

NAME

Pit Stop 2-15-23 Andi Arndt.mp3

DATE

February 23, 2023

DURATION

1h 3m 23s

5 SPEAKERS

Karen Commins

Anne Flosnik

Andi Arndt

Suzanne Barbetta

Hillary Huber

START OF TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:04] Karen Commins

I want to welcome you all to the Pit Stop. It's your fortnightly midweek rest area to refuel your drive. I'm Karen Commins. I'm an audiobook narrator and the chief cartographer of NarratorsRoadmap.com and your host for Pit Stop. And with me in the copilot seat is the Fabulous Anne Flosnik. She's an award winning narrator who hosts the narrator Uplift Show here on Clubhouse. How are you doing today, Anne?

[00:00:29] Anne Flosnik

Great. Thank you, Karen.

[00:00:31] Karen Commins

Happy to be here. Me too. And every other Wednesday audiobook narrators who do more than narrate will pull into the Pit Stop, and they are sure to inspire you to follow your interest and use all of your talents and gifts. So I want to let you know this conversation is being recorded so you'll be able to relisten or catch parts you missed and feel free to comment in the chat and raise your hand in the app if you want to be part of the conversation because we'd love to hear from you. So thanks so much for joining us this afternoon. I am super excited to talk today with audiobook narrator, author and owner of Narrator.Life, Andi Arndt. Since her start in 2010, Andi has narrated over 600 audiobooks, including Audi earphones and service award winning titles. She founded Lyric audiobooks in 2014, and she passed the torch to new owner Katie Robinson late last year. In 2020, she and a consortium of coaches launched Narrator.Life. And that's the pinned link in the chat there, which provides courses, community and coaching for audiobook narrators at all levels of their careers and in her spare time. She also coauthored the romcom Heidi's Guide to Four Letter Words with Tara Sivec.

[00:01:53] Karen Commins

So hi, Andi. Thank you so much for joining us this afternoon.

[00:01:57] Andi Arndt

Thanks so much. And I just saw yesterday on Valentine's Day that audible named Heidi's guide to four letter words to its 100 Essential Romance listeners.

[00:02:07] Karen Commins

Oh, my goodness.

[00:02:08] Andi Arndt

I was very proud of that.

[00:02:10] Anne Flosnik

Well, that notion.

[00:02:11] Karen Commins

Yes, that deserves a round of applause. And I just happen to have one for you right here.

[00:02:22] Anne Flosnik

I'll take it. I like I like the cutoff. Well, it.

[00:02:27] Karen Commins

Can come back any time.

[00:02:28] Andi Arndt

No, no. Oh, my goodness.

[00:02:34] Karen Commins

Well, you know, you had started a blog on Substack and you wrote about your origin story, your origin story in 2021. And I loved what you said there because it actually applies to this whole conversation that we're going to have, because you were talking with someone who was in theater, who was teaching classes, and you invited her to teach, and I didn't write her name down. Should have. But you you wrote in casual conversation, I shared an insecurity I had that I seemed to be doing all these disconnected, fragmented things, teaching, acting, directing plays, blogging about travel with my family, hosting a variety of shifts on our local public radio station. Everyone else seemed to have a life and career that was so easy to describe. Was I doing something wrong? Not at all, she said. Andi, you just have a big life. And you wrote you really liked that because it allowed you to let go of the need to have a story that fits some kind of narrative. And it made you really interested in how all our lives have these disparate elements that make us unique. And that's kind of what I'm trying to get with people on the pit Stop, because we're all here for more than one thing and we can do more than one thing. So I was really excited to see you say that. And so can you talk more about like, what did you do before you were an audiobook narrator and what led you here?

[00:04:07] Andi Arndt

Well gosh, you know, when people say, How did you get started? Part of me and I wonder if you've ever had this thought to is like, Well, what what would you define as the start? Because I think there's a germ of what we do now in us from from the very earliest parts of our lives. And when we look back, we can see the patterns.

[00:04:34] Karen Commins

Oh, yeah.

[00:04:34] Andi Arndt

Definitely. Yeah. So what I thought I was going to do when I went to college, what I thought I was going to do was get a degree in interdisciplinary social science.

[00:04:47] Karen Commins

Really?

[00:04:48] Andi Arndt

Well, I mean, I did get a degree in interdisciplinary social science with I was going to get a teaching certificate and I was going to be a high school social studies teacher.

[00:04:57] Anne Flosnik

Wow.

[00:04:58] Andi Arndt

And then I. Sorted out which courses I needed to take, which semester, and how many credits I needed to get over the summer. Because when you're going to teach, you have to leave a whole semester for student teaching. So everything has to fit into the previous seven semesters. And so I was just like insanely organized about, you know, what do I But I always put an art class in my semester. I always and it was usually theater because I just needed that my fun time. I needed to like, schedule my fun creative time. And I didn't actually view my my major as fun. I thought it was interesting and very practical, but I didn't view it as like, joyful, if that makes sense.

[00:05:45] Karen Commins

Well, and I think I remember you wasn't your dad and risk analysis and so practical would always be something that interested you.

[00:05:53] Andi Arndt

Yeah. And I also was very aware of, like I grew up in a family that my mom's side of the family gossiped a lot about other people in the family and what they were doing right and wrong and all this. And I never wanted to be the subject of family gossip. So I was kind of like, I don't want anybody to talk about me or worry about me. I'm just going to do something that's easy to explain as practical. So I'll be a high school teacher. That's a good occupation. I can do that. I'll find it interesting. I think I can do a good job and then nobody will worry about me. And because if I say I want to be an actor, though, that's just so impractical and I'm just going to run into all this discouragement, you know, everywhere I go. So, you know, but I was kind of like sneaking my theater in around the edges all through college. And then finally I had this crisis of like, I don't think I want to be a teacher. And it's too important of a job to go in sort of by half measures. And so I decided not to get my teaching certification and my advisor told me I could graduate early. Because I planned my schedule out so much and I applied for and got an internship at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., in their education department. And there I was working in an arts institution surrounded by music and theater and and dance and all kinds of stuff in a really exciting city right out of college. And that was the first step on the road to identifying as first, like a person in the arts connected to the arts, and then ultimately an artist, which was the hardest thing to be able to say.

