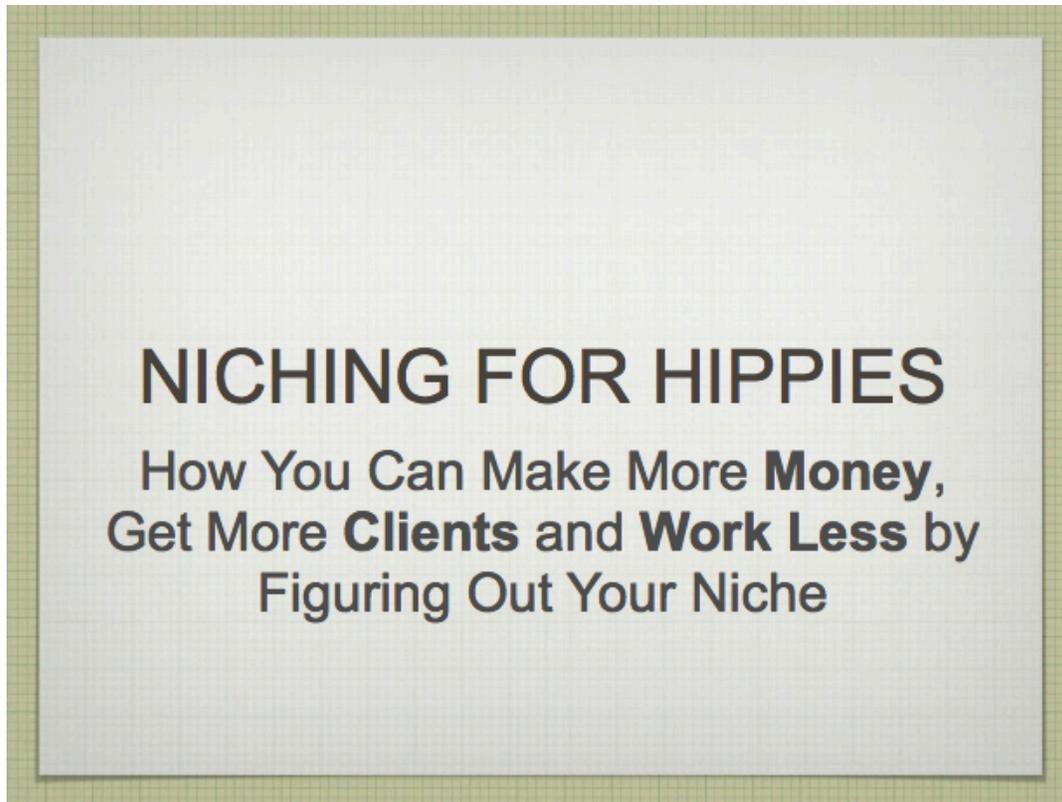




"Niching 101 For Hippies"

Webinar Transcript

Recorded July 5th, 2012



So, officially, everyone welcome to the call, *Niching for Hippies 101: How You Can Make More Money, Get More Clients and Work Less By Figuring Out Your Niche*. That's really the promise of this call and this whole idea of Niching, that by figuring out our niche and really honing in on who we most want to work with, everything gets easier. We tend to make more money, we get more clients and we don't need to work as hard.

It doesn't mean that we won't work hard, but it means that we're better rewarded for the work. Instead of putting in ten units of effort to get one unit of reward, it might even flip so we're ultimately putting in one unit of effort to get ten units of reward. All of that, in my experience, often comes back to this question of Niching.

If you go to slide two, we have a few logistics. Here's the link in case you ever get knocked off on your computer or something. It's a link you can go to and get to this page. If you want to Tweet this Webinar, *Niching for Hippies*, just use that hashtag. You can also add me on Twitter, it would be lovely to see you there, @tadhargrave. Feel free to follow me on Twitter if you would like.

