

Episode 188

Strategic Scaling: How to Balance Book Writing and Business Operations

Jodi Brandon [00:00:01]:

Welcome to the Wright Published Market Podcast. If you're a business owner thinking a book would be a great marketing asset for your business, you're in the right place. Maybe you've already committed even better. I'm your host, Jodi Brandon, book publishing strategist and partner for business owners, CEOs and entrepreneurs and 20 plus year veteran of the book publishing industry. On the Write Publish Market podcast, in addition to learning from me and other industry experts, you'll hear from other business owners about their experiences as we explore all facets of writing, publishing and marketing. A book that will help your business grow in ways you might not even be dreaming of yet. I'm so glad you're here. Let's dive in.

Jodi Brandon [00:00:39]:

We are so lucky to have today's guest here. She is one of the smartest business people I know, a great friend, a great follow on all the socials. Diane Mayer is the queen of turning over complicated operations into streamlined systems that actually stick, all while keeping your creative spirit alive and kicking. So if you are wearing all the hats and ready to see some wins, Diane's practical wisdom and infectious energy are exactly what you need to turn that ever growing to do list into a done and dusted success story. Welcome my friend, Diane. I'm so happy to talk to you today.

Diane Mayer [00:01:13]:

I am so happy to be here. It's lovely to see your face.

Jodi Brandon [00:01:16]:

Likewise. Likewise. We just had a great conversation. We should have hit record like 10 minutes ago so hopefully we can recreate some of that goodness for listeners. We're talking all today about, you know, scaling and chaos and making time and how you do that and why you do that and all the things. But let's just, let's pull back real quick and start and have you. Obviously I read the formal intro, but give us like the quick and dirty, who you are, who you serve. What's your favorite thing to do in your job?

Diane Mayer [00:01:42]:

Oh, so. Oh, oh. What's the favorite thing to do in my job? Oh, I've been asked that one before. Let me think. It depends on the day. So I'm Diane. I am a business strategist for online businesses and I split my time between consulting for small businesses and acting as a fractional coo. So for anyone who doesn't know, COO is chief Operating officer, which basically is the kind of nuts and bolts of running the day to day.

Diane Mayer [00:02:08]:

So I might go in the client who is the talent and the visionary and I build everything else behind them or maintain everything else behind them on a consulting basis. I bring that same vibe into

my consulting. So I'm very like data driven. Show me the numbers, show me the metrics, tell me what's going on, and then we formulate strategic plans and make good decisions from there. But that's how I work with people.

Jodi Brandon [00:02:32]:

I love that. Strategic.

Diane Mayer [00:02:33]:

My favorite thing to do. Wait. Yeah, my favorite thing to do. I mean, anything in a spreadsheet, definitely. If I can put it in a color coded spreadsheets, even better. It's high on the list. It's high on the list. But I think anything that is like the, the puzzle or the problem solving, like going deep into why is this happening, how do we make sure it doesn't happen again? Or how do we make sure it does happen again if it's something great?

Jodi Brandon [00:02:58]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:02:58]:

Probably my favorites.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:00]:

Okay. I love that. Yeah. Well, and that, what a compliment. And something that the visionary people need. Right. Because they've got the big ideas.

Diane Mayer [00:03:08]:

But.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:09]:

But how the heck do we make that happen?

Diane Mayer [00:03:12]:

Yes. I love my creatives. I wouldn't have jobs without creatives.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:17]:

Absolutely, absolutely. I have a bunch of notes of things I want to talk about. But you just were talking about like making those big ideas happen. So like I'm going to just veer off for a second here because writing a book is obviously one of those big things. Right. And we were talking before I hit record about, which made me very happy, by the way, to know that Diana is a fellow Schitt's Creek lover. And that like common platitude you hear about writing a book is you're not going to find the time. You have to make the time.

Jodi Brandon [00:03:43]:

And it reminds me every time I hear it or say it of the Schitt's Creek episode with like four folding in the cheese. Well, you just fold it in. But what does that mean, fold it in? Like make, make the

time is the same kind of thing. So how would you best advise a business owner that's like, oh, I wanna write a book, but I don't know if I have the time, what would you say to them first thing?

Diane Mayer [00:04:05]:

So I. Well, first of all, I'm gonna. Your time isn't gonna be my first question.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:10]:

Okay. Okay.

Diane Mayer [00:04:11]:

The first question is gonna be, should you be writing a book?

Jodi Brandon [00:04:14]:

Why?

Diane Mayer [00:04:15]:

Uh huh.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:15]:

Yep.

Diane Mayer [00:04:16]:

So like I 100% agree, business owners, a book is an amazing credibility builder. It's like a way people can engage with you before they have to pay you lots of money. They hopefully have to pay a bit of money to get attention for you. So it's not that I have an Objection to people writing books in any way, shape or form. Much to Jody's relief as I sit on the podcast. But if my fundamental question to people is how much money does your business need to make to support you and your lifestyle? And if you don't know the answer to that, if you don't have the data, that's where you should be starting.

Jodi Brandon [00:04:51]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:04:52]:

Right. Because if that's the case, your only job is to make money in your business. Writing a book is a long term strategy. It's not bringing you in \$3 million tomorrow. It's not even going to bring you in 3 million leads tomorrow. It's a long term authority build. Right. It's not a money generator, usually in the way that like a big high ticket client would be.

