

[Book Journeys Author Interview](#) - Oct. 27, 2016

Jenn McRobbie with Jeanne Andrus, author of *I Just Want to Be ME Again: A Guide to Thriving Through Menopause*.

"I don't write it - my book necessarily in order, and I don't think you have to, but know what you're planning to do each week and do it." ~Jeanne Andrus

Jenn:

Well, hello, everybody! Welcome to Book Journeys Radio. It's October twenty-seventh and if you've joined us before you know that our goal here is to speak to accomplished authors who've gone from having an idea for a book to a finished book. So, today's show, we have a very special author for you. She's actually written three ... books with us and probably has more on the way, so you're getting the chance to hear from one of our more prolific authors, which is always a treat. Jeanne Andrus is the "Menopause Guru," and she wrote *I Just Want to Be ME Again* in 2015, followed by *Lighten Up* in March 2016 and then *Chill Out* in August of 2016. So, I'm very excited to introduce you to Jeanne and to hear for myself how she was able to accomplish so much in just one year's time. So, welcome, Jeanne!

Jeanne:

Hey, Jenn! Thanks for having me!

Jenn:

Oh, so happy to have you here! And ... I want to reiterate, for everyone, before we get started, that Jeanne is the "Menopause Guru," so if you are approaching menopause, you're in peri-menopause or already in menopause, you're probably gonna want to stay tuned here, because I'm sure she's gonna have some amazing things to share with us ... on how to handle our changing bodies.

Jeanne:

...

Jenn:

So, Jeanne, let's talk about your first - what's that?

Jeanne:

I said, it's a big change.

Jenn:

Oh, boy. Tell me about it. Let's talk about your first book first, *I Just Want to Be ME Again*. Can you tell the listeners ... what the book is about and who it's for?

Jeanne:

I Just Want to Be ME Again is the talk that you never had with anybody who's ever gonna have given you the information you needed. So, women my age, we were all dragged into a classroom when we were kids and were told what it was all about to happen to us when our periods started. So, there's no way ... get women into a classroom and tell them what's gonna happen when it stops, so that's why I wrote this book.

Jenn:

So, *I Just Want to Be ME* began as the ... classroom portion of becoming a grown woman.

Jeanne:

... It's the primer about what's gonna happen with perimenopause and menopause.

Jenn:

I love that, ... and so necessary. How did you come up with the idea to write this ... primer book?

Jeanne:

Well, I actually had this humongous book in my head that had probably, on, nine hundred, a thousand pages and just everything in the world about menopause, and ... working with my editor, Grace Corina, she just - she told me, "You've got to trim down to something that people can read and use. And I had spent so much time talking to women and telling them stuff nobody had ever told them, that that's why I wanted to write this particular book.

Jenn:

Mmm. That makes a lot of sense, and it makes sense for that to be the first book, too, because it's an introduction to you and your topic.

Jeanne:

Right.

Jenn:

Right. Gotcha. And I must ... - before we move on, *Lighten Up* and *Chill Out*, are those also about ... menopause topics, or is that about other things?

Jeanne:

Yeah, *Lighten Up* is about weight loss in menopause, which is a very different animal than before you - your hormones started changing, and it goes into all the things that go into weight loss, not only just from a - from a diet and exercise standpoint, but what you have to - the way you have to approach being on a diet and sticking to it and why you're on a diet, ... what I call the "inner game" as well as the "outer game" of weight loss. And then, *Chill Out* was - I wrote just about hot flashes, so it - it -

Jenn:

A whole book on hot flashes?

Jeanne:

A whole book on hot flashes. Because it's so - it's such an annoying symptom of menopause, it's dragged you out of who you are and the funny thing is that I've never found anyone who's hot flashes weren't a message to them about something that's going on in their life. And -

Jenn:

Wow!

Jeanne:

But they're so annoyed by them that it's hard for us to hear that message of our bodies when we're ... sweating and not sleeping. So, it's about ... how to not sweat, not sleep, or - or sweat - not sweat and to sleep. And then how to listen to your body as it's trying to tell you something about the rest of your life.

Jenn:

So, these principles sound really interesting to me, Jeanne, because it sounds like this idea about listening to your body and what's happening as it changes is the same sort of thing that you need to do, as an author, when listening for your topic.

Jeanne:

Yeah.

Jenn:

So, did you ... - did you tap into any of that knowledge when you were writing?

Jeanne:

... Jenn, I'm writing the - the fourth book now, which is *Think Again*, about brain ..., and it's - it's very true. I have to get back down into what my body's trying to tell me, what the messages of my body are, around that topic, for my readers. So, yeah, it - it's really important - I'm also a reiki practitioner, so I use that a lot, to tap into the energy of what wants - what I'm trying to get out into the world.