[00:07:44] Karen Commins

But you weren't. Your first exposure to arts and theater wasn't college, was it? I thought I'd read that you actually had this interest to childhood going and going back to what you said at the start of this, that, you know, we kind of have a long journey that starts early.

[00:08:01] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Oh, yes. I was always I was the kid who's, like, made up a dance and made everybody watch it or wanted to read to my friends or my mom was a big old movie buff. And so we would always watch these old movies together. And my dad was way into the stereo system and he would he would lie down on the floor between the speakers and listen to his favorite symphonies or musical soundtracks or Johnny Cash album or spoken word, you know, Kermit Shaffer's bloopers from the radio. Like he had this really wide ranging taste in what he listened to. And I would go, I remember going into the living room and saying, Dad, what are you doing? And he would say, I'm listening. It wasn't like stuff was on in the back. College student was calling my my college student was calling. I'll have to I'll text her.

[00:09:02] Karen Commins

I'm on the always take that call. And not that you need me to tell you that.

[00:09:08] Andi Arndt

Well, I will just it's probably not an emergency and she will tell me if it is so I will do like do not disturb for one hour. But anyway, my.Dad.

[00:09:18] Andi Arndt

You know, for him it was listening. Was the activity that he was doing. It wasn't. This stuff is on in the background while I'm doing other things. If he put on a record, he was going to listen to everything about that record. And so he taught me. He taught me deep listening. And my mom taught me a love of of stories. And, you know, that's. That's really what I trace it back to is is what each of my parents gave me in those different ways.

[00:09:56] Karen Commins

So there you are. You're at the Kennedy Center and you're in some sort of a teaching role. And then what happened?

[00:10:05] Andi Arndt

I was I was an intern just like working in service of a grant program. But I loved I loved the combination of education and arts. So we had, like school groups coming in to do in school or to do educational performances during the day. And then sometimes we worked where we'd go out to a school and be the arts institution visiting the school. And I just loved that intersection and the sort of democratic nature of all the kids could be exposed to something that might change their lives. You know, it might not be something that they had at home, but they could be exposed to it through school. So then I went to George Washington University in D.C. and created an individualized master's program called Performing Arts Education. And so I had coursework in history and theory of education, how people learn both formally and informally in in environments like museum exhibits and stuff like that. And then the history and theory of theater, dance and music. And the idea was that I was going to either be an art specialist in a school district or be an education coordinator at a major arts institution. And then I fell in love and I moved to a college town in Virginia that had neither a large school district with those kind of resources nor a major arts institution. And so I got a job at the local public radio station. And it was while I was working there that I got asked to do something that was recorded to send to somebody for money. And that was the beginning of the whole the whole voiceover narration journey.

[00:12:02] Karen Commins

That is a pretty neat story.

[00:12:05] Andi Arndt

But you see I was like my my life makes no sense.

[00:12:10] Andi Arndt

I do all these different things.

[00:12:12] Andi Arndt

You know, I have two interdisciplinary degrees. Um, which is good and bad at the same time.

[00:12:21] Andi Arndt

Yeah.

[00:12:24] Karen Commins

Well, I don't see a downside to that. I mean, I do, too. I have a bachelor's in journalism and a master in computer information systems. And I don't see there being a problem because everything you know and everything you learn, you take with you and it forms who you are. And so. I love knowing this background about you because you're still teaching.

[00:12:51] Andi Arndt

I am in a different way.

[00:12:52] Karen Commins

Not maybe the way you thought, but definitely it's still there.

[00:12:57] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Yeah. The whole time I was working at the radio station, I mean, I didn't have kids yet, so I had all this energy and an abundance of time. And so the whole time I was working at the radio station, I was running the community theater in my town and, you know, directing things and acting and things. And the local university had a need for one adjunct slot for basic acting. And they called me and said, Would you be willing to teach basic acting? And I thought my first instinct was, well, I couldn't do that. But then I thought, Well, wait, they just called me. They they asked me so far be it from me to say I can't. Why don't I try it? And if I stink, they won't ask me to do it again. And so. So I did. And I guess I didn't stink. So they asked me to do it again and take on a second section. And ultimately I had like three sections of basic acting or sometimes two or like two or three sections. And I started to have that feeling of like, I need to do better by my students and ground my teaching in a little bit more depth of training. And so I applied to and was accepted to the Shakespeare and Company month long intensive up in Massachusetts. So in the summer of 2001, I went up to Massachusetts for a month and immersed myself in Shakespeare, in Elizabethan dance, in Linklater voice work and all kinds of awesome stuff, and came back feeling much more confident in my teaching. And all in all, I ended up teaching at James Madison University School of Theater and Dance for 12 years and eventually revived the voice course, which was in the course catalog, but nobody ever taught it. So as I got more training in Linklater voice, I got confident enough to say, Hey, there's this voice class on the books. I could teach it. And I ended up teaching that. It became a very in-demand class among the student body, and I've been teaching Linklater and coaching voice for 20 years now. Definitely comes in handy with the narration.

[00:15:17] Andi Arndt

So that's. Yeah.

[00:15:20] Karen Commins

Is that something you still do?

[00:15:21] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Oh, yes, absolutely. There's a voice class at NARRATOR Life that I'm going to be adding to and revising as I go forward. And we just renovated a barn on the property of the new place that we bought. And one of the things I can do out there is teach small group voice classes.

[00:15:43] Karen Commins

Well, that is really exciting. And you've had a number of voice classes. Is Linklater something you've done?

[00:15:51] Anne Flosnik

No, it isn't. Not, not. Not formally. Bits and pieces here and there, but not formally. No. Note, there are many new people that everything is always fluid and ever changing.

[00:16:06] Karen Commins

And I see that. Serena Scholl Those people in the comments are liking what you're saying. Andi and Serena Scholl said your life makes perfect sense.

[00:16:16] Andi Arndt

Well, you know, the older you get, the more now I'm like, it doesn't matter.

[00:16:21] Anne Flosnik

You know.

[00:16:22] Andi Arndt

Like, I used to think that it mattered. It doesn't matter. Like, it's my life. So it fits together because it's all my life.

[00:16:31] Karen Commins

That's a good way to look at it, because sometimes I feel very pulled from, you know, different things between like the narration and the site. So it's like trying to serve two masters and it sometimes makes me feel schizophrenic and. Just thinking about it. Well, it's just all part of my life. Kind of takes the pressure off.

