

THE INTUITIVE WRITER: INFLUENCE – WITH CHRISTINA CROOK –

Christina wrote *Good Burdens* during the 2020 lockdown. In this conversation, I asked her how she actually wrote it. She talks openly about her process, and gets practical with the details. She also talks about how she cultivated trust, and her support systems.

November 12, 2021.

Sarah Selecky 0:07

Christina Crook is a visionary and a leading voice in the field of digital wellbeing.

She's the author of the bestselling book *The Joy of Missing Out: Finding Balance in a Wired World*, and the leader of the global #JOMO movement.

She's written about technology and daily life for the *New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *bbc.com*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *NPR*, *The Times of India*, and *Glamour*.

And her newest book, which just launched yesterday, is called *Good Burdens: How to Live Joyfully in the Digital Age*.

Christina is also a good friend of mine, and so I can also say this definitively about her — she is a force of nature. As writers, we need to learn how to manage our own time more than most people do, and Christina models a way of relating to time and technology that has inspired and instructed me. I'm so happy to introduce her to you today.



Sarah Selecky
WRITING SCHOOL

She lives with her family in Toronto, and she joins me today, which is pretty special, here in Skybarn. We are recording this episode in person at a table together.

Hi, Christina, welcome.

Christina Crook 1:18

Thank you so much for having me. This is, I'm just so excited.

Sarah Selecky 1:22

This is so special. And it's the first time I've used this mic in this way. And there's also, it's probably picking up sound from the house. Congratulations on your launch.

Christina Crook 1:37

Thank you.

Sarah Selecky 1:37

We co-...

Christina Crook 1:41

We launched together!

Sarah Selecky 1:42

We launched it together here last night, we were on Zoom together and shared your book with the world yesterday. Really happy to be part of that. And I wondered if you could start us off by telling us, like you did last night, but I think it's a really great place to start — talking about burdens, talking about what you mean by a good one. What is a burden? And why... What's the story around why you titled your book that?

Christina Crook 2:13

Hmm. So I think most of us have a pretty negative relationship with the word burden. The last thing any of us want to do is to take on any more burdens, especially in the season in time when so many of us are exhausted. And so I need to do some explaining around the word burdens. Thank you for starting there. So the idea of good burdens actually originates with a philosopher of



technology named Albert Borgmann. And he wrote a book about this concept, created this concept in the '80s. And it was a happy discovery of mine a number of years ago where I was reading his book, *Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life*. And I came across this concept of good burdens, it kind of captivated me. And the question that he's asking, and this is the question I'm asking about good burdens, is what happens when technology begins to lift burdens we should not want to be rid of? So technology is always trying to "free" us, I'm using air quotes, you can't see them, but I'm telling you I'm using air quotes, to free us from all the burdens. So making things more convenient, more frictionless, you know, making us more comfortable, helping us control more and more and more things. But the truth is the things that bring most meaning and joy to our lives are often quite burdensome. They require attention and effort, they require more of us. There are certain activities that once you get across a certain threshold of effort, that burden disappears. And that is the idea of a good burden. So an example of a good burden would be writing.

Sarah Selecky 3:47

Right.

Christina Crook 3:48

Writing an essay, writing a book. It is a great burdensome thing to take on a project of that magnitude. But there is joy in the work, there's joy in settling into deep work and giving yourself over right to the flow of that work, into the ideas that you're compelled to share and write. And so I truly believe that shifting more of our time and attention away from passively consuming online to actively engaging in the creative process and building more community is the path to joy in the digital age.

Sarah Selecky 4:24

Okay, so thank you for that. And I want to pick at some of those threads a little later. But a couple things came up for me when you were talking about writing. Thinking about writing as a burden, and that threshold that you describe. I just want to hang out there for a minute and ask you, because you're a writer, so you're like, you've written books about this, you're a writer and do you feel... Like, can we talk about resistance and writing, and how that relates? Because I feel like when I sit down to write and when I teach writing, I recognize that there's a threshold that when you get past, you're in it, you're in the deep focus, it's pleasure. I wouldn't have thought of... The burden piece is new for me. This is new for me, because so much of my life is about releasing burdens, as you mentioned. And so much of my teaching is about teaching writers to find pleasure and joy in their work. So to



not treat writing as a burden, which is in the myth, it's in the myth of the artist it's like, this is this thing that you carry. Is resistance the burden? Like how did you sit down and write your book? Do you feel, do you have a relationship with resistance, and how does that relate to the threshold that you're talking about?

