

1

IN THE BEGINNING

Imagine moving through your day with ease, grace, gratitude, and awe. It is possible, we assure you. – channeled wisdom

The title of this book carries a powerful promise. Change your reluctant mind and grow your business. This is offered with great love and respect, though, not to imply that any resistance you feel is only in your head. For we all carry some level of reluctance when it comes to marketing. Some of us feel it often and intensely. Others only occasionally as they mostly market their businesses with ease but sometimes feel a bit of dread about this or that task. Many of us tend to feel reluctant when asked to step into a new level of visibility: when we want to grow our business or step into new services or products but aren't sure if it will work. Even hugely successful entrepreneurs often are still reluctant to grow into some areas. I know because I've met them. But here's the difference between those who fail and

The Reluctant Marketer

those who succeed—success comes from finding the tools to move forward anyway, reluctant or not.

Many of us long for a way to overcome our dragging feet in a way that feels kind, loving, and wants all of us to come along. Times have changed from United States' origins of tough settlers and bootstrap pulling. We shy away from moving forward in a pushy way and say to ourselves—so what if we don't always like sharing what we do with others? We love our work and we are content with the contribution we're making. But in our heart of hearts, we would like to find a way forward—if it's not pushy or tamps down on some part of ourselves. We're sensitive creatures after all.

We've tried the carrot or the stick approach. Believe me, it's not just you. I've chased many desires and ran from many a pain. Along the way, I discovered a startling truth. Change comes fastest, and lasts longest, with grace.

One thing I've come to know very well in the work I do with many entrepreneurs is that if your business isn't where you want it to be, there's something that needs to change. We often think it's something outside of us. If we could just slow down, get that client to sign-up or master that new skill, then we could soar. Or we focus inward, on what we believe we lack inside. If we could just be more confident or worthy, then we could finally have it all.

This book is not filled with pushy strategies or lofty affirmations to change you.

Though following the practices and advice will lead you forward and support you in feeling ease more than reluctance; it will do so holistically. Not only in the outer—leaving you feeling like a fraud on the inside—nor on only the inner—pushing off your success until you're better. The journey of partnering with divine grace gives you the whole package.

Could it be this simple?

Call it spiritual marketing, marketing with the divine, marketing with spirit, or any version of your own; these are

In The Beginning

all names for the growing movement of bringing our whole selves to our business. These are all names for the art of calling upon spirit or the divine, to assist and support you in your marketing. Yes, it's this simple and is available to all.

This book will uplift your thinking around spirituality in business. For indeed, the time to bring spirit into your business is now. For too long, we have separated our work and our personal spiritual practices. For entrepreneurs especially, this is important because your whole person is involved in your work and you spend much of the day by yourself. Having rituals to ground your day, a relationship with the divine to guide you, and the courage and devotion to attend to your spiritual nature as you move through the day is a must. It is no longer a luxury.

Attending to your spiritual nature as you move through your day is as necessary as breathing.

We all have some slice of the spiritual in us. Our divinity makes us unique, like fingerprints. It's similar to the amazement you feel when you witness a birth or the magic you imagine when you contemplate the stars so far away. It is your own personal slice of awe and is magnificent.

When we were little, we used to say, "Look at me!" as we tried something new, naturally sensing how special we were. Our parents—or grandparents or whatever well-meaning but misguided adults were around us—told us to tone it down and not express ourselves so brightly out of fear that we would be hurt. Seeing us stand so proudly in our unique selves stirred up their fears that being different might lead to rejection, and we quickly learned from them to tone it down.

The irony is it hurts worse to hide our light more than you can imagine. Think of a bolt of lightning locked in a small

The Reluctant Marketer

metal box with no outlet for its magnificent shine. That's you, hiding your light. The task of spiritual marketing is for you to rub the genie's lamp. Not only to get the genie to come out but also to make the lamp shine. It's okay if others are drawn to it or want its power. Because you *are* special. For anyone on the self-growth path, bringing together your spirituality and work is a powerful goal.

Why put the spiritual in marketing?

Marketing is a hot topic, partly because it comes with its own built-in hype. To stay relevant, those in marketing are always promoting, so there is an endless stream of best practices, new tips, tricks, and tools being explained, shared, and hyped up. Marketers are, after all, good at marketing.

It's not all hype. Marketing is crucial to a thriving business. Although selling and delivering the actual product or service may seem more critical to a business surviving, marketing is the gatekeeper that lets the business sell and deliver in the first place. In reality, marketing is woven into nearly every aspect of a business. Marketing starts at the beginning with research to see if there is a market for a product or service. From there, it moves to the creation of the product itself, then on to how to price, promote, and distribute—including branding, packaging, and delivery—along with customer care and repeat business. Even warranty and returns are under the review of marketing! Literally, everything involved with any aspect of the business that touches the customer is driven by marketing.