[00:16:52] Anne Flosnik

Yes.

[00:16:54] Karen Commins

Well. So you started narrating in t10? Mm hmm. And then at some point, you started lyric audiobooks. Now, what happened to make you want to do that?

[00:17:10] Andi Arndt

What happened to make me want to do that? Was that. I was getting more offers to narrate. Well. There's two parts to Lyric. There's there's the Nashville project that started it, and then it pivoted into romance. So to to be fairly brief about it. I had a friend of a friend who unfortunately just passed away in December who, yeah, it was such an awful, awful, awful loss. His name was Peter Cooper and he. Was the music. Senior music writer for The Nashville Tennessean. And he was also the. He ended up being the senior editor at the Country Music Hall of Fame in there in Nashville. And he was interested in making some audiobooks of the most influential memoirs and other music related books that he was aware of out there in Nashville that did not yet have an audio version. And so he and I teamed up on, I think, five Nashville based projects, five or six. But my theory at that time was that traveling musicians would want to listen to audiobooks about the music industry and about how their musical influences came up and their memoirs and stuff. And it turned out that musicians on the road like to listen to David Sedaris and Stephen King and, you know, Gone Girl.

[00:18:49] Andi Arndt

So it was a point where I was not going to go out to Nashville to to invest in those titles any more because it was all kind of self financed. And it was coming to a point where I'd had enough data and it just it wasn't that wasn't going to work. The sad thing was Peter's book came out in 2017. He was getting really busy at work and I didn't have the resources to do it, but we were going to do his book as an audio book. And we just always thought there would be time to, like, do it later. So let that be a lesson. You know, don't wait, do do it. Because we could have had his voice telling all these amazing stories and now his one of his best friends is going to do it. We're going to do it sort of as a memorial project and then at our own expense, but for a totally different reason, you know. But we're going to be doing that this summer out there. So at the same time that the Nashville experiment was sort of petering out, it's strange choice of words, but in any case, the romance thing was really taking off for me, and I was getting more offers of romance narration than I could possibly do.

[00:20:13] Andi Arndt

But I knew all these other great narrators and it kind of came to a fork in the road where I thought, I can either keep saying no. Or I could say I can't narrate it. However I could produce it, cast it. You'll be very happy with it. And on we go. And so that I had another a number of authors take me up on that. And then I brought Marnie Penning, my college roommate on to be a producer, and then she started her narration career and got really busy. So we brought on another producer and another producer. And just this last fall I sold Lyric after eight years and several audio awards and all these things that we're very proud of. To Katie Robinson, who was one of the producers that had been with me for several years. And she is going to be taking the company into a whole new, very exciting chapter. The social media feels like euphoric and, you know, it just is like I'm loving watching her just fly. And that has been very rewarding.

[00:21:19] Karen Commins

So it would be hard, I think, to let go of something like that's your child and now you've seen it out in the world with somebody else.

[00:21:27] Andi Arndt

Yeah, but she used to own her own production company, and the parent company of her production company folded like almost unbeknownst to her. The way that she found out was she tried to get into her social media and she was locked out because the parent company had folded, like in the middle of the night.

[00:21:46] Karen Commins

So somebody's leaving you on Post-it note?

[00:21:52] Andi Arndt

Yeah. And so, you know, we worked together all these years. And finally it hit a point where I remember we had a meeting and three of us were Gen X, and three of us were millennials. And I just thought, you know what? I don't want to overstay my. I don't want to overstay. I would much rather leave on a really high note and watch the company move forward then than insist that I'm the only person who can do this and kill it.

[00:22:24] Karen Commins

Well, I don't think that would have happened, but. Meanwhile, you had something else calling you anyway.

[00:22:31] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm.

[00:22:33] Karen Commins

Which. Narrator Life. So tell us how that came about, because did you have signposts along the way? How long did it take you to take action and actually create this thing?

[00:22:47] Andi Arndt

I created it during the pandemic, Know I was doing a lot of coaching all along. And again, it was a sense of like. There are multiple coaches who can do great, get great results for narrators at all stages of their career. And the hole in things that I saw was there's a whole lot of introductory coaching that will help you get started and help you get established. But then and this is sometimes a complaint with AIPAC as well, it's like once you're in it, now what? And so we really wanted to focus on working with mid and late career narrators. Who just.

[00:23:29] Andi Arndt

We get stuck, we get to these plateaus and then we get we wonder, like, how can I do this very specific thing, either as a performer or as a business owner that where I feel like I'm kind of stuck. And so that's we have online courses that you can do self study. And I know, Karen, you and I are going to be talking about a little something sometime after after we're on today. So we put a little teaser in there.

[00:24:00] Karen Commins

But we may be of something that might. No pressure.

[00:24:05] Andi Arndt

Oh, it's happening.

[00:24:09] Andi Arndt

It's. But yeah, we've really we've really discovered that micro events, very small classes, you know, 12 people or fewer are super valuable. So the Palm Springs. Narrator Retreat is 12 people. Max The open studio live zoom classes that we do are 12 people. I think we've all had enough of like 400 people in a room feeling overwhelmed and leaving, going, What just.Happened so.

[00:24:38] Karen Commins

Well? And they sell out so quickly. And anybody who is not on your mailing list should get on your mailing list at narrator Dot Life because Andi sends out an email every week and she talks about other things that are important to think about, but also gives you a list of, well, this is opening, this is coming soon. And I mean, before you can blink, those things are gone. So get the mailing list and sign up as soon as you see the notice. And I'm excited because I'm doing Matthew Lloyd DAVIES, 21 targets in May. Every time he did that, it wasn't a good time for me. And when I saw that a couple of weeks ago, it was like, sign me up.

[00:25:20] Andi Arndt

Yes.

[00:25:21] Karen Commins

Because that looks like such an interesting approach to have us all narrating the same passage. And then we all hear how everybody did the same thing and then get to talk with him about it. So I really like the unique slant of that class.

[00:25:38] Andi Arndt

Yes.

[00:25:39] Karen Commins

Yeah. Forward to.

[00:25:40] Andi Arndt

It. Yeah. And he's going to be doing a clubhouse room with some people who've already taken it, and we're going to do replays on that one so that people can kind of hear from people who've gone through it. It's like a boot camp challenge kind of thing and decide if it's for you at this stage in your career or, you know. And so, Karen, I think you're going to love it because he based it on a video auditioning course that he took that he just thought was mind blowing, because you you have to own your style and your voice and what you bring to a text.