Christina Crook 5:42

It may be helpful to kind of dig a little deeper into burden again, because what I discovered in writing this book is that one of the definitions of burdens is actually capacity. Is the capacity of a ship, actually. And when I started thinking more about burdens, and taking them on willfully, taking them on purposefully, taking on a thing that might have a weight to it. Did they in fact create capacity? If I was to choose the burden, to just go with that word, of intentionally calling my uncle who's got mental disabilities and can only be reached by telephone, because he lives far away from me, if I take up the burden of setting time aside and calling him on a regular basis, would it increase my relational capacity? Would it increase my capacity to love? Yes, I can with all honesty say it increases my capacity. If I take on the burden of clearing away two and a half hours every afternoon to work, you know, in my case, I like to work and do a lot of writing out of doors. So blocking off a two and a half hour chunk to just be in it, to focus on the writing and the work, would that burden in fact increase my capacity, my creative capacity? I found again, it would. And so I think reframing burdens in that way, and in terms of increasing capacity is the way that helps me think about it. I will say that I had something written down I think as many writers do, I had sort of like my cheat sheet of mantras and focuses.

Sarah Selecky 7:26

You did?

Christina Crook 7:27

Yeah, I did, at the front of my binder. And one of them was a reminder that heaviness kills creativity in writing.

Sarah Selecky 7:39

Oh! Yeah.

Christina Crook 7:39



And so was I willfully trying to create a burden to make it burdensome? Absolutely not. Heaviness does kill creativity. So there needed to be a lightness to it. But having that constant reminder. And of course, I was writing a book literally called *Good Burdens*, reminding myself every day that this was a good burden that it was worth the effort, was a powerful reminder.

Sarah Selecky 8:07

It sounds like something that, we've chatted about this before and something I think about a lot is that as writers, we know this, but we forget sometimes, it's not in the word. We're not looking... The word does not carry everything. It's a signifier. It's a signpost. It's something that we can play... It's a tool. It sounds like in the process, in your relationship to writing this book you like, you really changed your relationship to the word burden, and turned it into something else. Like that's the magic, that's what... Writers are magicians in that way, what we do with language. So I see that, I love, I just wrote this down that heaviness kills creativity, and I think that what you're talking about and how I teach, I don't... I think that there's a, there's a crossover. And I see it in that I talk about making time that writing makes time. So when you are looking for time to create in your schedule for writing, you won't find it. You have to begin writing and in and through the writing, you are making time. And it sounds like this is what you're talking about with capacity. That it's inconvenient. It feels inefficient. It kind of feels like, it kind of feels like you're breaking... You're breaking the pattern, the holding pattern of your life in order to do something that creates more capacity in your life. For us in writing, thinking about writing, it does feel like you're breaking some pattern in your life, which is really really hard. But once you do, time opens up like it doesn't even feel linear anymore. Like when you're sitting, when you were sitting and writing in the park, you wrote a lot of this book in the park at a picnic table, did your day... Like what happened to your days? Was there some kind of like... what happened?

Christina Crook 10:00

Exactly what you're describing. And I, we're both, visually, we want to tell your listeners, we're both sitting here with our pens in our hand scribbling things down as good writers do, and I wrote down this unbelievable idea that writing makes time and that was absolutely true for me. It felt like I was transported to another plane. I couldn't believe what was coming true. And it was an incredibly intense season for my family. A lot of difficult things happened to our family this year that made the making of time for writing next to impossible. But it was true that when I went to write, it did create time. All of a sudden, there was just this window into the places I needed to go that yeah, it's... No words. There's no words.



