

On Your Terms Episode 136:
My Big Secret REVEALED!

Sam Vander Wielen: Hey there, and welcome back to On Your Terms. I am so excited for this very special episode of On Your Terms today, because this is where I finally get to tell you my big, fat, juicy secret. I've been keeping it a secret, not because of me, but because of logistics and legal, ironically enough. And, you know, there are just certain things. You'll kind of understand more why when I tell you. But, you know, it's just something that had to play itself out before I could share publicly.

But I've been sharing this entire process with you, and so I am just really excited to share this with you today because this is just as much, if not more for you than it is for me because I am doing this for you. So, all right, let's just get right into it.

So, in Episode 115 of my podcast, I shared a little update on my book writing process or I was trying to write a book process. And, basically, where we left off, if you listened to that episode - if not, a little brief recap - is that I worked on a book proposal for two years with my book coach, Richelle Fredson. It took me forever, not only because it's really hard and I was running a business at the same time, but also because of everything that was going on with me, taking care of my dad, then my dad passing away, COVID, and we moved to New York, a whole lot of things. So, it took me a really long time.

And then, where we left off in Episode 115 is that I shared that the big step once you write a book proposal, if for non-fiction, is that you have to go out and you have to get an agent. So, my number one pick, Wendy Sherman - hello, Wendy, if you're listening. I love you - was the person who I had really had my eyes on. It was just some thing. I don't know. I felt kind of connected to her. I knew about her a long time before I even started looking. I liked other authors that she had acquired, and it was just somebody who I wanted to be in her space. I wanted to be in her universe.

And so, I think I had shared in the last episode that Wendy took me on as a client, which, you know, it was not a guaranteed thing. I wasn't sure. She is obviously a very successful and busy woman and has many, many, many incredible clients. And so, I wasn't sure if she'd want to take somebody like me. So, she did. And I'm so grateful that

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she did. And I've loved working with Wendy. And so, basically, Wendy and I, the first thing we did was meet and we went through my proposal and she had some feedback and suggestions.

And it's been so interesting because one of the things I was just telling a friend about the other day in this process - it has been so interesting for me to reflect on - is that in our own businesses in the online space, we don't get a lot of feedback other than just people being pissed off or somebody just being "I like this," or our day-to-day dopamine hits of people liking our stuff or following us, or whatever. But we don't get actual constructive feedback. So, it's been really interesting and helpful. It reminds me more of being a lawyer and when I was clerking in courts and stuff like this.

So, Wendy had some really incredible feedback for me. And, you know, we integrated what we could and some things I didn't do and did and whatever. So, we did all of that. And then, basically, your next step is that you go and you shop that around to publishers. So, we started shopping my book proposal around to publishers.

And one thing you have to know about me is that I'm a Scorpio. I'm also Norm's daughter. And that means that I'm incredibly stubborn, and I admit that fully. I own it. So, I'm very stubborn. Kind of like once I get my mind made up or if I decide I'm going to do something, I'm full steam ahead. So, I was really stubborn about one big thing, which was that I really wanted to get a traditional publishing, traditional book deal. Meaning, it was not self-published, it wasn't a hybrid publishing. Richelle has lots of resources for you to learn more about what all of the publishing options were.

But for me, I really wanted to go through a traditional publishing route. And not only that, because I'm me, I decided that I also only wanted a Big Five Publisher. So, there's this thing in the publishing industry - I won't go into it. It's boring - like, there are the Big Five Publishers. You've heard of them, people like Penguin Random House, Hachette, HarperCollins, Simon & Schuster, whatever, all of these things. So, I really wanted to do the Big Five, and that was really important to me. And I fully admit that this is not the best or the only way. There are many, many ways to get a book published and they're

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all awesome. This has been a dream for me since I was a little girl.

So, if you listened to a recent episode, Episode 133, where I gave you a life update, I was telling you that my mom was in the hospital. Before she passed away, she was in the ICU. She was in a coma. So, what do you know? One of the days that my mom is in the ICU in a coma, I get a call saying that this publisher, a Big Five Publisher, wanted a meeting. And I decided to take it because I knew, first of all, it's tough to do this and it's an incredible opportunity. I was so grateful for the opportunity. And I have to keep going. And I also know that that's what my mom would want me to do anyway.

So, I went to the meeting. I hung back in the hotel and I went to the meeting. And they were incredible people, everybody was so nice. And I really liked them a lot. And I thought that the conversation went really well. And I thought that they had a really good vision for what I was looking to do with this kind of book and all of that. And so, after that, they go off, they have to talk internally and make their decisions and do what they do.