Jenn:

Oh, wow, so do you have ... - especially since you're in the process of writing a book right now, do you have ... something you always do before you write, or some way you prepare your mind and your body to sit down and write?

Jeanne:

I had a really, really cool set of - deck of flies, it's Powerpoint, basically, that - ... I ha - I put pictures I really love, and I put affirmations on them, and I have some alpha wave music that goes behind it. So, I do that for about five minutes, and then the alpha waves music plays for about the next hour, while I write, So,

Jenn:

Oh! That's fascinating.

Jeanne:

Yeah, use ... under a - it's a - a set of music that I found online, from this guy, and they're really - they're really non - non-invasive. They - they sit there but they - they get me right into the zone, and since I target in on the people or the person I want to be reading my book, the person I know needs the help about this topic, it allows me to just get right into that zone and - and ... tell what I need to tell her.

Jenn:

Now, that's amazing, so it ... helps you - ... sit things in your subconscious, so that you can then spend ... your more important energies focusing on your ideal reader. Wow!

Jeanne:

Yes! It And, of course, the information, so that I can get the right equation to her.

Jenn:

Right! So you can access what - all of the - the tome of knowledge you have in your head about this topic.

Jeanne:

Or on the Internet.

Jenn:

Or on the Internet, exactly! Well, so, that - that ... explains ... your topic and how you came to it, but was it - even though this is a topic that you encounter every day and that you have experienced yourself, when you sit down to write, do you sometimes find it hard to focus, or does this alpha wave music really help you stay ... in the groove?

Jeanne:

Mostly, it helps me stay in the groove, I - I - I admit to sometimes, I'm either - I've been challenged by not feeling ... I have to write words, or just wanting to go outside and play or whatever it is. And so, yeah, there have been times when it's challenging, it - there's usually draws going back in, but Angela also - as a publisher, has created ... a beautiful framework for us to work inside of, to do ... our work, and helps us jump back into it, or alternatively, to say, "Okay, this is not time, and this is ... how I can better use that time." So -

Jenn:

Oh. So, let - let's talk about that, because I think a lot of authors - first-time authors in particular - make the mistake of thinking they have to sit down and ... white-knuckle their way through an entire book. And what I'm hearing - what I'm hearing you say is that there are times when it's a good idea to walk away.

Jeanne:

Exactly. ... One of the things that - I don't know, somebody - Angela does calls with her authors, so we get a chance to talk with her and ask her questions every week, and one week, when I was early on, somebody asked the question and said, ... "I get - I get started, and then I notice that - that my room is a mess or something, and I wanna go clean it, and then - but I feel like I have to get so many words on," and she says, "Well, ... you have to just take a - take a - take your temperature, or your writer temperature, and say, how close are you to being in the zone? And if you're not in your zone, maybe it is ... for you to walk away and clean your room and so that - that's out of your mind while you - when you sit down on the next topic." And that permission ... is wonderful, because it allows you to know that you have that option at any given time, and a lot of times, that allows your brain to say, "Oh! Yeah, I could, if I wanted to, but I don't really want to."

Jenn:

Yeah, I think permission, that's the - the key word there, and I - I love that there - you can give yourself the opportunity to follow the shiny object that might be distracting you.

Jeanne:

Yeah, exactly!

Jenn:

There's nothing wrong with sometimes seeing something shiny and going and following it. ... Take it from Jeanne, she's working on book number four, people, so clearly she's been able to get plenty of shiny objects time and writing time in there.

Jeanne:

Yes.

Jenn:

But speaking of that, is that how you were able to basically write three whole books in a year? ... That seems crazy. So -

Jeanne:

It does seem crazy.

Jenn:

So, how were you able to focus?

Jeanne:

I think partly because - at least these first few topics that I had - had been - had felt so important to get out into the world, to get the information out to people. There's a tremendous amount of service in being able to say to people, "This is what you - this is how you can capture your - recapture the person you were, the person that you felt comfortable with, and move her forward into your own life now, and go forward into life." Things like brain fog and weight gain and just not knowing what's happening is - is really taking a lot of people out of their own lives. And it - for me, that was so traumatic, that ... feel a real call to helping other people not be there anymore.

Jenn:

... And that makes sense, and - and so, in some ways, yes, these books are for your ideal reader, but they - I guess they serve you, also, and that desire to serve.

Jeanne:

Yes! Exactly.

Jenn:

.... So, I guess writing these books is feeding your soul.

Jeanne:

Exactly. It's - ... as a coach, I have a limited number of people I can work with at a given time, but through my books I can get that information out to a lot more people and draw the people who really feel called to go ... an extra level, an extra mile, whatever, with this information, and they can come and work with me, so ... it works both ways.