Sarah Selecky 10:58

I know, it's really hard to describe this. And it's a paradox because on the one hand we're saying in a very real way, our capacity expands, time expands. It doesn't feel linear, it feels like this is a paradoxical kind of like riddle of life. And at the same time, I think it's also probably very true that you did not do other things in order to go to that picnic table and do... So like, on the one hand, your capacity expanded. And on the other hand, in order to expand your capacity for writing this book, you needed to limit your capacity for other things.

Christina Crook 11:37

Yes.

Sarah Selecky 11:38

Is that true?

Christina Crook 11:39

Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. It's 100% a paradox. Without carving out those windows of time, you know, that space wouldn't have been possible. I think what made it especially possible in that season was trust. Was trusting that when I sat down to do the work, that it would be there. And when I say it, again, the words are difficult to ... The wonder, the ideas, the words, all of it, right? We're just... I had to drop right in and somehow in trusting that it would be there when I sat down to work empowered the writing in a very, in a very quick... It went very fast. The windows were short, but the words were there. And I'm incredibly grateful. Because I know that's not always the case. And this is, I want to say that this is probably one of the great struggles, right, of a writer, is that sometimes you do sit down, and it's not, it's not there. I'm curious to hear more about how you teach around that.

Sarah Selecky 12:45

Well, what, just what you're saying. That it's holding the outcome, loosely. It's — so much of this comes back to that trust, and having the courage to face the page, like the courage to let go of being in control of everything. And it's scary, and it's weird. And, you know, I feel like, the more I can write myself notes to remind myself of that, the more conversations like this that I have with other writers to talk about it. I mean, we stumble over words when we talk about this, because there, it's like, there's not a space to talk about this unless we go into, you know, faith based languages. That's



where it can go, but it seems like it's still oil and water. And there's so much trust involved in order to show up on a page and know that you don't entirely know if you're going to be able to do it. And showing up anyway.

Christina Crook 13:39

Yeah. And I think that what you're saying there in terms of holding the outcome loosely, was the freedom I needed to do the writing when I sat down to do it. Because one of my other reminders that I had on that front page was that, that the outcome was not my responsibility.

Sarah Selecky 13:56

Ah!

Christina Crook 13:57

That my responsibility was to the work, period. That's it. And that, yeah, and that circled back to the heaviness, right? Because there was such a heaviness, right? And trying to wrangle the outcome to the ground, which is ridiculous because we have absolutely no control over the outcome of our creative work.

Sarah Selecky 14:18

Right! I mean, we have no control over, we have no control over the outcome. And yet we do because it wouldn't have been finished if you didn't sit down and finish it.

Christina Crook 14:25

Yes! I'm meaning to say that, absolutely. I could control the completion.

Sarah Selecky 14:30

Right.

Christina Crook 14:31

I could not control the impact.

Sarah Selecky 14:33

Right!



Christina Crook 14:34

Yeah.

Sarah Selecky 14:35

Practically speaking, just backing up a little bit. Also, because it's just interesting to us. What was the journey publishing wise? Did you have a proposal? Were you writing...Did you have someone who was waiting for this manuscript that you were working on? Or were you writing into... Like, how did how did it work beginning, middle, and end?

Christina Crook 14:51

Yes. So I had a proposal for a different book, which my agent Samantha Haywood, we have the same agent, which is very magical.

Sarah Selecky 15:04

Really, really magical.

Christina Crook 15:07

Which Sam, you know, tried to sell and it didn't sell. And that was pretty heartbreaking. And then I had to go back to the drawing board. And that was an incredibly... I was going back to the drawing board in the first summer of the pandemic. So it's a pretty difficult time.

Sarah Selecky 15:26

Had you already written some of the previous book?

Christina Crook 15:29

I had. But if I'm honest, it wasn't the book I wanted to read.

Sarah Selecky 15:34

Oo, tell me more!

Christina Crook 15:36

Yes, and Sarah, your sticker is on my laptop and that was such a powerful reminder. It was going to be just a straight follow up to *The Joy of Missing Out*. It was going to be called *Experience JOMO*.



It was going to be kind of kitschy if I'm honest, like prompts, but quite light, it was going to carry on...

Sarah Selecky 15:59

Like a workbook?