Marketing also drives several intangibles, like brand awareness, cause and community building, and environmental choices the company makes. Think of marketing as the actual threads that weave the fabric of your business. No wonder there's a lot of attention and pressure around it.

**Marketing is woven in nearly every aspect of your business.
You'll be most successful if you can learn to love it.**

For entrepreneurs, especially purpose-driven ones like me, marketing can be particularly difficult. Our products and services are often personal. They flow from something we are passionate about or are crafted by our own hands. In some ways, we are our business, or at least the separation between us and our business is very thin. We are good at what we do and want to use our talents to make a difference to the world we are part of.

For most, marketing is not the business they are engaged in. Marketing and sales are additional skills they need to garner on top of mastering the product or service they offer. So, reluctance rears its head. In other words, your craft may be well-suited to your introverted state or your passion for detail, while your marketing may ask for the opposite skill set. It's a lot to ask of one person.

Step outside your comfort zone

I'm suggesting an alternative approach. Marketing is really a state of mind. It's not a long to-do list, never-ending campaigns, or endless copywriting and social media. It's an all-embracing approach to achieve visibility for you and your business. Simply stated, marketing is a willingness to connect with other people. Your mind and body state have everything to do with that.

Many people make themselves crazy as they hunch over a computer looking for the things they should do to market themselves when they really need to stretch themselves, head out of the house to meet people, and see what life brings them. They cannot effectively market while hunched over a

The Reluctant Marketer

computer or sitting with arms crossed stiffly, demanding that business come to them. Marketing, more than anything, is an attitude and openness to life.

Now wait, you're thinking, what about those online marketing people who earn seven figures all from their laptop? I want to do that! Here's a little secret—most seven-figure business people are highly visible in their industry and are often out speaking at conferences and meeting people who can move their businesses forward. A tiny sliver of folks (in the .001%) may truly live in their cave of isolation and make money, but odds are it won't be either you or me.

If you think you can't get clients or work done by being out in the world, please reconsider. One of my favorite clients, Nancy, caught my attention at a newly formed women's business meeting I attended as a favor to its organizer. There were only seven of us there and we listened to a speaker for most of the meeting. However, Nancy's one-minute introduction at the beginning of the meeting stood out to me so much that after the meeting, I asked her to tell me more about her story. She was struck by my quick understanding of her background and how that connected to the work she was doing now. She hired me one week later to help tell her story in an important proposal. Three years later, she is not only a valued client but a friend and colleague. Another of my clients came to me because I made a nice connection with his wife in the park while pushing our daughters on the swing.

Another day, I found a videographer for an upcoming project I had when I was sitting in the coffee shop writing, rather than staying in my office by myself. A woman sat next to me and told me to please not think that I needed to move but she was going to be interviewed on camera for her Yelp page. She then went to check on her makeup, leaving the videographer and me a moment to connect; we realized we were in similar businesses and could benefit from knowing each other. If you stay isolated, it's like the universe, source,

In The Beginning

God, or whatever you happen to call it, is trying to send you the answers to what you are asking for but can't get through. So, get out and be open to receiving that which you've been asking for.

Cultivate success

How do you overcome reluctance and cultivate a body and mind state that support our success in marketing? Here's how reluctance plays out in the average workday: complain often, avoid what feels scary or new, and scowl every time you have no choice but to sit down to write copy or go networking, all the while reminding yourself that it will never work anyway.

Sound familiar? Even though we know it works against us, the negative feelings pop up when we step into our marketing role.

There's good news! This book is designed to help you overcome your reluctance and uplift your thinking around marketing. I'll show you how to invite a practical spirituality to your business to do exactly that. Although the end is worth it, your journey won't be all sunshine and roses. This book may challenge the way you think and present ideas you find difficult to implement, or hard to sustain.

**No journey that has great rewards feels easy along the way—
but it's always worth it in the end.**

Well, welcome to life. What is worth doing that doesn't challenge us, at least at first? Once you accept the challenge, you are on your way to a life within your business that you've only dreamed of. You'll even find the universe will meet you partway, sending you support in the form of people, ideas, and opportunities you could never imagine from where

The Reluctant Marketer

you're standing now. So, get to it; the end result is worth it. As I mentioned at the beginning of this book, you can move through your work day—and your marketing efforts—with ease, grace, gratitude, and awe.

In the chapters ahead, you will learn how to have more grace and be more effective in your marketing. As you become more and more aligned with yourself and with your inner guidance, this will unfold naturally. Things will happen with more ease and less stress.

While much of this work is personal, even a bit unexplainable, I can show you how to explore and discover your own path. I will share steps that have worked for me and my clients to encourage and inspire a merging of our vast human business capacity with the vast divine cosmos. I'll start where I am; you start where you are.