Diane Mayer [00:05:16]:

So if your business isn't making money, it's lovely that you want to write a book, but you need to be asking yourself if that's the best thing you can be doing for yourself and your business right now. And I think some of this comes from, you know, that piece of like, if it's not a heck yeah, it's a heck no.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:32]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:05:33]:
Right. And I think this has been so detrimental to people's small businesses because you think, I want to write a book. And your gut goes, heck yeah. And you're like, I must do this.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:43]:
Yep.

Diane Mayer [00:05:44]:
But that's not really how business works. You don't get to go, I should pay my taxes. Oh, no, that's a heck no. I'm. I'm out.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:52]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:05:52]:
Instead of paying my taxes.

Jodi Brandon [00:05:54]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:05:54]:
I, I'm going to write a book. Right?

Jodi Brandon [00:05:56]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:05:57]:
And it's the same for rent and utilities and paying for zoom and whatever else you use in your business. Right. So it might be that your book just needs a slight delay. And it just means that you need to be thinking less about writing the book right now and more about capturing the ideas you have for the book so that you don't lose them while you focus on the money.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:17]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:06:18]:
Once you have the money sold, then the question becomes, how do I make time for this?

Jodi Brandon [00:06:23]:
Love that. That's fantastic advice. Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:06:27]:

Now the, the twist here with the time is you probably don't have that time right now. And so where you're going to take that time from is probably not your business.

Jodi Brandon [00:06:39]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:06:40]:

So you have to, when you think about this, make time, calendar blocking off in your calendar, an hour at the beginning of your workday to write is probably not going to happen because you're going to open your computer, you're going to see your email, and you're going to go, oh, here are the 17 fires that I need to fight.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:00]:

Yep.

Diane Mayer [00:07:01]:

So you have one of two options. One, you smooth out your business and you add more time outside of work to the work life balance. You create more life that you can then use to write your book.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:13]:

Yep.

Diane Mayer [00:07:14]:

Or you have to understand that you are going to have to give up something on the life side of that equation to write the book. And maybe that's a half an hour in the morning before anybody else is up, whatever it is.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:26]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:07:26]:

But there's not like something for nothing anywhere in our business. You know, even, like, everything is a sacrifice. Everything is a. An opportunity cost. So if I say yes to the book, what am I saying no to? And that could be the case of, if I say yes to the book, am I taking away from my clients? Realistically, you're not going to answer yes to that, because if you do, we're going to go back into that money level and we're going to go, oh, wait, I don't make enough money anymore.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:51]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:07:52]:

And I think people then think, oh, well, I should just hire a team and they can do all of this while I write my book.

Jodi Brandon [00:07:57]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:07:57]:

Well, no, because now we're back into the money of like, are you making enough money to do that?

Jodi Brandon [00:08:03]:

Yeah. To support.

Diane Mayer [00:08:04]:

Right. And I think people have, like, oversimplified this. Find time. You're right. It is like, fold it in. Yeah, fold it in. But you don't know what that means. You don't know what the rest of the recipe looks like.

Diane Mayer [00:08:17]:

And so you are just going, I'll just find time.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:21]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:08:21]:

And then you try to write the book when you're not prepared and all hell breaks loose. You get dragged into your business. You're not prepared for, like, you haven't built in any buffers in your work, in your life, in the book writing, and suddenly you're just in this, like, storm of frustration and chaos and all you know is you're not getting to write your book, which is the only thing you really want to do in your day.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:44]:

Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:08:44]:

So I agree with you. Hugely oversimplified. That was a very long way of saying that.

Jodi Brandon [00:08:49]:

Loved it, though. No. Good. Well, I. One of the questions that I have for you, I mean, I. In full disclosure, this interview was prompted by a LinkedIn post that you had that I thought was so smart, where you're doing this, breaking down, you know, it's more of this and less of this. And you can. They're big things in the beginning, you know, like more work, life balance, less time with your family, like those kinds of thematic things.

Jodi Brandon [00:09:15]:

But then it gets broken down into something much more, you know, tangible. You know, like more team members, less money, you know what I mean? Like you can actually put numbers to it. And I think that's where I think book writing in particular, as opposed to some other bigger things that people do in their businesses. Because, you know, like creating a course is very like, it's tangible. I'm doing this, I'm creating this module and then I'm launching the course out in the world. Whereas a book, people feel like, like have like some sort of like personal, like they feel like it's their personal creative project versus looking at, looking at it as a marketing asset for their business. Like we're much more willing to do with a course or a program or something like that. And I think that emotional attachment.

Jodi Brandon [00:10:02]:

A lot of business owners want to write books. They've wanted to write a book since they were a kid. It's like a lifelong, you know, it's like a bucket list item. So I think that that gets in the way a lot of times too because they think, oh, I've always wanted to do this. This feels like a great idea. But you've got to look at that, you've got to take that more or less concept, I think, and really get clear about is this the right time? And also on like the other end of it, like, how is it going to fit in? What do I want it to do for my business? Because like you said, it's not an immediate income generating activity. So when you're writing a book and taking away from income generating activities, that's where you can get yourself into trouble too. But I would love for us to go into that, like, are you really creating something good or are you just creating more chaos? And I'm going to put a link in the show notes to this specific LinkedIn post that I'm talking about because it really, Diane, it really did.