Christina Crook 16:00

Yeah, but and also, just like, I was just going to kind of carry on the, you know, the heels of the first book, and it wasn't entirely fresh and new. And to be honest, I was pretty tapped out on that one idea. But I was like, but there might be, I'll just be completely candid. There's money to be made. This is a topic that's interesting and people might want this. And design wise, I was quite excited because I'd have worked with a fabulous designer, and aesthetically I was quite excited about how it visually could look because I'm quite visual and aesthetics are really important to me. And I still think there's something there. But going back to the drawing board that first summer of the pandemic, honestly felt like a gift. Because I had the opportunity to write something that to me was much more important, was much more me.

I had an interesting conversation with my father who is a builder. And he sometimes has these little golden nuggets for me. And his encouragement to me with this new book, which is sort of like part of me was like, who are you to give me any advice, sir, in this area of my life that I know nothing about. But he really encouraged me to lean further into my own voice. Because in *The Joy of Missing Out*, I did lean very heavily into expert research from other people. And I do have this tendency, and you know, I've spoken about this before, that I have a tendency to heavily weight the words and ideas of people who are so-called experts, or have certain levels of education. And so that's what I did in this new proposal. Without belabouring the entire story, I did a new proposal, wrote probably another four new chapters, some of the core ideas from the first proposal, you know, did come into play, but to be honest, very little. And it went back to Sam. She was really happy. And then it was sold. There were a couple offers, went with, yeah, went with Nimbus, which was a good experience. And yeah, so then it needed to be finished by May of this year.

Sarah Selecky 18:11

It had a deadline.

Christina Crook 18:12



Yes, I had a deadline. I took a couple of months after signing because I was kind of deep into something else at that time, and then started writing in earnest in January of this year, and then it came out just now.

Sarah Selecky 18:24

Wow. So during that time, you knew that someone wanted it?

Christina Crook 18:29

Yes.

Sarah Selecky 18:30

Did that help with the courage piece?

Christina Crook 18:33

Absolutely. And I had the option to deliver the full manuscript and then have it edited or have it edited concurrently.

Sarah Selecky 18:41

What did you choose?

Christina Crook 18:42

I chose to do it chapter by chapter.

Sarah Selecky 18:44

Yeah.

Christina Crook 18:45

And I loved that experience. I would, that is like the only way I want to do it again in the future.

Sarah Selecky 18:50

Really?

Christina Crook 18:51



I found having a teammate, like it was just it was so collaborative. She was such a phenomenal editor, Whitney Moran, and I found that experience incredibly nourishing. It was, because I found with the first one, you send it and it's like, it's you just don't know.

Sarah Selecky 19:08

Right.

Christina Crook 19:10

With this one, you're being affirmed along the way, like yes, yes, yes to this, like, I want to hear more of this, or this isn't quite right. And it's being corrected, not corrected, but it's being refined in real time. And I found I love that experience.

Sarah Selecky 19:23

That affirmation, like getting that feedback about what's working, what's working, what's working is fuel for me too. And I know it's different. Fiction and nonfiction are definitely different. There's an aspect to, you have to hold the outline loosely, or you have to hold the outcome loosely in all creative projects because you never know. It's such a chaotic experience. And with a work of nonfiction that has a proposal, that has a premise and then like, it's somewhat of an outline that's not a story, it doesn't go through a transformation, through a character which can be quite chaotic and surprising.

Christina Crook 19:34

Yes.

Sarah Selecky 19:56

I think it's a little bit different. However, I will say that Sam was my person. So I had, I am really lucky to have an agent who just gave the positive feedback, which was my fuel, which is what I needed. The witnessing.

Christina Crook 20:08

Yeah.

Sarah Selecky 20:08



So much of our writing, it does what it needs to do when it lands with a reader and then the transmission lands. Otherwise, it's like, you know, it can... There's a lot of personal support and care that comes from writing for yourself in your own journal and writing your own copies. But something different happens when someone else reads it. And if you had an editor who received it chapter by chapter, who could then tell you, this, like it's a mirror, it gives you a mirror, and it's affirming and it helps. That's great to hear.

