

EPISODE 61

Why You Should Do a 2020 Year in Review

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Welcome back to the Author Revolution Podcast! I'm your host, international bestselling indie author, Carissa Andrews – and CEO of Author Revolution, the indie author's source for all things rapid releasing.

So here we are guys. The finale of 2020.

This has been a rollercoaster of a year. I'm not much of a gambling woman, but I'm willing to bet this has been a stressful and overwhelming year for the majority of us. Amiright?

Get ready to say Jumanji at the stroke of midnight New Year's Eve. Even without all the COVID stuff, being an indie author has never been a walk in the park. I've been doing this for a while now, I think it's safe to say that. But one thing I do know is that in order to get clarity on where we're going and feel secure at where we are, it takes stepping back and viewing things from a higher perspective.

You may have already figured this out about me, but I'm the kind of person who has certain cycles I adhere to – in my personal and professional life. This time of year, I do a lot of reflecting because throughout the year, I typically don't stop to take a breath and smell those roses. I'm totally not even gonna lie. It's just not in my nature to stop after each accomplishment and revel. Which, for the record, I don't believe is the best way to handle things.



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So, if you're the kind of author who does stop to enjoy all of the spoils after a hard-fought battle...er, story, series... or whatever, then more power to you. You are my hero, my friend.

I think part of the dilemma for me is that I don't like spending a lot of time in the past. My dad was... and still is... a man trapped in the past, I swear. Something that's evident in the type of cellphone he uses and the music he listens to (eh-hem, it's still the songs from the 1970's when he graduated high school.) It's not that my past is glittered with sad things, either - well, no more than anyone else, I suppose. It's just that in the past there's nothing there you can change. Nothing you can do. Yes, in case you didn't realize it sooner, I'm kind of a control freak. I blame it on being a Virgo. HA!

So, like I said, long story short, I plan out deliberate times to stroll down memory lane and bask in my accomplishments. Okay, probably not bask, but for sure take a beat to be proud. You know how it is. For me, this year has been my best so far for growth - both personally and professionally - and it's taught me a TON.

I published five books, four of which were brand new and rapid released - you know the ones I'm talking about. One was the novel I published inside the Playing with Fire box set in 2019.

This was also the year that I attempted my very first ever solo list-aim and while it didn't go the way I had hoped, it was an experience I wouldn't trade for the world. I have no doubt that one day in the coming future, I'll hit those lists. So, for right now, I just have to trust that it wasn't my time. Maybe I didn't reach my precipice numbers yet. Meaning, I haven't created a big enough black hole, sucking all the readers to me who love paranormal and supernatural books. But the good news is... this is a long game and as long as I keep on going... my list only grows bigger. My reach only expands. And my odds only go up.

This was also the year I took on DCA – Digital Course Academy by Amy Porterfield. I've said this before and I'll say it again, I love her. Her teaching style is what I would love to emulate, but for authors. I've put in a ton of thought, effort, and energy into going through her course, learning how I want to launch Rapid Release Roadmap in January, putting things together and making magic happen. That is pretty damn incredible to me as well.

I've also learned, that unfortunately, I'm not super stellar at managing the creation mode for two projects at one time. How other authors can write multiple books at once boggles my mind. There's a ton of processing power that goes into my books and if I can't be 100% focused, I struggle to maintain my groove. I start to lose my threads, so to speak, and then I go into a state of almost writer's block. Case in point, I was trying to work on Rapid Release Roadmap at the same time as writing the Windhaven Witches books this past year. By June, Rapid Release Roadmap took a backseat because I was spinning my wheels on both. Windhaven took off and obviously, I got the series out there – much to my PA and BFF Jenny's delight. Now, roles are reversing. I've been putting in a ton of energy/thought and content creation into Rapid Release and Amends has had to take a back seat... and truth be told, may even get postponed until later next year so I can finish up this first round of Rapid Release Roadmap.

I want to make sure I'm putting as much energy, thought, and effort into the system I'm trying to teach as I would put into weaving my plots together. Because, let's face it, our careers deserve a bit more effort than just being an afterthought, right?

Another big thing I've learned, or maybe relearned this past year is that you have to advocate for yourself. No one else is going to do it for you. Not even the people you love and who love you. So, rule #1 - don't be a dick boss to yourself.

Yes, we might all be striving to hit that \$60K-100K mark, but it won't happen overnight for the majority of us need to face that fact. Myself include.

Remember those Written Word Media studies and give yourself grace to know that you build your author career one book at a time. Just like a house, you get a little reprieve by building a wall. More by building a room. And eventually, more security by building a whole house. Okay, so maybe that was corny, but you get the point. One book will not shelter you. At least, not unless it's a magical book that transforms into a Harry Potter tent... or you've sold your soul to a crossroads demon. Or you're just damn lucky. Clearly, magic must have been involved somewhere.

Now, if you haven't taken stock of the things you've done this year, I want you to take an hour or two to remind yourself of all you've accomplished. Even if you haven't published a single book yet, if you're taking action by listening to this podcast, you're obviously on the journey toward indie authorship. You're taking the necessary steps to learn what you can so you can make the most of things when you're ready. Celebrate that.

It's easy to get discouraged and feel like you haven't made enough progress. And here's a little pro tip - it happens at EVERY STAGE. So, cut out all the negativity from your mindset and celebrate your wins. Remember what I said, you have to be the advocate for yourself. That means being your own cheerleader at times, your own accountability coach, your own butt kicker, and even your own BFF that tells you to take a freakin' day off and relax for a change.

Once you get a PA, put them in charge of all of that. Jenny loves kicking me in the pants and telling me to get my butt in gear. I think she has a sadistic side, not even gonna lie. HA!

Now, remember... we're about to leave 2020 behind and start something totally new and beautiful. You have it in you to create whatever it is you set your mind and heart on. So, set your intentions now and start making your plans.

But no matter what, don't forget how far you've already come. Deal?

Speaking of new things to come, I want to wrap up this episode by letting you know there are some fun new things coming at you in January. I'm going to be hosting a live 1-hour masterclass on The #1 Secret to Building a Successful Indie Author Career. This is a must-attend class if you've ever thought to yourself, "Why are my royalties still so low?" or "This next launch is going to be the big one that finally puts me on the map." Or heck, "I just want to make it big in the indie author space." There are going to be three different dates available, so pick the one that works best for you. Head over to authorrevolution.org/masterclass to get signed up.

As always, you can download the transcript to today's episode in the show notes by heading over to authorrevolution.org/61.

Alright my writerly friend, that's it for this week. I want to thank you so much for being a part of my journey in 2020. Your encouragement through listening and rating this podcast mean the world me. I wish you a very Happy New Year. Stay safe and we'll see you again in 2021.

In the meantime, you know what you have to do, right?

Go forth and start your author revolution.