Jodi Brandon [00:10:58]:

It made me stop. And it was just like one of those moments where you're like, this makes perfect sense. I wish everyone thought about it this way because everything would be better, everything would be better if we just all thought about it this way.

Diane Mayer [00:11:11]:

So yeah, I think we like to really complicate things in our business. And sometimes you need to just see the like this versus that in a really clear way. Not like this, I'm a coffee or a latte kind of vibe when I say this or that. I'm not Talking about an Instagram post. But I think people in the small business space are very influenced by people who sell sales and marketing. And there's a reason for that. We might not naturally be good at that, but also those people are the best people at sales and marketing. The thing they sell you is that they can convince you that you can convince others.

Diane Mayer [00:11:51]:

Right. So it's natural for us to be in this bubble of like, I just need more clients. What I need is more clients. What I need is more clients. And books definitely seem to be on a hot streak at the moment. I have at least two or three emails in my inbox from people being I'll write your book

with you kind of vibe. And they're often like business coaches, which is interesting to me, versus like a Jody. If I was going to write a book, I would probably come and talk to Jody about it.

Diane Mayer [00:12:17]:

Not a business coach who's also happens write a book even if it's a bestseller.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:22]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:12:22]:

And I think we get caught up for the book piece in the same way we get caught up in the marketing piece. Right. It's kind of the same thing of like if I have this asset, then I will attract more clients. If I have more clients, I will make more money and all of my problems will be solved. And that's just not the case.

Jodi Brandon [00:12:42]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:12:43]:

If I sent a million people to every single one of your listeners websites individually today, all of their websites would crash. They're just not built for that traffic. So even if you got all of the marketing dreams that, that you think you want, if your business isn't able to handle it, it's going to fall apart. And it, you are going to be the center of that crisis. Right? You are going to be the one doing all of the firefighting, all of the fixing, pulling things together. And I think people think, okay, well let me set up the business then for success. Let me like make sure I have standard operating procedures, let me hire a team, let me do all of these things. And then I talk to people who tell me they don't get to do the work that they love anymore because they spend all their time managing a team.

Jodi Brandon [00:13:27]:

Yeah, right.

Diane Mayer [00:13:27]:

So there's a lot of this like knee jerk reaction that happens in business. Like, oh, first of all I need to do marketing. Now I need to do ads. Now I need to write a book. Okay, Now I need a team. Now I need, I don't know, specialist in X, Y, Z. Now I need a fractional coo. Now I need a fractional cfo and there's all of these things happening and their day is beyond hectic.

Diane Mayer [00:13:54]:

And if they had just taken a step back and gone back to that initial question of actually how much money do I need to make? Not forever, just right now, what would feel good? Like if I included my investments and my savings and I don't know, taking the whole family to Disney once a year, what would feel good? And then what do I need to achieve that? And then what else can I do while maintaining that to then improve the time, to be a little less worried, to have

more white space in my calendar where I can write a book or jot down ideas. Right. Where I can be making decisions from that, it only feels like a heck yeah place. But what happens is we try to operate from the heck yeah place before we've done the work to get to the heck yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:14:40]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:14:41]:
Right. And we go, well, my gut says, like your gut in business, not in human relationships. All women should always trust their guts, especially in the big wide world with other humans. But in the business, you need to ask yourself if you have the experience and the expertise to be relying on your gut.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:03]:
Mm, love that.

Diane Mayer [00:15:05]:
Because that's what, that's what combines to give a gut reaction. So when I'm talking to a business owner about their business, I probably have a sense in the first little bit of time what the solution's gonna be like. It doesn't often take that long, but I come with 20 years of experience and a bunch of qualifications that allow me to apply that. That looks like gut, looks like intuition.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:31]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:15:32]:
Right. Whereas what happens when we start saying, well, my gut says this and my gut says that and we don't have the data to back it up and we haven't done the basics.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:40]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:15:40]:
Is that you don't know if you're excited or if you're terrified.

Jodi Brandon [00:15:44]:
Right.

Diane Mayer [00:15:45]:
You don't know if you're making a good decision or a bad decision. And you just go and go and go. And then you're like, why does everything feel like I'm in the middle of a frickin tornado?

Jodi Brandon [00:15:54]:

Yeah. What is going on around me? Yeah. Yeah. Well, I think there's so much emotion attached to when we're. We start as a solopreneur. It's our, you know, like this business is our baby. To feel like we're doing, not doing everything right.

Diane Mayer [00:16:08]:

And let me be clear for like, I. I don't want, like your listeners to feel bad about this. Like, everybody goes through everybody go.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:15]:

Yeah. Everybody feels.

Diane Mayer [00:16:16]:

There are seven figure business owners out there who are on that level of like, does this make enough money to support my life? And the answer is no. They are pulling from their savings to pay their teams to keep their business running in the hope that the next sale is going to be the thing that saves them and puts the ship back. Back on the right course.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:36]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:16:37]:

Right. So you don't want to be one of those. And you especially don't want to be trying to use a long term strategy like a book if you haven't taken care of the short term bills. Absolutely.