Christina Crook 20:42

Yeah. What you said about it needing to land with the reader, and I'm thinking beyond the editor, like more in terms of an audience, is that why we feel so angsty and terrible before the book comes out?

Sarah Selecky 20:53

Oh yeah!

Christina Crook 20:53

Because it hasn't completed. It's not brought to fruition?

Sarah Selecky 20:58

A hundred percent, I think so. It's such an anxious time. And it feels like it shouldn't be an anxious time before your book... It feels like everyone around you is like, congrats, your book is coming out! All is well. But it's like that is the pinnacle. That's like before, you know, it's not — a book is not a baby. I know a book is not a baby.

Christina Crook 21:17

No, that's automatically what I thought of. I birthed three babies. So I think it's true.

Sarah Selecky 21:21

There is a labour...

Christina Crook 21:22

It's like, right before, and that's the most terrible moment.

Sarah Selecky 21:27



Yeah, I really do advise...I booked some time in my own calendar before my last book came out and I advise writers to just like not, it seems like you have a full empty calendar and you should just be like, working really hard before your book comes out or something. But I think psychologically, it's huge. And you need a lot of rest. And you just need to take care of yourself and have lots of soup, and blankets, and like long walks, and do whatever you need to do to maintain some form of stillness or remind yourself to come into balance, because it's not a usual time.

Christina Crook 21:59

Why did we not have this conversation before?

Sarah Selecky 22:01

Right! We should have had this conversation before.

Christina Crook 22:05

Now I will be found in blankets with chicken soup.

Sarah Selecky 22:09

Take care of yourself. It looks invisible. It's an invisible... I don't know what the word is for it. But it's an invisible storm. It's like an invisible, private, very quiet hurricane.

Christina Crook 22:19

And this is where the community of writers is so essential, because it was a couple, and I just... You just need one, right? But I had a couple of people that I could, other writers that could reach out and be like, am I a crazy person? Why am I feeling this way? And just that affirmation of like, this is 100% normal. It would be weird if you were not feeling this way. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes. Right? And to just have that reflected back and be affirmed and those feelings, because it is so incredibly difficult for people that do not walk this career path to have any understanding. And it's not like, oh, I'm a special flower. Like my profession is so special and unique. It's just like, they have no way of knowing.

Sarah Selecky 23:00

Yeah. It's what you're holding. It's, you're holding the psyche of, you're holding your psyche, you're holding the psyche...You're holding all those ideas. And then you're also holding the possible, like, receptions. It's so much that you're holding. And you have the capacity, like you can hold it, it's just



that, again to capacity. When you have the capacity to hold all of that, it's just, you know, if you're in a ship, and there's like a big storm, you're steering in the storm, you're not also making omelets and, you know, registering people for a conference, and doing, you're not doing all the other things at the same time. You're just holding space for that storm so that when it passes you can be on your two feet again.

Christina Crook 23:44

I like that. And I also think about, you know, carrying a burden, and a burden shared, right, is lighter. And so to share it also, right, like automatically just lightens the whole thing. Yeah.

Sarah Selecky 23:58

It's, oh, there's so much to talk about. I want to go back. Because something you were talking about in that journey I think it's really interesting from your first book to the proposal for the assumed second book, and why and how, and making it to the third one, which is write what you want to read, which is your brain. That's like, writing what you want to read is in your own voice. It's the one that Sam sold. And I think this is this is another paradox and it's another hard, it's another thing that's just like trust me, if you forget about what people think, and don't write for that external expectation, but write what you want to read that is actually going to be the thing that's fresh that is going to reach people. It's really hard to square that circle for our brain. It's very illogical to do so but you just described it perfectly. And one of the things I just wanted to highlight that came up for me is the heroine's journey.

I've been reading a lot about structure, story structure, and the difference between the hero's journey and the heroine's journey. I've been looking at different stories, three act structure, four act structure, different structures. And there's a moment in the heroine's journey, which is not necessarily gender specific. It's like, you know, Harry Potter is a heroine because he has a collective and he reaches out to other people, and he knows his strengths and he knows his limits.

Christina Crook 25:30

Interesting.