If you go to the next slide, slide three. Commenting is a little bit tricky. Below my bio, you'll see a place that says 'Leave a message'. If you click that, it'll open up to what you

LOGISTICS

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see below that on slide three there, where you see the icons for Facebook, Twitter, Google +. I recommend signing in with one of those if you can. If you don't, sometimes it registers your comments as somebody else, for some reason. You can type in your name and your email, but make sure you do sign in, otherwise it could make your comment from someone else.

COMMENTING





CONNECT WITH     OR PICK A NAME:

The password is **hippy**, if you're struggling with the password. Just say hello. At the top, by the way, you'll see under the comment thing, it says 'Discussion community'. If you



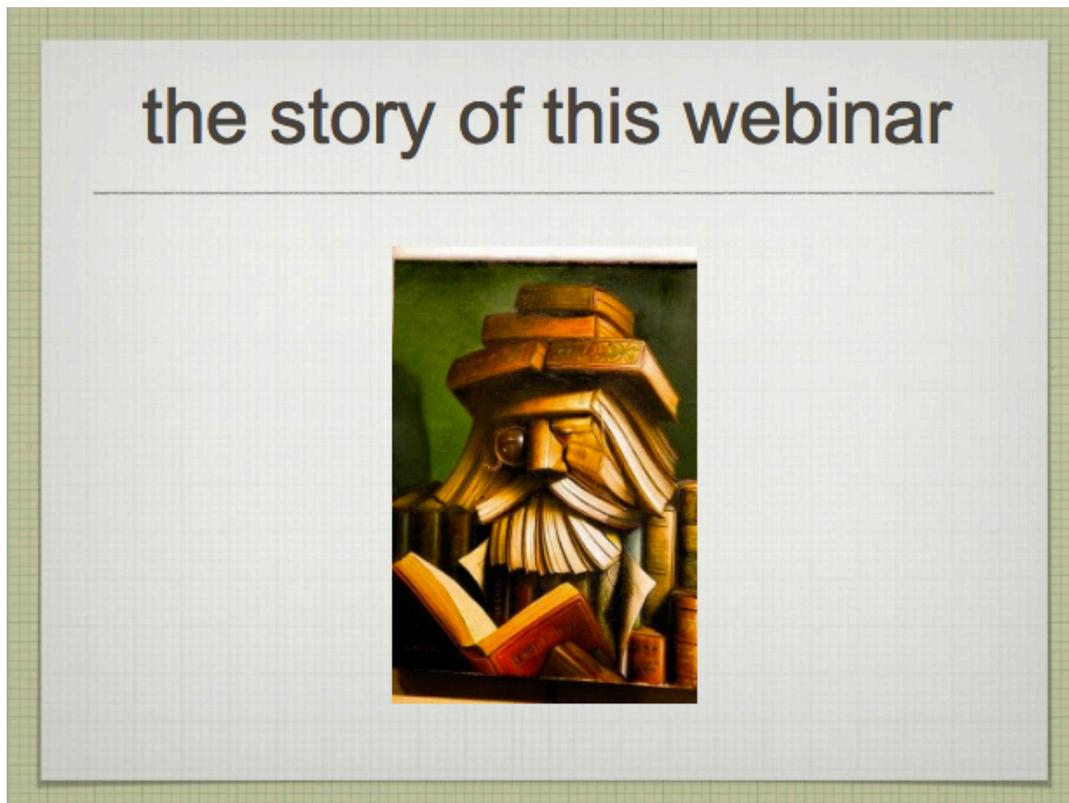
click discussion, you can see the comments by best, newest, or oldest. I recommend clicking **newest** so that the new ones will show up on top.

Here's a bit about my story. It's interesting. It's really just my story as it relates to Niching, I guess. I've been a marketing nerd since high school. I just got interested in it and fascinated by it.

When I started, I immediately had a niche, instead of trying to reach everybody. I just had a few of my friends who were really into green, holistic things. They were struggling with marketing. Sometimes I didn't realize it, but I could see it when they would articulate what they do that they were struggling with it.