[00:26:18] Karen Commins

Well, two of our audience members are Suzanne Barbetta and Lianne Walker are both telling me the same thing. You're going to love it, Karen. Well, I know I am. And I'm all the more excited seeing those comments.

[00:26:30] Andi Arndt

Yeah, the registration link is actually at the narrator's life events page. It's already live and the course is not until May, but like you said, these things fill so.

[00:26:43] Anne Flosnik

There you go.

[00:26:45] Karen Commins

Kayla Kirby also says, Yeah, you'll love it. This is just making me more and more excited. You have to wait till May. Can we not do it in March or April?

[00:26:56] Andi Arndt

Yeah, he's going to.

[00:26:57] Karen Commins

Why isn't everybody else?

[00:26:59] Andi Arndt

I know he's going to do it twice a year. He's going to offer it twice a year because that feels manageable for him. Because he's realized that he needs to keep it small enough that he can be more involved because people are wanting not only one another's feedback, but more of him. He's like the puck of audiobooks. He's just like, you know, super energetic, mischief, fun. And yeah, I look forward to taking 21 targets one of these days to.

[00:27:32] Karen Commins

Kayla Kirby, in fact, says she would do it again in a heartbeat. So obviously lots of love and praise for that particular offering. But you have so many others because the open studios are always targeted on a particular topic. And. Have such top tier people leading them that of course, people are chomping at the bit to get in them.

[00:27:56] Andi Arndt

Mm hmm. Yeah.

[00:27:57] Andi Arndt

We had January Lavoy teach one last November about creating diverse characters, which is something that we're all so much more sensitive to. We should have been all along. But for those of us who are feeling the. The call to be very responsible and authentic in the way that we create characters of different backgrounds. She has a really her method is grounded in honesty, integrity, the diversity of our own friendships. I remember the Ahab breakdown that that she and some other narrators did. She was talking about, you know, when you have a character of a particular background, think of a friend or someone that you deal with in life.

[00:28:47] Anne Flosnik

Who.

[00:28:48] Andi Arndt

Has the qualities of that character and then think about the qualities of that person's voice. What can you make use of? And she said, if you're if your circle has no diversity in it, maybe fix that.

[00:29:06] Andi Arndt

You know.

[00:29:09] Andi Arndt

Which really is the larger the larger question, I think for authors and for narrators and just for humans living in the world.

[00:29:17] Karen Commins

Mm hmm. I don't mean to be doing all the talking. Anne if you want to jump in here any time, please do.

[00:29:28] Anne Flosnik

I will keep going. I don't want to break the train of thought.

[00:29:35] Karen Commins

Well, you know, Andi, you are doing Narrator.Life and I know you've got big plans to even expand it. So how do you split your time? Because you're such a busy narrator, too. How do you split your time between these two task masters?

[00:29:52] Andi Arndt

I group my coaching all onto Wednesdays, and it used to be Fridays, but my husband retired, and we have things that we want. We want to take advantage of three day weekends here and there. And so I figure Wednesday is the furthest away from any weekend trips that we might take. So that's one thing that I do is just to have a theme day on Wednesday so that I don't crowd my coaching with too many other commitments. And you notice that today is Wednesday. So I've already had two coaching students today and both of those were just absolutely fantastic stimulating conversations. And now we're talking about. Narrator life here. And I do have some narration to do this week, but I just, I put it in a container, so I did it Monday, Tuesday. I'll go back to it tomorrow and finish Friday.

[00:30:51] Karen Commins

Do you have an assistant or some other help? Or you just Wonder Woman who is doing it all.

[00:30:59] Andi Arndt

I. Narrator Life has a webmaster who handles all the back end technical stuff, and I also have a designer on call who's helped me make some visual aids for some of the things that I used to always draw on my iPad. I was like, I always draw the same thing. Let me send it to this guy, explain what I'm trying to say. And he made these beautiful slide presentations for me that make me look so much smarter. And then I have a bookkeeper slash accountant, and I was just exhorting another narrator this morning to consider doing the same thing for their business. Because the more time we spend in our book bookkeeping, the less time we're spending narrating.

[00:31:41] Anne Flosnik

Yeah.

[00:31:44] Andi Arndt

We used to have somebody who did cleaning on Fridays, but now that my husband's retired, he is like that. I'll do it, you know, I'll say we'll save the money. But yeah, I've. I definitely have help and I think everybody should, should look at there's this business podcast I like to listen to and every at the end of every episode, she says, And remember, just because you can do something does not mean that you should.

[00:32:09] Andi Arndt

So it's like, Yep.

[00:32:13] Karen Commins

I think that a lot to. But how did you decide you needed help? I mean, how did you like how did you find the graphic artist?

[00:32:22] Anne Flosnik

Yeah.

[00:32:24] Andi Arndt

I was tired of my graphics looking like I drew them on my iPad. And so I there's a fantastic site called free up dot Net, and it's like Upwork or Fiverr of those kind of freelancer sites. But the thing about Free Up that I like and it's not free dot com, it's dot net I always forget about that is that freelancers have to be vetted in order to even hang out a shingle on that site.

[00:32:53] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm.

[00:32:54] Andi Arndt

So I just felt like there was a little bit more protection for me as a business owner that I was going to be putting out a job description of what I was looking for and hearing from people who that's the thing that they do.

[00:33:08] Anne Flosnik

Right.

[00:33:09] Andi Arndt

So I highly recommend that. And the other the other way to find people is through referrals, like asking people that you trust who they trust. And also looking within your own network that you already have or service providers that you already have. Maybe they offer a service that you didn't know they offered, and that way you're limiting the number of relationships that you have to maintain. Because the older I get, the more kind of like relationship energy. Is really a precious resource. And I notice when I've I've got too much relationship thing going on. I just need I need to I need my only child time.

[00:33:53] Karen Commins

And I guess that's different than introversion or extroversion. Or is it?