Jodi Brandon [00:16:48]:

Yeah. I, yeah, I, I think that's really fantastic advice that we need to. We're not looking at the right things a lot of the time and looking at the right things and then reverse engineering that plan versus creating the plan first when it's, maybe it's a solid plan but you're not, you don't have the foundation to support it, then it's not going to get you where you want to go.

Diane Mayer [00:17:12]:

And I think you can think of it in terms of like, I'm not saying, well, look, you can never write a book until like your business is like a smooth, well oiled machine that never needs you. I need to remove myself from the business. But no, I'm not saying that at all. I just think when you're thinking about like how do I create this time while minimizing the chaos that you're introducing is to think almost about like, how much time have you kind of bought with how you've built your business so far? So if you're in that stage of like, oh my God, like it's not paying the bills, I really need to focus on that. Maybe what you're looking at is, okay, I have lots of ideas for the book. I'm going to give myself half an hour a week where I can just brain dump them, write little sentences to myself, work on the book structure. And I can still feel like I'm moving towards that goal, but I'm not taking away from like the essential need that I have.

Jodi Brandon [00:18:06]:

Hey there business owner, an aspiring or published author. Sorry to interrupt this episode. Just wanted to check in and see if you're subscribed to Coffee and Commas, my email newsletter where I share behind the scenes industry info and much more about writing, publishing and marketing a book for your business. Sign up at [Bit Ly Coffee and Commas signup](#). That's all lowercase. Now back to the show.

Diane Mayer [00:18:29]:

Yeah, if you've got enough money but like time is still in essence, then you have to think about, okay well, where can I claw back a little bit of time? Maybe that's half an hour a day. Maybe it's two hours a week. Maybe that's something I need to put in the calendar. And then once we start getting like more and more settled, that can expand for you. So you. Doesn't mean you can't work on it right now, but it does mean that you might not be able to work on it as much as you would like to.

Jodi Brandon [00:18:56]:

Yeah, yeah. Just looking at it a little bit differently. I like that.

Diane Mayer [00:19:00]:

Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:00]:

Can we like break down one of those like chaos related things? Like there's like the right way to do it, the wrong way to do it. Like, is it hiring more team members? Is it? I mean, I know so many people and know of so many people also that went all in on that. Right. Let's hire the team, be like an agency style and then realize, one, I hate this. Two, like you were saying before, I'm not doing any of the work I love anymore. I'm just, I'm basically like a manager. So it turns out like more team, more offers, more whatever. Maybe isn't the right way to do it.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:35]:

Like, what's the counterbalance to that?

Diane Mayer [00:19:38]:

Well, the counterbalance is going to be different for every person's business. I think this is another one of the big problems we see out there is everything's very cookie cutter.

Jodi Brandon [00:19:46]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:19:47]:

It's like, I wrote a book, I was successful. You should write a book. And you too will be successful. Yeah, right. That's kind of where we, where we come into it. But basically the flow tends to go, I'm going to go all in on marketing, convert all these leads and then people go, oh my God, I have to deliver.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:04]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:20:05]:

So then they switch their focus and all they do is deliver. And then they get like, they look up from delivery and they're like, oh my God, I have no more new clients. And so we swing back into, oh, I must do marketing. Right, right. What you really want to be thinking through is strategically, where am I trying to go? How much money do I need to make? How much time do I have? What's my threshold for risk? Like, how comfortable am I that things could go real wrong here and for different people that's going to be different. Like whether, like maybe you have a partner who can pay the bills. If the business goes, maybe you have kids and you really need the business to pay those bills because, you know, you've got, I don't know, dance or cheer or whatever that the kid is relying on you for or college is coming up.

Jodi Brandon [00:20:53]:

Yep.

Diane Mayer [00:20:54]:

So everything is a set of levers based on the individual person. But essentially I always start with like are we making enough money? If we're not making enough money, what is the best way for me to make more money? And that's usually not a membership, a group program, a course. Like if you are in a state where you need to get money, a high ticket, one to one done for you, VIP day, that's going to bring in money faster for you.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:21]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:21:22]:

Now if you already have the course, if you already have the membership, I'm not saying dismantle it.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:27]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:21:28]:

But selling 100 buck a month membership is not going to do the same for you as selling a 10k client.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:32]:

Right, right, right.

Diane Mayer [00:21:34]:

What we're usually trading and this is what people hate, what we're usually trading to get that money level up is time. Whether that's time spent marketing your course or delivering to a client, it's still time.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:47]:

Yeah, right.

Diane Mayer [00:21:48]:

So that tends to be the trade off and people don't want to trade it. They want both and they want both from the beginning.

Jodi Brandon [00:21:54]:

Yeah. I love that breakdown too though. People don't think of, they just think time as this like big generic thing, not you just broke it. Like time can mean different things and you have to think about those different things, not just the big picture category of time.

Diane Mayer [00:22:12]:

Yes, 100% I think people think. What does timing. Is it a four day week? Is it? I want to finish it at one so that I can pick up my kids from school. Is it I don't want to work after 5pm Is it you know what, I don't care. I'll work 24 hours a day. I'm obsessed with my business. And we all have these kind of people say like oh, work life balance isn't. Isn't a thing.

Diane Mayer [00:22:33]:

And it's not because we will have busier seasons and we will have less busy seasons. But people think of that in terms of like oh, I'm launching, so that's a busy time. Like no, like life can be busy but also your stage in business has different levels of busyness. When you're a solopreneur, you are busier than someone with an established team.