Maybe *you* already see how much you'd benefit from this path. In today's business world, it's clear not all people do. Many spend their weekends seeking a more peaceful stance with their yoga classes and self-help books only to arrive Monday morning in their business to force things ahead, no matter the cost. To call on spirit or the divine means you no longer believe you're alone in your marketing. You understand that at all times, in all places, there is something greater happening around you. And you desire to be part of that.

Why should you change your perspective at work? Well, first of all, for most of us, work is the activity in which we spend most of our waking time—even if we have children, partners, or are active in our communities. Add the hours up and work usually falls to number one or two on the list, neck-and-neck with sleep.

When you want change, look for the one element that's likely to make the biggest impact, the lever that moves the most with the least effort. In this context, work makes the most sense. Not only is it the largest chunk of our wakeful time, it has deep ties to our personal lives, especially since it

In The Beginning

generally funds those. Not superficially, either. For most of us, the acts of shelter, food, and water are tied to the money we earn with our work. Emotionally, this matters. If our survival is tied to something, and it's not going well, every aspect of our lives is impacted.

For small businesses, marketing is tied to our health and success. It could be the lever that once moved, pushes all the other pieces in our world from inside the business out to our personal lives.

It's not the amount of activity or time that you spend being spiritual at work that counts. It's the overall frame of mind and ongoing cultivation that you do. You could spend an entire day in your garden, but if you left it alone for the rest of the month, that day would be lost in weeds. Instead, tend to your garden, day by day. A little bit of weeding done every day never lets the overgrowth begin in the first place.

Same with work. Your one-day spiritual retreat, although relaxing, may not do much for the rest of your work month. A few small actions taken every day can sustain you for the rest of your career. Don't be fooled by the smallness of the actions you can take. As Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can all do small things with great love."

Why me? Meet your guide

Growing up in the Midwest, I was taught not to trust sales people. Used car salesmen were held up as the worst of the worst. In fact, anything to do with sales was considered suspect. Marketing? Way too close.

In college, I chose graphic arts as my major; I felt pleased that I had found a business way of being in art. Then, I thought about the unsavory industry I was getting mixed up in. I vowed to not stay in it too long, as everyone knows that the field of advertising and marketing doesn't contribute any

The Reluctant Marketer

good to the world. Unfortunately, this line of thinking stayed with me throughout the first 20 years of my work life!

Eventually, I moved to San Francisco, where the graphic arts were somewhat revered or at least, slightly cool; I found the flexible, creative nature of the work to fit me well. To vent some of my frustrations, I moved towards the eco-side of the design business, using vendors who had green practices. Later, I let go of clients whose companies weren't making a positive impact and only worked for those who were making a contribution. But I still felt guilty.

I felt I didn't belong. Because I believed that I was doing something unsavory, I never really put my heart into growing my business. I didn't connect with the others in my industry who loved what they were doing. I told myself that I needed the money and had to stay with what I knew in order to earn a living. I was simultaneously supporting and punishing myself.

Sound familiar? Then, you know this is a hard way to live.

Fortunately, early on I discovered personal growth via books and I delved into books by Louise Hay and *The Artist's Way*. I participated in self-growth courses like the Hoffman Process and body-centered therapy groups. I even became part of an ashram and learned how to meditate and teach yoga. All this was part of a journey that, with lots of twists and turns, led me to write this book.

In a way, I was living two lives. If I'm honest, it was partly driven by my need to fit in. This was deeply ingrained from my childhood. My father had grown up in a financially strapped family that was emotionally unstable. They were good people but they had definite issues. His solution? Bootstrap himself through college and get into business. He left his family of origin and all that it entailed. Did he succeed? Yes, but at the cost of never stepping out of line of what he thought made someone successful—or not. I grew up being told that if I stuck out or was different, I would suffer. So, I tried to fit into his mold.

In The Beginning

Few in my professional life knew of my spiritual and personal growth orientation. I pretended my spiritual side didn't matter to my work. In my spiritual circles, I found it hard to admit I was in marketing. Instead, I opted to highlight my artistic nature. I was a graphic designer, not in branding; I was a freelancer, not an owner of a firm. In both worlds, I felt the need to downplay the other so I would be accepted.

In 2014, tired of the split and ready to finally do good with my work, I discovered coaching. I had enough mastery in the marketing world that I earned good money with only part-time hours each week and had time for school. I moved to Sonoma County and tried, once and for all, to quit this field to finally do something that made a difference. I wanted to become a life coach to help others live bigger, fuller lives on their own terms.

In the process, I realized I could make a big difference right where I was. Rather than tossing out my 20+ years of marketing and branding experience, I could combine coaching and marketing to help entrepreneurs have bigger, fuller businesses on their terms. Because the truth is, to grow your business, you need to grow yourself. For this, you need a coach. This allows me to bring all my skills to bear on impacting lives in a significant way.

Grow yourself and you'll grow your business.