[00:34:01] Andi Arndt

Yeah. I mean, I think we're all on a spectrum of introversion and extroversion. Even on any given day. And you've started to hear people talk about being extroverted introverts. You know, Amber Verts. We have we have a store of energy and it needs to be cared for and replenished from time to time. So I think we all need to know, especially as creatives, what is it that fills our well? And for some people it's time with others. So that would be the extroversion thing. But I think even extroverts need time to themselves. So I kind of reject that whole label thing.

[00:34:44] Anne Flosnik

Yeah. And there are things that drain energy as well. Yeah. Yeah, for sure.

[00:34:54] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Have you guys watched the White Lotus?

[00:34:57] Anne Flosnik

Yes, Both seasons.

[00:34:59] Andi Arndt

So I did. I just finished season one last night, and the character I related to so much is Rachel, the woman on her honeymoon. Every time her husband was fixated on how somebody had done wrong by him, and you could just see in her face her just being like.

[00:35:19] Andi Arndt

Let it go. You know?

[00:35:23] Karen Commins

So it's not only done wrong, it's just like minuscule things that a week from now won't matter.

[00:35:28] Andi Arndt

Yes.

[00:35:29] Andi Arndt

Yes. Oh, my goodness. I just I, I was very sad when she went back to him. I'm sorry. Spoiler.

[00:35:37] Andi Arndt

Spoiler.

[00:35:38] Andi Arndt

But I was just like, Oh, lady, what.

[00:35:41] Andi Arndt

Are you doing? Run for your life.

[00:35:47] Karen Commins

Yeah, well, they were mismatched from the start, so.

[00:35:50] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Yeah.

[00:35:51] Andi Arndt

But yeah, I mean, to me, that's like a draining of the spirit kind of thing, so.

[00:36:01] Karen Commins

Well, I've got what I call the Pit Stop hot seat. Which one of my favorite questions is, if you went into the witness protection plan, what identity would you like to assume?

[00:36:17] Andi Arndt

Oh, my goodness. Wow.

[00:36:21] Andi Arndt

What identity would I assume if I were in the witness protection program? Yeah.

[00:36:27] Andi Arndt

Hmm.

[00:36:29] Andi Arndt

I think. I would.

[00:36:35] Andi Arndt

I would do something.

[00:36:38] Andi Arndt

That had to do with. This is going to sound completely crazy, but you have to kind of be a hermit, I think. To be in the witness protection program. You obviously can't do something in the entertainment industry because.

[00:36:53] Andi Arndt

Hello.

[00:36:55] Andi Arndt

And so I think I would want to do something that involved. Being with animals or nature in some way.

[00:37:07] Anne Flosnik

Hmm.

[00:37:07] Andi Arndt

So like studying bird populations or monitoring stream quality or forest management or like something where the job required me to go outside regularly because I miss being outside when I'm recording. I took up horseback riding when we moved because we moved right next to a stable.

[00:37:34] Anne Flosnik

Oh. Hmm.

[00:37:36] Andi Arndt

And that. That's been really great.

[00:37:41] Karen Commins

Are you going to get a horse or do you already have a horse?

[00:37:44] Andi Arndt

No, no, I. I don't know to both questions.

[00:37:47] Andi Arndt

I don't have the disposable income. I actually I don't even know that I'm going to stay with the stable that I was going to because they're mainly about going to shows and that's thousands and thousands of dollars. I met this little old lady in the neighborhood who has two retired horses and she needs help, even just brushing them and feeding and watering them. And she'd rather have company because she does it all the time by herself. So I was thinking, hmm, there's a way to combine two things. I could go and hang out with this really interesting 80 something woman. And hang out with horses and kind of get my my nature and my people fix in at the same time. So.

[00:38:33] Anne Flosnik

Yeah, that sounds idyllic.

[00:38:37] Karen Commins

But would you want to do that in the middle of a michigan winter when it's, what, 20 degrees below zero or something. And it.

[00:38:44] Andi Arndt

Doesn't get that cold here? My husband calls it the banana belt of the upper Midwest.

[00:38:49] Andi Arndt

I grew up in Minnesota.

[00:38:51] Karen Commins

Yeah, I thought that area was just, you know, below zero all the time.

[00:38:55] Andi Arndt

No, no. I grew up in Minnesota and I'll watch the weather and they get stuff that goes north and east. It never hits us. It goes across Wisconsin and up into Canada. And we meanwhile, we're just like.

[00:39:10] Andi Arndt

No.

[00:39:11] Andi Arndt

Didn't come here. So not that we didn't get any snow, but it's pretty and it feels good to be outside.

[00:39:17] Karen Commins

Well, I know you posted a picture of you sitting, I guess, on the side of Lake Michigan. And, you know, it was a beach and it was a beautiful day. And I thought they have that in Michigan.

[00:39:28] Andi Arndt

Oh, the beaches of western Michigan remind my husband of the Jersey Shore where he grew up.

[00:39:33] Anne Flosnik

Oh.

[00:39:37] Karen Commins

Well, that's that's pretty nice. I mean, in landlocked Atlanta, I have to go five or six hours to see a beach. And I think you said it's just 30 minutes from my house.

[00:39:46] Andi Arndt

It is like.

[00:39:47] Karen Commins

Was so jealous.

[00:39:48] Andi Arndt

Well, that's why we fixed up the barn. And so I can offer classes and gatherings in the summer. And my plan is to have sort of a grand opening ribbon cutting picnic thing this summer. I've got the Saturday before the lobster bake marked off. So. Watch for that in the Narrator dot Life Weekly newsletter.

[00:40:14] Anne Flosnik

Wow. Yeah.

[00:40:16] Karen Commins

You wouldn't want to do it in competition with the Lobster Bake. That probably wouldn't be a good look

[00:40:21] Andi Arndt

Never. No. But I thought, hey, if people are coming from the West Coast, they can just make a stop in Michigan. You know, we'll do something here. Probably be more of a pig roast and then.

[00:40:31] Andi Arndt

Continue on to Maine and go to the Lobster Bake and just have a mid-summer little social break.

[00:40:39] Karen Commins

I like how you think.

[00:40:41] Andi Arndt

Hmm. We all have. To come up. Karen.

[00:40:45] Karen Commins

How far are you? You're not far from brilliance, are you? Or do you? Because I've been wondering. How have you been recording lately with your. Are you. Do you have the recording setup in your house and you're just finishing out the new studio?

[00:41:00] Andi Arndt

I've just moved my stuff into the new studio last night, and so.