Jodi Brandon [00:22:55]:

Right, right.

Diane Mayer [00:22:56]:

Like it just makes sense. So you can't have. If that person spends Mondays having a goddess day where all they do really fun self care things. If you're in that level of like I don't have enough money in my business yet. That's not for you. You need to do some work on a Monday. Right, right.

Jodi Brandon [00:23:14]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:23:14]:

And I think we've, we've walked this definition of like, what do I, what are the things I need time for? How much do I have to give to my business? Is that enough for me to make the money that

I want? And if it's not, we need to have a conversation around what do I need to change in the business that fits that equation of both things and doesn't keep me awake at 3am every night.

Jodi Brandon [00:23:36]:

Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:23:37]:

That's the piece people forget. People just think, I'll just keep adding complexity. I'll hire a team, I'll build a course, I'll, I don't know what, add a membership. I will offer 14 different offers with multi stage funnels. Even though I'm terrified of tech, you know, and they don't think, well, what happens when my tech person leaves?

Jodi Brandon [00:23:57]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:23:57]:

You know, or yeah, what happens if my client, who is 20% of my revenue, decides they no longer want to keep working together?

Jodi Brandon [00:24:05]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:24:06]:

So everything is this tolerance of the individual. Your tolerance for how much money do you need? Your tolerance for how much time do you need and for what? Your tolerance for risk and your ability to deal with a crisis.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:19]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:24:20]:

It's almost niche to the person. Like it's so specific to the individual.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:24]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:24:25]:

And we've bought into this. Well, this is how this person lives their lives. And we know nothing about their life.

Jodi Brandon [00:24:31]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:24:31]:

Nothing about their husband, wife, partner, kids, dogs, what's going on? Are they in a sandwich generation? Are they in a, like young and carefree? We don't ask those questions. And the problem is then we don't ask those questions of ourselves. And then we think, well, you know, what I need is I need to write a book. Because that feels really good to me. We have to have a moment of. It's kind of like, you know, if you go to the gym, I hate to use a really trite example, but if you go to the gym. I love to squat. I would happily do squats every single day in the gym for the rest of my life.

Jodi Brandon [00:25:07]:
Okay.

Diane Mayer [00:25:07]:
Not a big fan of deadlift. I don't know why, I just don't really like it. It's not exciting to me, but I still do it. Right. It's not like I've gone, okay, I'm in my, in my gut. It says to me that today is a squats day because then what you're going to walk around with is giant quads and no hamstrings and not as good a butt. Right. So you can write your book, but like your business.

Diane Mayer [00:25:33]:
But's not going to look as good as if you like, you know, love it. Wrote your book and thought about some strategy. Right. I veered off a little in that example. Sorry.

Jodi Brandon [00:25:42]:
I love it. I've never heard that analogy before. It's a good one.

Diane Mayer [00:25:47]:
We've lost some sight of the fact that we don't get all the like quote unquote freedom that we want that our business is supposed to get us simply because we want it.

Jodi Brandon [00:25:59]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:26:00]:
We have to. And I hesitate to use the word earn because it sounds like, you know, you have to become something you're not to feel the way you want to feel. And it's not about you as the person. It's you have to build the business that supports that particular.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:15]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:26:16]:
Piece that you want to go after that then does allow you to go, you know what? I'm going to write a book team, take care of my business. I'm not available from 8 to 12 every single day. I'm writing my book.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:26]:
Right.

Diane Mayer [00:26:26]:
Don't interrupt me.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:28]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:26:28]:
That's a very different business from I'm a solopreneur who is customer service, client delivery, wearing all that, you know.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:35]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:26:36]:
And even once you're at the stage where you have like a VA and maybe even an obm, you're still not quite at that level where you can just unequivocally go, well, I'm just going to conjure time out of thin air.

Jodi Brandon [00:26:47]:
Right.

Diane Mayer [00:26:48]:
Are in that opportunity cost of like, if I choose to spend an hour a day writing my book, what do I not get to do for an hour a day?

Jodi Brandon [00:26:55]:
Absolutely. Absolutely.

Diane Mayer [00:26:57]:
And can I live with that sacrifice?

Jodi Brandon [00:26:59]:
Yeah, well, I think, I mean, I think you hit the nail on the head where you, when you were talking, the more, more, more I feel like we, we tend to, I mean as humans in general, but definitely in business, when things aren't going perfectly or as well as we want, the tendency is to overcomplicate rather than simplify. And if we go, if we just go back to those questions you were asking, you know what I mean that, like, what's your risk assessment? What do I need to be like, you know, what does that really look like? And not just, I mean, I think the like the dreamy part of it for sure. Like, what do I, you know, I want to be done one every day so I can pick my kid up from school or whatever. But as much and as important as that dreamy side is what's the realistic, like, what Are the numbers, what's the data that I need to know about, have in place,

be striving for to make the right decisions so that I'm not just overcomplicating it. And I mean, to get back to that LinkedIn post, like, cause just chaos. Because that's not helping you. Chaos is not helping you scale and get you where you want to be.

