, I had - I had identified a problem, I thought that I had a solution, but I had lots of voices in my head telling me that I have the problem wrong and that the solution was wrong. And so, I did - not a huge number of interviews, but probably twenty-five or thirty interviews, with people who self-identified as having the problem, so I literally put out a Facebook post and e-mailed that, ... "Do you - do you have this problem? If so, let me know." And what I got, actually, were interviews from people who had had the problem, for me, it was what I called "martyr mom," at the time, which is a terrible term, but it just means somebody who lays down themselves for everybody else around them and bleeding themselves dry trying to quote unquote love other people well. And so, I - what I got was thirty people recovering, people who - who recovered from that, who used to be that pattern of behavior in their lives, and they were willing to share how they got out of it, and that confirmed, for me, how I had gotten that ... of my life and made me more confident to share the tools that I learned of other people. But it wasn't really - it wasn't - it - it wasn't to write the book, it was, again, to overcome the fear of writing a book and saying the wrong thing or offering the wrong advice.

Angela:

But did you know that? Were you ... "Oh, I just wanna get over the fear," or ... gaining confidence -

Caroline:

Oh, of course not! No! ...

Angela:

- or do you think - did you think those interviews would go directly into the book?

Caroline:

Oh, I thought that - well, some of them did, and I certainly thought that they would. I thought that they was - they were crucial -

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

- ... that this would - how could you possibly - I also - by the way, I don't even think I ever told you this, I hired a research assistant, too.

Angela:

Oh, my goodness gracious, you're using -

Caroline:

Oh, yes. ...

Angela:

I'm hurt, me. I'm on a radio interview. ...

Caroline:

I know, I hired a Ph.D student to do ... social - I don't even know what research about, social science research, about, my topic, so that I could validate my theories through data. So, y - again, of course, I didn't realize it was about fear, and I have great compassion for myself, and ... you could argue that the book was better because of it, but I think, for me, the difference was - of what I described versus what I did - was that I couldn't - if I hadn't had a date on the calendar, when I was gonna show up and write a book with you -

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

- I could have done that for years. I could have done that for years, And - and then - by the way, as we grow, our perspective grows, so the solution that I offered a year ago might not be the solution I offer now. So, then, I had to start the research all over again, ... because now, I ...

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Angela:
Right!

Caroline:
- whole new approach, because I'm a new person, a year later, and - and then, all of a sudden, you're writing for ... a decade. ... researching for a decade and - and you think that you're writing a book when you're not. But, yeah, hey, deep compassion for that place. I - I was there for a long time.

Angela:
So, I know you help moms to find work that matters and ... start businesses. How has the book journey, how is the journey of becoming an author, and ... best selling author - how has that informed your work and - and is writing a book, is there a metaphor there for building a business?

Caroline:
.... Yes, there are a lot of questions in that question, all of which resonate with me, so I'll try and take them in turn. I think - ... it's interesting, because what immediately comes up for me is, how is my business - my book serve my business. For the same - in many ways, and I - I hope this - I hope this'll make sense. The research, the interviews, the meeting, all of this stuff in order to write the book - ... with my first book, I felt like I needed the book in order to bring my magic out in the world in order to serve and love people. So, as I'm sitting here, I'm thinking ... "Oh, wow, look at that! ... I really thought that I needed a book in order to become the coach that I wanted to be."

Angela:
Mmm.

Caroline:
And whether - so, obviously, that, for a second, and just noticed how you can convince ourselves ... not to go out and do the work that we are meant to do because - am I an author? Yes, but I'm a servant, most of all, and I - I - I really wanna be out in the world, serving and loving my people, and I get a hands-on, one-on-one way, and so, for me, the book was really - what - what it became - it didn't start this way, at the beginning, I just - I really wanted this book because I was an author who hadn't written a book yet, in my own head. But what it really meant to me was ... a vehicle of transformation, for me to stop hiding.

Angela:
Mmm.

Caroline:

... I don't need another certification, I've written the book, people have read the book, people's lives have been changed by the book. I really didn't have any excuses left to not - ... I don't - I don't know that you'll remember this or not, but I actually - I tell this story in *NEXT*. I was sitting at the table at Three Days to Done and wr - writing my first book and the art - the cover designer, John Matthews was there, and - and I looked at him, I told him ... "I n - never - I'm never gonna coach again! I'm just gonna write books. I'm just gonna stay in a cabin and I'm just gonna write books forever and I'm never coaching ever, ever again!" Because I really - I really - well, stop there. That - that was my pronouncement, and you, either, at the time or shortly thereafter - well, ... around the table, said, "It's totally fine if you wanna hide for the rest of your life."

Angela:

I'm sure that was me. I remember that ...

Caroline:

Yeah. And - and I didn't even honestly - and I talked about, do you know - could you see that then, but I didn't even understand what you were saying, then. ... It wasn't like you said that, and all of a sudden, I had this great clarity, ... "Oh, no, I don't wanna hide, I wanna help people," and now I understand what you're talking about. It took a long time for that message to settle in, and so - anyway, so, that's a long ... answer to my - to - my book serve my business well. I think my book serves me well, and it serves the people that I wanted to serve well, and it helps ... without getting too cheesy, it helps me to transform into the person that I knew that I wanted to be, which, in turn, serves my business well.

Angela:

Mmm. Totally.