Sarah Selecky 25:31

There is a point in kind of a classic heroine's journey that Maureen Murdock writes about in her book, there are two books that I recommend, one by Gail Carriger and one by Maureen Murdock.



In Murdock's book, she writes about this classic moment where the heroine, in a world that is to a hero status quo, all is well and he goes out to achieve something. For a heroine, the starting point is dissociated somehow or disconnected somehow. Already, she's not, she's not in perfect connection with the status quo. And her journey goes toward finding success, or like, balance. And often the first step to get there is putting on the clothes of the hero. And I think a lot of us, a lot of women writers I know do this and I think what you were talking about, that credibility piece, and making sure that you've got your studies, you've got your experts, you've listed all the things, you've done all your research, and you're speaking... You're actually showcasing the voices of other people to be there, to achieve the success. This gets us so far, it gets us to a point where it seems like, achievement! But we can't go on in that way because it brings us to a... A heroine needs to then take all that off, and be herself, and be able to be shining and like, the success can't come from other people's voices. It can't come from other.

Christina Crook 27:07

I have Mulan in my head right now.

Sarah Selecky 27:08

Ah! I haven't watched it.

Christina Crook 27:13

Well I was just thinking of like, yeah, just the physically, the putting on a kind of armour and then a shedding.

Sarah Selecky 27:23

Right!

Christina Crook 27:23

And the letting the hair down, you know, metaphorically.

Sarah Selecky 27:26

Right!

Christina Crook 27:26

And coming into her own way of...



Sarah Selecky 27:31

Yeah, yeah. And I have, I've experienced something similar with my first book and my second book, where you know what I loved writing — when I was an uneducated, emerging beginning writer, like from teenage hood on — was like, wild, random, magical, like a lot of magic. I wrote a lot of magic. I wrote a lot of stories about women, and friendships, and magic. And then as I progressed in my writing education, I began writing about different things in a different style. And I began studying and modeling my writing after... I love it. Love the objective style. Love, like Carver and Hemingway and all these like gritty guys. And I wrote a book that then achieved something from that style. And I went through a similar aspect of writing what I wanted to read. Can you talk a little bit more about how you, where your courage came from, like how you knew to do that? And just like the heart of it a little bit?

Christina Crook 28:45

Yeah, mm hmm. A really good therapist.

Sarah Selecky 28:48

Really? Yeah. Really?

Christina Crook 28:50

Her name is Georgia Dow. Look her up, hire her if you can. She's magical. She's also like a tech journalist. She's also got, like, she's a martial artist, like she's just like this magic, like just really like multifaceted, loving, straight shooting human being. And there is just such important work I did with her at the beginning of COVID. The beginning of COVID I was like, I am pulling in all the reinforcements, like whatever kind of support I can get around me, I'm going after it. And so that was one of the best decisions of my life, really, was she helped me unpack all kinds of things, all the ways and reasons why I was defaulting to leaning into these so called other experts and not trusting my own voice. We went through this process, and I would recommend this to anyone, of getting into core beliefs that were not serving and going through the work of refuting them in a way that was absolutely true. Like in the core of my being. So I can't think of, I'm trying to think of an example right now. Like, my words have no worth. Let's just go with that example.

Sarah Selecky 30:15

Yep.



Christina Crook 30:16

Okay, so I could say my words have no worth. And I could say, the response can be, my words have worth.

Sarah Selecky 30:22

Right. Turning it around.

Christina Crook 30:23

Turning it around. That's not good enough. It's not just good enough to just, you know, at the surface level, just flip it because it's much, much deeper than that. And so we went through the work of: what did I know, at the core of my being, was true. Okay, so my words don't have worth, okay. Okay, so I can say, I could say with all honesty, that I believe that all people's words have worth. Okay? Okay, I believe that all people's words have worth. If that's true then, it's true that I believe that Christina's words have worth. And then going down a layer and going down a layer. And it was literally a page where it was like, thought bubble, and then I drew a speech bubble back to what I was saying back to that negative belief. And it was a full page of them. And I said these aloud, I said them aloud. Like I spoke them into being over many days and weeks until I began to believe they were true. And it changed my life. Some of the things we already talked about were reminders that I came to through my work with her, which was that heaviness kills creativity in writing, I give myself permission for this to be light.