Diane Mayer [00:28:04]:

No, no. And I think if we think back to, okay, I'm going to write a book, and we think of that as a vehicle to scale, as a vehicle to get us more visibility, as a way to reach more people with only one asset, essentially, it does lend itself to you thinking, oh, that does sound like scale. I'm like, I'm getting more efficient and therefore delivering. But I want you to think about this when you. When you're writing your book, and I know Jody will 100% agree with me on this. You have to think about how you're marketing your book.

Jodi Brandon [00:28:36]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:28:37]:

So if you're relying on social media and ads or whatever to generate money to run your client business and you're at that, like, threshold level, things are looking good. Now suddenly you're going to start marketing your book, but you can't stop marketing your client stuff because you still need those clients to come in. So now you're running two sets of marketing. So forget about the chaos in your business. You've created chaos just in your messaging and in your marketing. People are like, does she want me to buy the book or does she want me to buy her services? I feel like I'm being sold to constantly.

Jodi Brandon [00:29:11]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:29:11]:

And your audience burns out. Right now. Suddenly you're in the state of, okay, now I don't have enough clients. Now we have to abandon the book completely because we have to get clients. And then we do a big push for that. Oh, we got lots of clients. Now I have to deliver, but, oh, what I'm not prepared to deliver. Right.

Diane Mayer [00:29:29]:

And it's the same thing, like, if the book is really successful and it does bring you a bunch of people who now want to spend time with you because they believe in what you wrote in the book. Now we've got. That's our only marketing. So our marketing's lovely and smooth, but now we've got all these people who are coming in going, you said all of these things in the book. Now turn it into something. This book was meant to promote your business. Do you have the thing that the book just sold? So if you've told people about this amazing framework in your book, is There a way they can work on that framework with you. And if there's not, that's a complete waste of marketing.

Diane Mayer [00:30:06]:

Because now you're in the chaos of like, oh, my God, I have to build this. I have to build this so quickly because I have 400 people in there and I need to build it now because now it's hot and like. So you haven't, like, strategically plotted everything together, no matter which way it goes, if the book is the main thing or not the main thing, if the business isn't well thought out and well prepared for it, it's not just, where do I get the time to write the book? That's like, step one, right?

Jodi Brandon [00:30:34]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:30:34]:
You still have to, like, actually get the book out there, market it. Most people who write a book are like, I want to go speak on stage. Where's that time coming from?

Jodi Brandon [00:30:42]:
Right.

Diane Mayer [00:30:43]:
Where are those podcast opportunity hours coming from? Absolutely.

Jodi Brandon [00:30:47]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:30:48]:
Right. So even the simplest thing that you think this is a good thing for my business, and I agree it's a great thing for your credibility in your business and therefore will open doors for you can be a vehicle of chaos. If you haven't thought about what is the plan, how do I steer this exactly where I want it to go? And I think that's the piece that we just miss. Like, it's so easy to think, oh, my God, it's going to be a bestseller. It's going to sell millions of copies. I'm going to be so rich. I can't believe it. It's so exciting.

Diane Mayer [00:31:18]:
I'm gonna get paid millions to speak on stages. And we get caught up in that dream.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:23]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:31:23]:
And of course, our gut is going, heck, yeah. Yeah. You've just, like, fed it so much dopamine on, like, non existent, like fantasy, which is amazing. We should all dream and we should all dream big.

Jodi Brandon [00:31:35]:
Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:31:36]:

But at some point, you do just need to bring it back in and go, okay, what does that look like? What are the steps for me to get from here to there without my entire business and my life imploding in the chaos I've created?

Jodi Brandon [00:31:49]:

Absolutely. Yeah. Well, yeah, because for business owners especially, you're not trying to be a professional author. This is. This is something that has to fit into your business. I mean, I talk about. I talk about that a lot. Figuring out that's part of the why do you want to do this? But how does it fit into your business ecosystem? Like, because if you don't know that and you're not asking the questions that you're Talking about Diane, then, yeah, you're gonna end up again, back in chaos.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:14]:

And that's.

Diane Mayer [00:32:15]:

Yeah. And then. And then the book that you've put all this time and all this effort into writing is gonna live in a Google Doc on your computer, on your laptop, that in three years time, you're gonna be. Whatever happened to that laptop that had my entire book on it?

Jodi Brandon [00:32:30]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:32:30]:

Right. And meanwhile, you've lived like 17 lifetimes in your business since then. And now the framework has morphed so much, you have to rewrite it.

Jodi Brandon [00:32:39]:

You have to start over anyway. Yeah, right.

Diane Mayer [00:32:40]:

Like people. It's not that. And this I always. For creators, it's not that you don't like structure. It's not that you don't want systems. It's not that you don't want processes. Even though you tell yourself, this is what it is. It's not any of that.

Diane Mayer [00:32:55]:

It's not. I will feel so trapped. It's not any of that. It's. You don't want to slow down. You have an idea and you want to run a full tilt at that idea. And what a structure and a system does is ask you these questions that make you stare reality in the face and go, yeah. Huh.

Diane Mayer [00:33:12]:

Maybe I should think this through.

Jodi Brandon [00:33:14]:

Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:33:15]:

And instead what happens is we go, well, I don't want systems, I don't want structure. Have an idea, try an idea. Doesn't work out. Try the next idea. Try the next idea, try the next idea. And that's also a recipe for burnout. Right? Creatives think of burnout as being super bored of doing the same thing over and over again till they have no more inspiration. But actually you burn out from, like, too much stimulation over too long a period of time.