Jenn:

That's a good point, about the - this style of book, too, that ... you are effectively putting everything out there, ... you're putting your information out there. But that doesn't mean that people aren't going to have a deeper experience when they hire you. You're not just regurgitating your books, I'm assuming, to you coaching clients, right?

Jeanne:

No, ... that's one of the awesome things about coaching, is that we can take it wherever somebody needs to go, so I can - yeah, I can give you a whole lot of information. But I've done that in the books and a lot of people come to me after reading the books and say, "Well, how -" how can they go deeper, and that's when looking at some of the - some of the questions that they're deepest hearts and souls takes them forward and allows them to ... maybe feel great about themselves in a way that they've never felt before.

Jenn:

That just sounds amazing, that - ... the difference between, say, ... the book on the shelf, or the book in - in - on Amazon and working with you, it means that you have now the ability, now that you have these books, to help people at every phase of this part of their journey. So -

Jeanne:

Right. And this journey is so important.

Jenn:

Right!

Jeanne:

One of the things I haven't ... said is that, for me, this is ... - we change, and I explain this in the - in the books in different ways, but we actually change the way we relate to the world physically, through a physiological change, it really changes the way we relate to the world, so that, moving forward, we can be ... that we never were before, and it's - it's a gift! And I love opening people up to that gift.

Jenn:

... That's just so wonderful, though, Jeanne, I - I love speaking to people that have really found their calling, because your excitement and your desire to serve really comes through, and it's just really nice to be in that - in that space, and I love that a book, or several books, ... helps you get there!

Jeanne:

I know. I love my books. And I - I just really love the process. O - obviously, since I'm doing this for the fourth time, the ... process is - it is this opportunity to go deeper in one subject, or one part of this and help people - not just for me, but for everybody else who's experiencing it.

Jenn:

And that actually raises a very good question about being a repeat author with - with the Author Incubator. ... Presumably by now, you know the process, right?

Jeanne:

Right.

Jenn:

So, why would you come back for more, if you've done it once before? Do you feel like you could do this on your own?

Jeanne:

No. Obviously, I can't. Obviously, I couldn't. First of all, I work really, really long ..., so having somebody hand me a schedule and say, "Boom, you have to have this done on this day," and I'm scared 'cause I have a deadline on Monday, But - but to have those deadlines in place and know I have to hit certain targets at certain times, that's a little bit structure for me. So, yeah, that's part of it, but the second part of that is that you can sit - and I hope I'm not ... making a mess of things, but you can write real crap.

Jenn:

....

Jeanne:

If you're just sitting there in your own little - little world -

Jenn:

Right!

Jeanne:

And so, having somebody say, "... you've gotten off track here, you're not talking to the person you wanna talk to, you're just doing -" okay, I'm gonna ... use another one "- mental masturbation here. And you're just - ... you're just doing whatever you do wanna do and this is - this might ma - be making you feel good, but it's not doing anything for your reader." So, having that developmental editor from start to finish, saying, "This is why you have - ... to stay on track, and this is where your - you got off track," is fabulous, and it means that the writing process is so much faster, and I don't have to worry about going out and finding somebody who is an ideal reader to read it and - and then hope they will give me an honest feedback, because I trust Angela and her editors to give me one hundred percent honest feedback.

Jenn:

Right. Well, and - because they have an interest in you writing the best book possible.

Jeanne:

Correct! And -

Jenn:

So, they help you with that!

Jeanne:

And ..., I can - I can - I have a writer's group here in - in - on the north shore of where I live, and these people are fabulous, and I love going, love taking some of my work and take my fiction there and read it to them, but I can count on about half of them telling me how wonderful I am, whether I write "See Dick run, see Jane run, Spot run," or whether I write *War and Peace*, so - so, they're not gonna - they're gonna think it's wonderful anyway, because I actually sat

down and just did what I said I was gonna do, whereas, if I turn in "See Spot run" to Angela, she's gonna say, "What are you doing here? This isn't - this isn't your best work!" So, this - she's really got my interest at heart, and - as well as the interest of the book and my readers at heart.