And the day that my mom passed away, which I obviously didn't know she was going to pass that day, but that afternoon, I got a call from Wendy to tell me that I got a book deal from Grand Central Publishing, which is with Hachette, the Big Five. It was exactly what I wanted to do.

Hachette is one of the Big Five Publishers, is actually number two, I think. The last time I looked, I think it's Penguin and then Hachette in terms of size and sales and all of these kinds of things.

But I am even more fortunate that I got an awesome editor, an awesome team, editorial assistant. Everybody is so nice. They are really excited about the book. I'm really excited to be with them. I don't know how much more I'm able to share at the moment, but they did give me the green light to just share generally that I got this deal that it's going to be published with them.

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I can tell you what I'm up to now. So, basically I've known about this now since the day my mom died. To be honest, it has not set in. I've kind of mentioned this like offhand in some episodes, but it hasn't really set in. I'm kind of just like, "Who got a book deal? Where? When?" I just don't believe it's me and I can't believe it's with them. I just can't believe it. I feel so grateful, so excited to do this.

I want this to be such a good book for you. I'm just really excited for you to have it. I feel like we've been talking about it for years. I've been very open about the journey along the way. And so, I'm just really, really excited. And I'm trying to enjoy the whole process.

So, okay, here's where I'm at right now. I'm writing the book. It's really going to be quite a journey. I actually have a pretty tight timeframe. I mean, if we want to stay on schedule and follow their schedule, it's a pretty tight timeframe. I'm trying to create a routine around it and get into a little bit of a routine.

It's something I've been talking to my mindset coach, Jen Diaz, about a lot because I've been procrastinating a lot because, well, for one, I'm grieving. But I've been writing, but it's a lot of, like, inertia to get started once you've been so excited about something for so long but your mom dies on the same day.

So, I'm writing. I'm writing the book. It's coming along. I'm really excited. I'm going to get them the first chunk of it not that far from now. I mean, the book is my priority right now. It's kind of funny how when you go down this journey and you have your own business, the book really becomes the focus. So, I'm really excited to share more details about it with you about what the book is about and all that kind of stuff.

But in the meantime, I can tell you that it's going to be a lot like how I write and speak to you every single day. So, if you've liked my podcast episodes, if you liked my emails, you're going to love this. Well, first of all, it's a mix of personal narrative and storytelling along with practical, applicable tips. So, it is going to be really exactly how I write and talk.

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And I'm hoping to also focus on issues like overcoming obstacles. I mean, as you know, I've been through a lot personally and continued to persevere in my business, so I'm hoping to talk a lot about that. Helping you build a business that you love and not falling into some of the traps and mistakes that can happen to you as an entrepreneur. Including not tying your worth and your identity to your business. So, I just think trying to show you things that happen down the line and things that happen now, really helping you to build a business that works for you and makes sense for you in your life.

So, more details to come. I will share all the specifics like the release date, the official title, everything with you when I'm allowed. I'm really, really excited about it. But I hope that you'll DM me and you'll let me know if you're excited, if you're going to read it one day when it comes out. I really want you to all be involved in this process. I've already been pulling people a little bit on Instagram Stories, people's stories who I'm going to include in the book and getting a lot of feedback and doing some research and all of that. So, that's really, really cool.

So, let me know if you're excited. Send me a message on Instagram, I'm @samvanderwielen. Or I guess now if you're only using Threads, you can add me there, I'm Sam Vander Wielen on there too. And I would also love to hear from you if you want me to share about the process, like I have been showing you more behind the scenes. I mean, now that the news is public, I'm able to show you as I'm writing, talk about what that's going to look like. I think it's going to be so fascinating to talk with you about the marketing rollout once that all happens.

You know me, I am so jazzed to market this book. I have already got so many ideas coming out the wazoo about how to market this book and get it to people. I'm really, really excited about that process. I'm excited about writing it. I'm excited about getting feedback and becoming a better writer. I'm excited about, I don't know, I guess meeting people that I don't know yet and being exposed to a different group of people through a book process than what I've been exposed to through social media and stuff like that.

So, I'm just generally very excited, even though I feel like it kind of hasn't set in yet. I'm

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just more excited than anything that I don't have to keep hiding this because I feel like it's been this big thing I've had behind the scenes and I've wanted to talk to you about it and I'm super jazzed. And so, yeah, secret's out. Let me know if you're excited about it. I'm so excited to talk with you about it. Thank you so much for listening and I will see you in the next episode.

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