Diane Mayer [00:33:38]:

Having too little stimulation is bore out. That's like a different thing. So I think creatives think they won't burn out, but having an idea, trying to implement it, and then just cycling through that like a hamster that does not stop running, that's you in burnout mode. Like, I can see it coming a mile away. And what your solution to that is. I love my creatives. Is to have another idea. Let me have a different idea.

Diane Mayer [00:34:01]:

Let me have a different offer. Let me write a book. Let me think about a different way to market this instead of just pulling back and going, am I making this too complicated?

Jodi Brandon [00:34:09]:

Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:34:10]:

Is there an easier way for me to get everything that I want without all of the, like, stress and noise and, like, chaos. And chaos.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:20]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:34:21]:

And panic and crisis and stress. Like, just where you're just living on cortisol. Like that's not healthy for anyone long term.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:29]:

Right.

Diane Mayer [00:34:30]:

How do we just pull it back a little bit? Yes. It'll slow you down to start with. So. Yes. You're probably not loving me telling you. What else are you going to sacrifice? Where are you going to find half an hour a day? That's probably not what you want to hear, but I bet if you found half an hour a day for the next year, you're more likely to have written your book than if I. If I told you to try and find a week when you could write your book.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:51]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:34:52]:
Because you'll never have a full week.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:54]:
Right.

Diane Mayer [00:34:54]:
Thing will happen.

Jodi Brandon [00:34:55]:
Yeah. Well, yeah. The best laid plans. Right. Even if you can get yourself into a situation where it seems like you have that time. Yeah. Oh, I love that. That's.

Diane Mayer [00:35:04]:
Yeah.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:04]:
Yeah. I like burnout versus bore out too. That's good. I have not. That's. Yeah. I bet a lot of people listening are like raising their eyebrows when you said that. Like.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:13]:
Oh, yeah, like I did.

Diane Mayer [00:35:15]:
Right. Yeah. I think it's this. We have especially creatives have this fear of like under stimulation. Yeah. And actually I have a more of a fear of overstimulation for creatives because it does feel like it's creating energy for you until it suddenly doesn't.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:29]:
Until it's not. Right.

Diane Mayer [00:35:30]:
And if you do have a team, they're going to burn out really fast because they aren't going to be of the same kind of creative energy usually.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:39]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:35:40]:

And so they can't keep up with idea after idea after idea. They're just like, oh my God, we've never finished what is going on.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:45]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:35:45]:

And like, oh, we want to do something else. We haven't finished the last six things.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:49]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:35:49]:

We're not.

Jodi Brandon [00:35:49]:

Yeah. There's 17 half finished. Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:35:52]:

Yeah. So you pull your whole team along with you as well. So even if you're one of those people who you make enough money and you've got enough time, you still need to be like, okay, what is my plan for this?

Jodi Brandon [00:36:03]:

So good. Oh my gosh. All right. I. I feel like we could talk all day. You could talk all day about this. I know you have a great freebie for the listeners. Before we talk about that, I want to ask you for a reading recommendation because I know you have a good reading recommendation for me.

Jodi Brandon [00:36:20]:

You read all the good things. I know you do.

Diane Mayer [00:36:23]:

Yes. So my number one business book recommendation to anyone who hasn't read it is Shoe Dog, which is the Phil Knight story. The Guy who built Nike 100%. If you haven't read that, that's always mine. And I have literally just finished one, which was. I didn't think it was going to impact me as much as it did, but it's called Never Enough by Andrew Wilkinson. From barista to billionaire. So he basically is somebody who has signed Warren Buffett's giving pledge to give away his money, who started from absolute zero and built multiple businesses, landed up investing in things like Shopify.

Diane Mayer [00:37:00]:

So it's his story.

Jodi Brandon [00:37:02]:
Oh, love that.

Diane Mayer [00:37:03]:
Of, like, how he built it, but then also his experience of being with other millionaires and billionaires. Love that.

Jodi Brandon [00:37:09]:
Oh, I have.

Diane Mayer [00:37:10]:
Not having all of that money and thinking about it, it was amazing.

Jodi Brandon [00:37:14]:
Okay.

Diane Mayer [00:37:14]:
So I highly recommend that one.

Jodi Brandon [00:37:16]:
Okay. I'm looking for a new nonfiction read too. So that's. That's good.

Diane Mayer [00:37:20]:
Yeah, that would be my nonfiction one.

Jodi Brandon [00:37:22]:
Okay. Love that. Fantastic. Okay. Tell listeners, Diane, where they can find you, how they can interact with you, and about the freebie you have that we'll link in the show notes.

Diane Mayer [00:37:32]:
So I've decided to write a book, which I think is hilarious. And to be fair, I'm probably one of those people that Jodi was describing who's like, I've always wanted to write a book. I've always wanted to write a novel. I've always wanted to write a book. I've always, like, I've always been obsessed with it. If I wasn't as practical as I am, I would have been the person who studied English at university and, like, did creative writing and all of the things. Love it. But when I look at my business, it doesn't need a long term credibility builder from me.

Diane Mayer [00:37:58]:
It's not really what it needs. But I've still got this itch. So the way I'm scratching this itch is to write my book kind of in real time as an email series.