[00:41:04] Andi Arndt

Yeah.

[00:41:05] Andi Arndt

It's all done. It's beautiful. It's warm and toasty. I'm so, so, so excited about it. I can't believe it's done. And I did record at Brilliance, and I'm going to be recording at Brilliance again in March. I was actually the first person to record their post lockdown.

[00:41:24] Andi Arndt

So.

[00:41:25] Andi Arndt

So they're back up there. They're back in business, but they're not. I don't know that they will ever be where they were, where they used to fly people in and put them up in a hotel and have them come into the studio. You just have to stay with me.

[00:41:43] Karen Commins

Anne used to be on that flight all the time.

[00:41:44] Anne Flosnik

Do you say that?

[00:41:46] Andi Arndt

Well, come stay with me, Ann.

[00:41:48] Anne Flosnik

I'd love to. Oh, gosh. How far are you from Berlin?

[00:41:54] Andi Arndt

25 minutes.

[00:41:55] Anne Flosnik

Good grief. Oh, wow. Mm hmm. Well, that is something.

[00:42:03] Andi Arndt

Yeah. So we're we're right halfway between Grand Rapids and Lake Michigan. So we've got a half hour into the city with museums and great restaurants and cultural activities and ice skating, you know, Rockefeller Center style ice skating right downtown with the Christmas lights and everything. And then we've got beautiful beaches. And what is it? There's a luge run.

[00:42:28] Anne Flosnik

Oh.

[00:42:29] Karen Commins

It doesn't sound like you've done it yet.

[00:42:32] Andi Arndt

No, in theory.

[00:42:36] Karen Commins

Because, you know, we need pictures and video of that when you decide to go.

[00:42:40] Andi Arndt

Oh, my goodness, yeah, I'll have to get the GoPro that I don't own yet.

[00:42:45] Karen Commins

But that would be reason to get it. And you could make it a business expense because, you know, you've got to show all your colleagues what this is like.

[00:42:53] Andi Arndt

True. And I think you should come out and go with me.

[00:43:00] Karen Commins

I'll be cheering you on. Right behind you 100% of the way.

[00:43:04] Andi Arndt

Calling you on it. Commins.

[00:43:09] Karen Commins

Now, that would not be the ride I would want to be on. Yeah, me And you.

[00:43:14] Karen Commins

Wouldn't definitely want me behind you because you would probably lose hearing because I'd be screaming so loud. You know, I used to scream when I. When I would see Barry. Barry Manilow in concert because he's pretty much the only concert I go to these days. But of course, now I can't scream because it would affect my voice. But something like that, you can't help it. You just.

[00:43:35] Karen Commins

AAAghhhhh, the whole time.

[00:43:39] Andi Arndt

Oh Karen (sung to the tune of "Mandy").

[00:43:48] Karen Commins

Well, and I know we're coming up close to the top of the hour, and I want to be sure anybody in the audience, if you want to raise your hand and come up to the mic and have a chat. We'd love to hear from you. And in the meantime, Andi, so I have another question from on the hot seat. What is your most trivial, useless or flat out counterproductive superpower?

[00:44:18] Andi Arndt

My count, my most counterproductive superpower.

[00:44:20] Karen Commins

Yeah. Well, it can be trivial or useless. It can be any of those three things.

[00:44:27] Andi Arndt

Oh, trivial or useless.

[00:44:29] Karen Commins

Yeah.

[00:44:30] Karen Commins

Or flat out counterproductive or.

[00:44:31] Andi Arndt

Flat out counterproductive. I mean, my counterproductive tendency is to. Is to be helpful.

[00:44:43] Karen Commins

So I understand that it is counterproductive because you spend time helping other people instead of progressing your own agenda. I definitely understand that.

[00:44:55] Andi Arndt

Yeah. I mean, I love you know, I love like, I keep track of a lot of information and I tend it's just I have to sit on my hands and duct tape my mouth shut sometimes because I'll be like, Oh, I know who should talk. I know who that person should talk to. But it's like, Nope.

[00:45:09] Andi Arndt

Nope, I that's.

[00:45:11] Andi Arndt

Not on my that can't do that today. I cannot do that today.

[00:45:14] Karen Commins

I feel like you're my sister from a different Mr..

[00:45:16] Andi Arndt

Office because.

[00:45:18] Karen Commins

I call that the girl in fifth grade syndrome.

[00:45:20] Karen Commins

Because I know. I know. I know, I know.

[00:45:25] Andi Arndt

Yeah. As far as, like.

[00:45:27] Andi Arndt

Trivial skills that I have.

[00:45:32] Andi Arndt

Oh, goodness. Trivial skills that I have. I'll think of something, but I can't think of. I don't have a lot of I don't do crafts. I don't do.

[00:45:45]

while you're thinking, Andi, Suzanne Barbetta has her hand raised, so. Yes. Yeah. Have to say. Hi, Suzanne.

[00:45:57] Suzanne Barbetta

Hi, ladies.

[00:45:59] Anne Flosnik

Hi. How are you? Good. How are you today?

[00:46:02] Suzanne Barbetta

Good. I have a quick question. Referring back to something I think we talked about at the end of last year. You are planning on maybe doing some like little, I don't know, recorded mini courses or something on the air table.

[00:46:18] Andi Arndt

Oh, yes. Template. It's on my list.

[00:46:23] Suzanne Barbetta

And then that actually brought up to me, is there any is there any are there any other classes that you're kind of planning to put in that kind of format?

[00:46:35] Andi Arndt

Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. And multiple members of narrative faculty have their course topic chosen and I have resources in place to like help them actually one by one by one, kind of check off the process of creating a course. So there's one that I'm going to be talking with somebody about this afternoon. The table course is now that the barn is finished, I will be able to do course recording out there because being in the.

[00:47:15] Anne Flosnik

House.

[00:47:17] Andi Arndt

Believe it or not, I'm really shy. And so the reason that I'm being so expansive this afternoon is I have the house to myself right now. So I am shy about teaching things when other people are in the house. And I don't know why that is, but that's just like a weird thing. So now that I have my barn, I can go out there and just, you know.

[00:47:42] Andi Arndt

Let fly.

[00:47:48] Suzanne Barbetta

Great. I have. I wanted to ask if a particular teacher might do a particular course, but I don't know if that would be letting out of the bag. So maybe I could like DM you about it or something.