But even here, where I seem to be finally in a moment of congruence in my professional and spiritual life, I am being pushed further. Apparently, the journey of being authentic vs. fitting in isn't over. This book clearly makes my beliefs about bringing the spiritual and business together public, which is slightly uncomfortable. What will all my past colleagues

The Reluctant Marketer

think? Probably nothing, of course, but you can see how the inner voice of doubt sneaks in when you step out of the crowd.

Even less comfortable is the way writing this book came about. In October of 2015, I didn't clear space on my calendar with the idea that it was time to write a book. Rather, I started to have an urge to write, which I couldn't ignore. When I sat down to write, it wasn't my own words that sprang to my mind. I don't know quite how to explain it other than to say that when I opened my mind to see what this urge to write had to say, all kinds of words came tumbling through almost faster than I could type them. A little confused but curious, I allowed them to come. The amazing thing was how quickly and consistently they came. I could sit and write a thousand words in about 20 minutes with my eyes closed. My fingers seemed to have a life of their own. Since I had wanted to write a book for as long as I could remember, this felt pretty darn exciting. Books I had read about writing said to aim for a thousand words per day and here I was banging that out in less than half an hour. I did this for about a month and the book was born. Of course, that was only the beginning. It took the next two and a half years to translate and organize these profound but densely packed messages so they could be applied to my—or your—work lives.

This birth was also a little freaky. It brought up an awful lot of questions. I mean, whose voices are these? Am I losing my mind? Why is this happening to me? Even as I sit here trying to write this experience, it's bringing up tears and waves of sorrow. I never wanted to be the eccentric, weird, woo-woo type prophesying on the corner while city folk stream around me pretending I'm not there. I simply want to be a regular, artsy but business savvy type who helps others rock their business. I just want to fit in. But, the lure of writing a book in such an easy way was hard to step away from.

I started to talk back to get some answers. Honestly, I wanted to know if this was safe. All kinds of things I've heard

In The Beginning

over the years were swirling through my head. On one hand, I knew about channeling and how positive that could be. I don't know a lot about it, mind you, but I have heard the occasional talk by Esther Hicks or Doreen Virtue and feel they offer a lot of good healing energy to the world. I have also read about older indigenous cultures using a middle man to interpret between the unseen realm and the physical. I've also seen bits in religious texts about demonic or ill-intentioned spirits trying to reach people. Not knowing enough about it left me feeling unsure and a little worried about my sanity.

Ironically, I can only get answers to these questions by moving into the open mindset of letting the words come, in other words, channeling their answers. Sometimes they would answer me while I was writing. Other times, I would try to consciously connect during a time I wasn't writing. I also ran into several people in my community who knew enough about channeling to give me some guidance.

**Stop praying for guidance and support,
then freaking out when it comes.**

Long story short, at some point it was undeniable to me that I was indeed channeling some kind of intelligence outside of myself and that it was benevolent in its intention. Any question I posed was answered in a kind, consistent way. When I read back through the material I was typing, the voice was different from anything I could have created and the subject matter was different from any thought I've ever had. There were even jokes in what I was writing, good naturedly teasing me for being so uncomfortable with the process! It was good and moving material. It was also only the beginning of this book.

The Reluctant Marketer

I asked if the intention was for me to channel every word for the whole book and the answer was—not if I didn't want to. These were concepts for me to play with and share in a way that might touch modern purpose-driven entrepreneurs as a way to support them on their journey. In other words, it was left up to me to make this book accessible to my tribe—and to get it out to the public. So began the relationship that led to me receiving parts of this book, and writing or translating these concepts to you, my reader. I've added my own thoughts, found examples to support the ideas, and researched further when the idea was around an area that wasn't in my expertise.

When my editor recently asked me to add this bit about channeling to the book, I resisted. After all, this pushes me further into the outer limits of the business community. When I checked in with my guides, here's what I received—

Channeling is not something to be scared of; it is a gift. An intelligent connection shared between minds in different parts of the universe—is like a kind of telepathy. It's available to most people and could be a source of great comfort and support. It's not because we are divine beings with some kind of larger intelligence. It's because when you channel, you tap into the larger space that is collective to all beings. And, this feels profoundly settling. When tapped into the larger collective, you realize you are not alone and never could be. There is a source of divine intelligence available to you, at all times. Not that we are giving you specific advice, but that there is a channel on the radio dial, if you will, that you can tune into to receive frequencies from others you share the universe with.

I can live with that. Weird? Yep. Insane? I don't think so. I still feel mixed about this whole thing, mind you. It's not easy to step outside of what's considered normal and OK. All my life I've had a big vision. That's generally how I best help

In The Beginning

others—when I push the envelope and create a bigger world for us all to live in. It's inspiring when big ideas come our way and change our perspective. So, I hope this book has a big impact on your life—and that you'll let me know what that is.