Sarah Selecky 30:47

I love that.

Christina Crook 31:16

I give myself permission for this to be light. And it was just... Yeah, that was the way that I honed courage. And I write about courage. I have a chapter in *Good Burdens* called Be Brave. And it's such a muscle. I think of courage like a heart, like truly, like strengthening it over and over. And I think part of the process too was, what we were talking about before in terms of the writing process and having it mirrored, and having someone like, I was also seen through that process. And she was also someone I really respected in a bunch of other spaces. And so that helped me hone courage, like, just keep going, you know?



Sarah Selecky 32:31

Thank you so much for sharing this. Because I do, I also got some help. I got counsel with someone at that phase. I think it's powerful to talk about that, because we need a support system. We don't have to do this alone. I don't think we're supposed to be doing this alone. I think that again, the myth of the writer is one of solitude. We do go in, we do go to a quiet place to actually do the writing. But that does not mean that we are meant to do it unsupported. And what you talked about, just in the pandemic, being like, okay, I'm going to need support. I think that's a testament to your bravery and your ferocity that you knew that you needed support and gave it, like, before you give yourself permission for the writing to be light, you gave yourself permission to ask for support. And this is, I would like to say, because you are a heroine, it's another classic signature heroine move. To know your strengths, to know your weaknesses, and to bring in a culture and a collective of care around you to support you. To know that you're in a network, and you're not alone. The hero is alone. The heroine never assumes that she needs to do any of this alone. So I think that's brilliant.

I think that probably out there somewhere is like a whole network of therapists and counselors who've loved working with writers especially for this. It's a specialized place. And I'm so glad that you got the support that you needed so that now your book is a support to us, you know? Like, it doesn't end.

Christina Crook 34:11

That's, yeah, I love that you said that. Because it's true. I do feel like I was empowered to give what I most wanted to give. That feels so good. Bringing something like that into the world. Writing what you want to read. And another thing that came through that work with her that gave me courage was one of the thoughts was, this is going to hurt. This is going to hurt because we're talking about that horrible, angsty feeling before launch. What if it falls flat? What if it doesn't resonate? What if it doesn't, whatever? I can't control the outcome. And the thought was, this is going to hurt. And here was I know that I know that I know that this is truth speaking back to that thought, which was, it would hurt more if I didn't try.

Sarah Selecky 35:05

Yeah, uh huh. That's a classic, right? Yeah.

Christina Crook 35:10



It would hurt more if I didn't try. If I don't give this all that I have and all that I am, I will never know what is possible in my creative gifts, in my life. And so getting to that truth changed everything. It changed everything. Because it would hurt more if I didn't try. Like, what is life, but trying? And then trying again, and seeing, and experimenting, and having the courage to do that. So that's, I truly believe that's how I honed courage. Yeah.

Sarah Selecky 35:47

Thank you. I kind of feel like that might be a good place to leave people.

Christina Crook 35:54

Okay, yeah.

Sarah Selecky 35:56

I don't have anything to add. And I just think it's really inspiring.

Christina Crook 36:02

I like that. I like that stop point too. That's good.

Sarah Selecky 36:05

Yeah. Thank you so much for sharing your personal story. And sharing how you wrote this book, *Good Burdens*. If you're listening to this, it's the kind of book that you want to buy two of. You want to buy one for you and then as soon as you start reading, you wish that a friend you know was reading it with you. So just buy two, and then you don't have to worry about ordering the second one and catching up to yourself. Just buy two and read it with a friend. It's very inspiring. There are several small, practical, manageable changes that I've made in my daily life since reading *Good Burdens* that have made a huge difference. That have impacted, in the weeks that have followed, that have impacted my daily life and my relationship to technology, which I know we didn't talk a lot about in this call but that's like, it's part and parcel of this work that we're doing. And I just really recommend it. I think you should go get it. Read it. Enjoy it. Thank you so much, Christina, for sharing your story with us.

Christina Crook 37:09

Thanks so much for having me.