[00:48:08] Andi Arndt

I don't mind if you say like just phrase it in the form of like, I would love if so-and-so would teach this and such.

[00:48:16] Suzanne Barbetta

Och, I would love if Vikas would teach.this.

[00:48:23] Suzanne Barbetta

Class on archetypes. I think he taught or was teaching at one point at university.

[00:48:28] Andi Arndt

Mm hmm.

[00:48:29] Suzanne Barbetta

And I know another narrator that took, I think, a short workshop around that idea with him and loved it. And I haven't seen any kind of offering like that anywhere else, so.

[00:48:43] Suzanne Barbetta

I would love that.

[00:48:43] Andi Arndt

Okay. I will put a bug in his ear about that because, you know, sometimes the thing that somebody should should offer, it's almost like.

[00:48:53] Andi Arndt

Well, hasn't everybody heard me talk about that already? You know.

[00:48:58] Anne Flosnik

Yeah. Yeah.

[00:48:58] Andi Arndt

And I don't I. So I think he'd be really intrigued to know that, that there's still interest in that as, like, something that's new to people. Because I know he did an APAC session on it at one time that I took. That was really helpful. And there's no reason why that couldn't be an evergreen course. So I think that's a great idea. I will bring that up with him.

[00:49:22] Karen Commins

Yeah, I would like to see it. I missed that APAC session, so. And you know, of course, they don't record anything, so it's not like you can go back and look at anything.

[00:49:31] Andi Arndt

Exactly. Yeah.

[00:49:32] Karen Commins

So I think there would be a lot of interest for that. So. Thanks, Suzanne. I'm I'm in line for that one, too.

[00:49:41] Anne Flosnik

It's just. More questions.

[00:49:49] Karen Commins

Audience members, your chance to ask Andi your pressing questions is about to run out. So. Not that I'm threatening you or anything happen yet.

[00:50:01] Andi Arndt

What's going to happen to me? My gosh. Well, while.

[00:50:04] Andi Arndt

People are formulating their question, I will just mention that every once in a while people will ask if I coach and and like what? How that goes, how how to work with me as a coach.

[00:50:16] Karen Commins

So I'm glad you brought that up. Yeah.

[00:50:18] Andi Arndt

Yeah.

[00:50:19] Andi Arndt

So the way to get on my schedule is to go to narrator.life. Thanks for the pin link and find my my faculty page and that's got a link to my coaching schedule. So every Wednesday I have three slots available, one very early in the morning, one around lunchtime, and this is Eastern and one in the evening. And that should theoretically make it possible for people in any time zone on the planet. To.

[00:50:51] Andi Arndt

To book with me, because I know I've worked with people in Australia and people in the EU. So that's when I'm available and that's how to book me. I use an app called Callan Lee and it's great because it looks for the next available spot. It books you in that spot. It asks you a couple of questions about what are the things that you want to talk about, either performance things or business things. And it collects payment right there. It puts it automatically on my calendar. So it eliminates the back and forth of, Hey, I'd like to coach with you. Okay. When? Okay, well, look at it just it eliminates all of that that stuff and just puts it on my calendar.

[00:51:33] Anne Flosnik

How do you set up the calendal thing? Andi is just Google it and find out. Is it self-explanatory? Oh.

[00:51:41] Andi Arndt

How do you like if you were going to for your coaching.

[00:51:44] Anne Flosnik

Yeah. For any anybody that wanted to set up some calendar situation.

[00:51:48] Andi Arndt

Yeah. Go to calendly.com and I think that they have like a.

[00:51:53] Anne Flosnik

Trial.

[00:51:54] Andi Arndt

Membership or a trial usage of it that's either like a lower cost for the first few months or first months free or something like that. And yeah, it's very intuitive if I'm using it, it's got to be user friendly because I'm not super tech savvy. And you just you just set it up to, you know, here's when I'm available, here's how long the average appointment or the appointment should be. And, you know, then the next thing you know, your book and sessions. It's great.

[00:52:25] Anne Flosnik

Yes. You could do that a long time. It really is very, very clever.

[00:52:32] Andi Arndt

Yeah, I learned it from Celia Segal, because when you ask for her time, she just says, Here, here's my schedule.

[00:52:39] Andi Arndt

Put yourself on it. Wow. Yeah.

[00:52:44] Karen Commins

Marcus Zarco added in the chat that he has the free one that allows for a 30 minute session. So that's interesting because I've seen them too. But I like an I haven't investigated how to set it up or how much it cost.

[00:52:58] Andi Arndt

Yeah, and one way that narrators can put that to really good use is to set up 15 minute free consultations. And if an author asks to meet with you about a potential project and they want to know how to do that, you can send them your calendar link. And then that way you can you can make sure that people only ask for your time when it's available so you.

[00:53:27] Andi Arndt

Can protect your recording time by not making it show up on the calendar.

[00:53:32] Anne Flosnik

Oh, that's golden. Yeah, that's a great idea. Yeah.

[00:53:36] Andi Arndt

And I have mine for coaching set to allow two instances per day.

[00:53:42] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm.

[00:53:43] Andi Arndt

So I'll either have the morning and the evening one Phil or the morning of midday or midday in the evening. But I won't have a day where I have, like, morning, noon and night sessions.

[00:53:56] Anne Flosnik

Oh.

[00:53:59] Andi Arndt

But yeah. Marcus, I'm glad that you're enjoying that. I just think it's a great it's a great piece of software, and I love that it just automatically puts it on your on the calendar.

[00:54:10] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm. Yep. It does a lot of things.

[00:54:15] Karen Commins

Well, and you're Andi. You're always in with all the latest tools and toys and. It's there's so many things coming every day that it really helps to have somebody who's already used it and has practical advice. I mean, that was golden about even scheduling authors with it. That's not something I'd thought to do. So we appreciate it.

[00:54:39] Andi Arndt

Daisy I bumped Hilary up here because she raised her hand.

[00:54:42] Hillary Huber

High heels. Hi. Hi, guys. Hi there. Hi. So I had a question about that. Sorry, I just came in in the middle of you explaining that calendar, Andi. Mm hmm. And by the way, I might have to hop because I'm waiting for somebody to come to my house. So if I ditch right after my question, that's why. My question is, when you do that and they can just sign up for a slot. How does that give you control over whether you want to narrate that book or not?