Caroline:

So, it was so much more than a marketing tool, It was so much more than - did people learn about me? Yes. Did it increase my revenue? Yes. Did it help me get clarity and sell my programs faster? Yes. ... It did all of those things that you know books can do, but for me, this journey has been about so much - so much more than just - just the book held in my hands, if that makes any sense. I think that was only one of the questions you asked me.

Angela;

Yeah. It makes total sense. So, ... what I was gonna ask you next was, what - what was the biggest surprise about this process, but I wonder if that's - if that's what the surprise was, that you thought that this was about getting a book in your hand, and it was really about the way you - the way you changed to become the author of this book, or someone who had finished a book, there were ways that you had to change and show up differently. Was that the biggest surprise about the ...?

Caroline:

Yes. I - yes, I - on a - on the deepest, most honest level, yes, the reason that I'm hesitating 'cause - 'cause I'm thinking ... "Actually, the biggest surprise is that I wrote two books."

Angela:

Really?

Caroline:

... A - and this is just - I think this is ... that gap, ... it's like I handed over my money and I set the intention, I did all of my interviews, ... I - I've won ... said, "What's my advice?" And the answer is, "Trust," is because I didn't have that trust, ... there was this chasm between - between what I wanted and what I said I was gonna do, and quite frankly, I think, in my life, especially my adult life, showing up for myself and doing things that I wanted to do was not ... my strength -

Angela:

Mm-hm.

Caroline:

- a - and I had a track record of - of - of making big promises, so the one that - that I talk about a lot is, I publicly announced on social media that I was gonna run a marathon, ... twelve times, but I've never run a marathon, ... I would - I would make a pronouncement - and I would hire a running coach, by the way, that ... run to, and ... - it wasn't just for lack of - I didn't go through for myself.

Angela;

Mmm.

Caroline:

And I think that, as I'm sitting here, thinking about it, I wanted to believe that it was going to work, that I had failed myself, in quotes, because I don't truly believe there are failures, but they felt like failures.

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

I failed myself so many times over the past decade, before I started this process, that I think - I think the biggest surprise was that the practice didn't fail me, and that I didn't fail me.

Angela:

Wow.

Caroline:

And - and that I - I actually came - I actually came out of this having achieved the very thing that I - that I was to achieve in the first place. So, that's the first one, the second one is that - ... and they're so connected, ... because, obviously, by following through on that promise to myself, then I was transforming the way that I was showing up for me, which - ... the two ...

Angela:

Mm-hm!

Caroline:

They're so deeply related, but I would just put them in that order.

Angela:

Yeah. I - ... the biggest gift, I think, of - of writing a book, beyond the "service for other people," is ... when you keep a promise that big to yourself, whether it's running a marathon, losing a hundred pounds, writing a book, getting a - ... getting a - a law degree, ... those big promises, when you keep a big promise like that to yourself, at the end of keeping that promise, you're just a different person. You can't not be, 'cause now, you're the person who kept that promise, and that changes up - changes the way you show up for a cup of coffee with a friend.

Caroline:

Mm-hm.

Angela:

It changes the way you show up in anything, 'cause it's ... a next evolution. So - so, we - we - I just have a couple of minutes left, and I'm wondering, what advice that you would give to someone who wants to write a book but they haven't been able to - to finish it before.

Caroline:

So, this is the same advice I give to anyone who wants to start a business and hasn't been able to get it off the - off the ground, is, get help. I don't care who it is, or I don't - I don't care who ... do, but to help - and this is - this is - a - a - and - and this is my - one of my favorite soap operas, and I just jump on it with two "e's," so -

Angela;

Mm-hm!

Caroline:

The my - the myth of self-sufficiency in our culture is overwhelming. This idea that, if we're good enough to do it, we're good enough to do it alone -

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

- especially for women. ... so much of - both our culture, but more importantly, our own self-talk to ourself. "I shouldn't need help -" and, by the way, I don't deserve help if I'm not doing stuff to follow up on my own deadlines, ... we just - we just drive ourselves into the ground with a big, fat riding crop, whipping ourselves all the way down, and - and I - I just - so ... - and - and what help looks like? It could look like anything, sure. It could look like a writing program, but it could look like more help at home. It could ... look like an honest conversation with your partner or friend or family about ... tacit arrangements ... that are not serving you well, or serving other people well. Help ... all sorts of different forms, but in order to - in order to keep these big promises to ourselves, these - the ones you were talking about, Angela, that just transform who we are and how we show up in the world - we can't keep those promises alone.

Angela:

Mmm.

Caroline:

And we just can't, so I think just getting really honest - getting really quiet and really honest with yourselves about what you need in order to keep that promise, and then giving yourself permission to go get the support you need to get it done.

Angela:

Beautiful, I love it. Caroline Greene, author of *NEXT: How to Start Successful That's Right for You and Your Family*, and she's also the author of *Matter: How to Find Meaningful Work That's Right for You and Your Family*. You can find out more about Caroline at carolinegreene.com, with an "e" on the end, carolinegreenecoaching.com, and if you reach out to her at caroline@carolinegreenecoaching.com, you can ask her for a copy of her book that - ... mail for you, which is amazing, and also have electronic copies available, so I encourage you all to reach out to her and Caroline, I just wanna share my gratitude for sharing a little piece of your book journey.

Caroline:

Well, thanks so much for having me, Angela, for - for letting me share how this book is - has transformed me, and I hope that it helps at least one person out there, who's thinking about writing a book really stick up themselves and do it. ... Their lives will never be the same.

Angela:

I love it, absolutely. So, we will be back next week at Book Journeys, where we're changing the world one book at a time.