Jodi Brandon [00:38:10]:
Love it.

Diane Mayer [00:38:11]:

So the things that we've talked about today, those levels of freedom, financial freedom, time freedom, freedom from worry, creative freedom, and then what I'm calling freedom, that ability to say, like, heck, yeah, this is all I want to do and I don't want to do anything else. And really working through that structure as an email series and so you can come along and watch someone write their book in real time in a way that still fits into everything I'm doing in my business. So it's still emails to a list. It's still creating content that can go onto social posts. It's still allowing me to test in real time because people can respond to me. I completely disagree with you on this point.

Jodi Brandon [00:38:50]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:38:51]:

So it's just a really fun way to write a book that feels good to me. And look, I'm not saying it's the way for anyone to do it. I'm not even saying this will become a book. But it feels good. And then because I want it to really feel like a book, I want you to be able to read chapter one, let's say that's the intro, and then chapter two and go. Okay, I've got this section. I understand this. I'm okay.

Diane Mayer [00:39:13]:

I've hit the part where my business makes enough money. I'm ready to talk about time. And I want you to be able to flick to the time section. So the email series is built really as a choose your own adventure so you can work your way through the book in essentially any order that you'd like. There is a quiz that will help you where I will say to you, here's where I think you should start. This is your priority. I think everyone should start at the beginning, obviously, because I think even seven figure business owners think that they're past level one and they're very often, they don't know. Like if you don't have the data you can say that you're past it.

Jodi Brandon [00:39:50]:

Absolutely.

Diane Mayer [00:39:51]:

So we'll 100% talk about how to figure that out. But I want you to be able to go, okay, I feel like I'm there. I've passed the test. I've done the work Diane asked me to do. Now I want to jump to how do I get free from worry? Like, I've got plenty of time. How do I. So how do I jump to section three and then how do I go deep in section three and stay in section three till I've like noodled through all of that and then how do I move on? I can go back and do section two or section move on and do section four. So I really wanted to have that feel of a book.

Diane Mayer [00:40:20]:

But there were probably also times where I go, oh, interesting. I had this new thought and that relates to level one. So you'll see the kind of, I don't want to say edit, but you'll see the like writing process of me going, this is really interesting. I read this book and it opened my eyes to

this particular thing and I want to write about it. And that fits in the money section. And you might not be in the money section, but everyone who's in the money section will suddenly get this new written piece, and if you went back, it would suddenly be there. So that's literally just on my website. It's diameyer.com and if you scroll like, literally in the middle of the page, you'll see where you can sign up.

Diane Mayer [00:40:54]:

There's probably a banner on the website as well. Just sign up to join the list and you'll literally start at the beginning. It'll tell you how to take the quiz, It'll introduce you to the framework, and it'll just guide you through the whole process.

Jodi Brandon [00:41:06]:

Oh, my gosh. I cannot wait to follow along. It's gonna be. I have not seen anybody do this, and I love that. I think this is going to be so fun. So, like, what a fun idea. And I mean, who doesn't love a choose your own adventure? Right? I mean.

Diane Mayer [00:41:20]:

Right? They were my favorite. They were my favorite as a kid and they were my favorite.

Jodi Brandon [00:41:24]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:41:24]:

It scratches my tech funnel tagging if in this type statements like, you know, all of that kind of logic, thinking coming to the forefront while allowing me to have freedom to go. You know what? I didn't think about this and I want to add it in.

Jodi Brandon [00:41:40]:

Yeah.

Diane Mayer [00:41:41]:

And so, like, some of it might be shared publicly. There might be, like, the odd blog. There might be some on posts and stuff, but the only place I'm really sharing it completely from start to finish will be on my email list.

Jodi Brandon [00:41:51]:

Okay. I love that. All right. Yeah, we're gonna. We'll include all of that for people to sign up in the show notes. You wanna be on Diane's email list. Everyone believe me, because this is the kind of brilliance she shares all the time, everywhere. Follow her everywhere.

Jodi Brandon [00:42:03]:

I mean, honestly, you are. I'm not. You are one of the smartest business people I know. Yeah. This conversation was so great. Promise you'll come back and talk about the book experience once it's done.

Diane Mayer [00:42:14]:
Sure.

Jodi Brandon [00:42:15]:
Yes.

Diane Mayer [00:42:15]:
Yes. If I survive. If I survive it. If I manage to. If I manage to hold in absolutely.

Jodi Brandon [00:42:20]:
No doubt that you're. You know why you're going to survive? Because you've thought about. You've thought it through all the way.

Diane Mayer [00:42:25]:
Right. I'm going to fold in the choose your own adventure time.

Jodi Brandon [00:42:31]:
Good callback. Thank you, Diane. This was so, so great. I know. Listeners are going to get so much out of this conversation. I appreciate you so much.

Diane Mayer [00:42:38]:
Oh, my pleasure. This is an absolute hoot. I'd love to do it again.

Jodi Brandon [00:42:42]:
Thanks for listening to this episode of the Right Publish market podcast. I know just how busy business owners and CEOs schedules are, and I'm grateful you've taken some time out of yours to spend with me today. If you enjoyed this episode, take a quick screenshot and share it on Social to let others know you're listening. Use the hashtag WritePublishMarket to spread the love.