[00:55:15] Andi Arndt

All you're doing is having a discussion.

[00:55:18] Hillary Huber

Oh. Oh, this is not for. For bookings. See, this is what happens when you come in late and ask a dumb question. This isn't for saving time in the calendar. It's just a time to discuss the book.

[00:55:31] Andi Arndt

Exactly.

[00:55:32] Hillary Huber

Okay. Sorry. My bad. Okay. Shut up.

[00:55:37] Anne Flosnik

This is a great question.

[00:55:39] Andi Arndt

No, but you can use our table that way. You can set up a form in air table that, like, you'd make a separate. And this, Suzanne, I'll add this to the course. You can make a separate table that's like audiobook requests and make that form available to people, and they can fill out the form with more information about the book and maybe even a sample chapter. And then you get a ping like, Hey, somebody asked for your time and you have it's not all that different from an email. But what I like about air Table is it captures that data so that you can even see, Oh, this person keeps asking for me. Maybe I should, you know, either block them or not. Sure. See you or or, you know, take their take their interest more seriously because they keep knocking on the door.

[00:56:31] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm. So, yeah. Oh, that's really good.

[00:56:35] Andi Arndt

And I know Karen is a big fan of Evernote and uses.

[00:56:40] Karen Commins

And I was just about to ask you, have you ditched Evernote totally in favor of air table or do they both have room in your life?

[00:56:48] Andi Arndt

Um.

[00:56:49] Andi Arndt

I am migrating critical information over to air table. I'm more using Evernote for some household data storage. Where I need that extra layer of security like a household file cabinet for digital stuff related to. Yeah. Things. So. But yeah, for business, it's all about our table.

[00:57:16] Karen Commins

Well, an air table gives more of a spreadsheet look, and it kind of depends on, you know, if you're really drawn to that versus. A document. Look, because I mean, I have all this in Evernote and it works for me, you know, and but there's a lot to Airtable that I, I like how it looks and, and the integration between things is definitely smoother and there's more layers to it, I think. But I mean, I've got so many linked notes in Evernote that I'm, I'm accomplishing the same thing.

[00:57:51] Andi Arndt

Yes. And you've got a lot more boilerplate where you've got big blocks of text that answer specific questions.

[00:57:59] Karen Commins

That's true and it's but I, I love using Evernote also for project incubation because I'll put ideas or like if I answered something on Facebook, every time I answer something on Facebook, I copy what I said to Evernote because it can come up for me again, like I may make an article from it or I may. Repurpose it in some other ways. So it's. Really functioning for all that, whatever kind of information that I'm trying to save.

[00:58:27] Andi Arndt

And that gets back to the being helpful thing. You are capturing your helpful information so that it has ongoing value. And that was one of the reasons why I stopped posting as much on Facebook as I got busier. I thought, my goodness, I take all this time to answer a question. And then two weeks from now that's been bumped down and down and down and down and down. And, you know, people don't use the search thing as often as they should.

[00:58:55] Karen Commins

I know.

[00:58:57] Andi Arndt

And I just started to feel like, what am I? I'm kind of pouring stuff down a well, and really I need to think about how to how I have leverage with this, this information. So doing doing narratives roadmap and having that incredible repository is one way and offering coaching is another way. But they both address the the need to value the help that we give. And I think that's and I'm not saying that like I'm not saying that what I have to say is is like so much more valuable than what somebody else has to say. But I think we all need to remember that our time has value and. There's there's our inner circle of people that we will always help. You know, just pick up the phone, call me. You know, we've got those those great kind of VIP inner circle folks that are close network. But when it starts to be an issue of needing to value our time, then I think I think it's okay to do that. There's just been a lot of discussion this week and in my coaching sessions today too about about the value of our time and our expertise.

[01:00:19] Anne Flosnik

Yes.

[01:00:21] Karen Commins

And that sounds like a whole other conversation we could have on another day. But we are at the hour, Mark, and I want to be respectful of your time. So I'm just going to I don't see anybody with their hands raised. So we'll just get the show back on the road at this point. So we're going to conclude today's Pit Stop and the recording will be available on clubhouse later today. And I will post it with a transcript in any relevant links on narrator's roadmap. And I hope everybody in the audience will take another road trip with us in two weeks on March 1st. Gosh, it's going to be March 1st when we'll be speaking with Rich Miller, who is a narrator, and he's the host of the popular audiobook Speakeasy podcast. And coming up, even before that is and NARRATOR Uplift Show on Thursday, February 23rd, where her guest will be Amy Rubinate, who's a narrator and owner of Mosaic Audio Recording studio. And Andi, I guess you're still doing your Friday takeaways at 3 p.m. in the Narrator.Life Club. Is on this week, right?

[01:01:34] Andi Arndt

Yeah, And you can RSVP for it now because I created the event just before we went live in this room.

[01:01:41] Karen Commins

Well, how handy.

[01:01:42] Andi Arndt

Oh, and can I also, while we're here, can I also promote, you know, clubhouse now has these things called houses?

[01:01:49] Anne Flosnik

Oh, yeah.

[01:01:49] Andi Arndt

And they are unmoderated open spaces, but they're a little bit more vetted in terms of who's in them. And so anyone who is a narrator who has at least one title on Audible is welcome to the narrator Green Room House. And any time you want to, you can go there, unmute yourself, and it's unmoderated. Narrator WaterCooler chat.

[01:02:13] Karen Commins

That's pretty cool.

[01:02:14] Anne Flosnik

Mm hmm.

[01:02:16] Karen Commins

And I appreciate you setting that up for everybody.

[01:02:20] Anne Flosnik

Yeah.

[01:02:21] Andi Arndt

I think it's a fun space to go after a room has concluded content. To just continue. The conversation

[01:02:35] Andi Arndt

But yeah, it's neat to see people interact and meet one another in there and expand their network. So.

[01:02:42] Karen Commins

And on that happy note, I hope everybody finds joy in every journey and lives the life of your dreams. I want to thank again our fabulous guest, Andi Arndt, for this wonderful, interesting conversation to my dear friend Anne Flosnik for your support and encouragement and to everyone for spending time with us today. So thanks for joining the Pit Stop and we look forward to seeing you again soon.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



Automated transcription by Sonix
www.sonix.ai