Jenn:

I am so glad to hear you had that experience, a - and not surprised to hear it, because I had the same experience, when I went through the program, but - but I love knowing that it is worthwhile to come back for more. You know what I mean? And -

Jeanne:

It is. ... you have to have something more to say, but - and -

Jenn:

Right! Because - ... let's be honest, we all - anyone who's listening to this is probably interested in being a writer or in being an author or is currently an author, then so, we all know what we need to do, right? But -

Jeanne:

Yeah! ... you know what it is. You - you sit down, you put your words out down for the week or - or the day, and you do it, and you hammer it out and you - you try - but then what do you do with it? You got ... thirty or sixty or ninety thousand words and it isn't any good! Well, this process is about knowing who you're talking to, about knowing what you're gonna say, about limiting what you're gonna say to - something that could be said objectively in - in an - a limited amount of time and space, and doing it. And making sure it comes out, so it's not only coherent but effective. And that's -

Jenn:

Do you find that your ego - do you ever find that your ego gets in the way?

Jeanne:

My ego, getting in the way, are you kidding me?

Jenn:

I'm not implying you have a giant ego, Jeanne, but I'm just thinking that, from - from the way that you've explained it, and I agree your having someone to be able to give you objective advice on your writing is really key, but isn't it hard sometimes to pour your heart out and have someone say, "This isn't right"?

Jeanne:

Well, I think - really, really lucky in - in my editorial process, in that I - I am a pretty good writer, so what comes out is nearly coherent to start with, but I think the - I think the process helps you to home in on one or two things, so that, as you start writing - ... I don't know how your experience was, Jenn, but mine has been fairly tight, in that I get feedback so frequently that it

just starts to approximate better. And yet, I guess if - I guess if you had trouble in your first couple of assignments, you could really feel that, but isn't it much better to adjust and make that thing good, so that, when it goes out, you get - you get to the people you wanna talk to.

Jenn:

I think it is. I think you're right. A - and I think that's something that, before I actually published a book, I didn't realize was important, ... to swallow a little bit of my own ego and my own pride and let some experts help me.

Jeanne:

Yes. Yeah, and - and one of the things, for me, is that if I don't - if I don't watch it, I would get really academic in my writing. So, it's ... - it's been really nice to have editorial staff all - all the way along so I can ... write as if I were talking, versus as if I were writing my college - my doctoral thesis.

Jenn:

Right! I'm assuming women with brain fog don't want to read a doctoral thesis.

Jeanne:

And I don't really want to write one either. So -

Jenn:

Right!

Jeanne:

But I've been able to write it conversationally and then have a really good editor come along and correct my work - grammatical errors so it's readable without being - without getting to the - turn into the dry side, which is really, really - and that's been - that's been superb for me, because it's - it's kept my works in that line where it's readable and conversational without me having to struggle to get it there.

Jenn:

Well, that makes sense, because your topic does have a - a scientific part to it, so I was just talking about the emotional response, but there's - there's a physical response, right?

Jeanne:

Yeah, and I have what I call my inner science geek, and - and she gets to write a couple of chapters in every book, where I go out and I've - I've really done the research, and looked at the - looked at the hormone interactions and all that kind of stuff, I just put all that stuff down, because you need to know that. It's what - what you ... get comfortable with the - with yourself and saying, "This is normal." So, I - I have this science geek, but if I let her go too much, people just get really tired of her. And

Jenn:

No. Say it isn't so!

Jeanne:

So, she - so, that's my other editorial thing, is to ask my editors to say, "Okay, you just got way to the - too deep. Go back and rewrite this and make it a little less

Jenn:

Yes, and you take this up a few notches please, Jeanne! Or down, I guess, down a few notches.

Jeanne:

Yeah. N - no, no chemical formulas here.

Jenn:

So, we're clo - coming to a close here, but I - I ask most of our guest authors this question, and i'm going to ask it of you, especially because you've written so many books, and we have many listeners who are just trying to write a book but haven't been able to finish it. So, do you have any advice for these people that are struggling to finish their book?

Jeanne:

Well, other than contacting Angela and Author Incubator, doing it that way, which I highly recommend, but put yourself on a schedule. Put yourself on a s - first of all, do an outline of your book, know what you want for the next - and don't let yourself go and put five more chapters in it, and - but put yourself on a schedule and say, "I'm gonna get Chapters One - Chapter One done this week, and Chapter Three done next week." Don't y - I don't write it - my book necessarily in order, and I don't think you have to, but know what you're planning to do each week and do it. Yes!

Jenn:

Oh, 'kay. Just do it! By Jeanne Andrus and Nike. That's - that's pretty solid advice there for everyone, just go out and do it. Jeanne, thank you so much for joining me here today on Book Journeys Radio.

Jeanne:

Thank you for having me, Jenn, it's been fun.

Jenn:

It has been a lot of fun, and it's been a real pleasure to talk to you. So if everyone can tune in next week, we'll speak to another amazing author about their journey and how they were able to go from idea - we probably won't talk to them about idea before book, like Jeanne, but we will do idea to book and how you can do the same. Thank you so much and have a wonderful day.