I just wanted to help them with their stuff. It felt really good to have those conversations. Automatically, I was focused on conscious, green, holistic businesses. From there, I noticed that about half of my groups were holistic practitioners, and so I thought, "Why don't I design a workshop just for holistic practitioners?"

What started out as a small project kind of ended up being the bulk of my work for the last few years. Recently, I've been getting into permaculture folks and supporting them.



Sometimes with a niche, you just start to notice who is already showing up, who is already paying attention to you and what you're doing. Sometimes that can be the most obvious sort of niche.

That's kind of my story and how it happened. In terms of this Webinar . . . as I've been doing my workshops over the years, it's become really clear how important Niching is. I sort of had a sense of this when I started getting into marketing and learning about it, but what honestly made it most clear was just seeing people struggle with it in workshops and working with them.

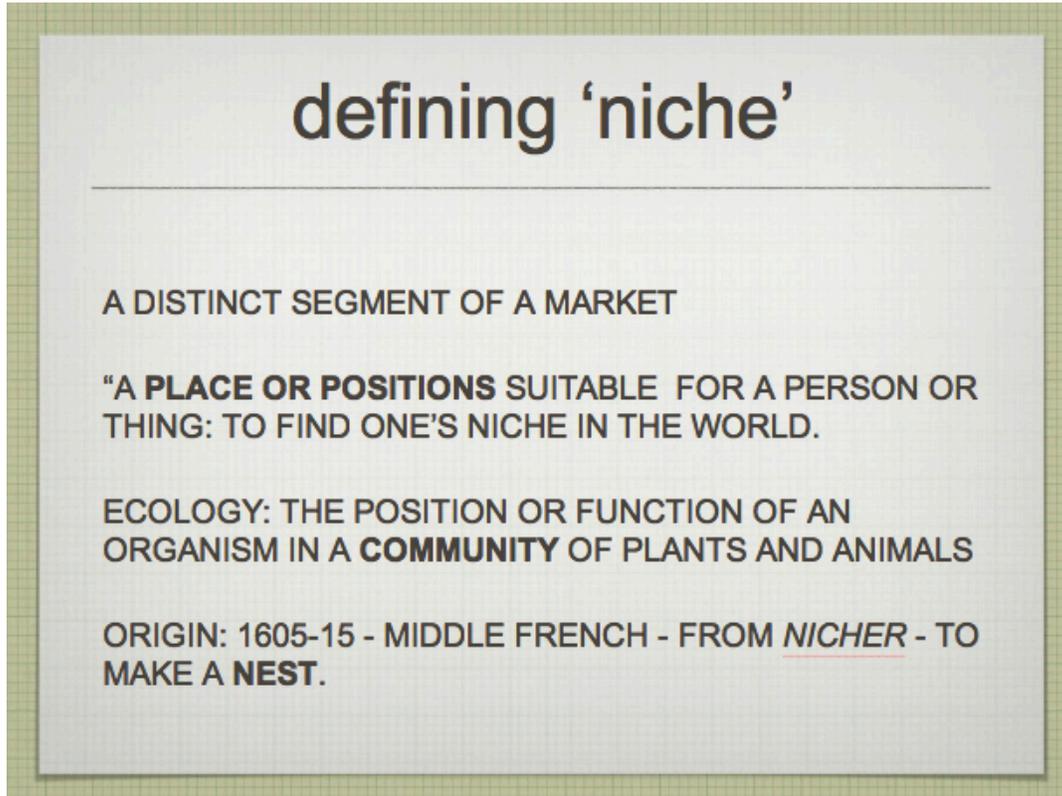
I would try to help, and they would just want some cool tools and tactics and I would see again and again how the tactics weren't working until they knew who to hook it up with. We would sit there and our brains would hurt, and everything would be fuzzy and we would struggle to come up with a really good strategy. Eventually, I would realize that we had to go back to the niche. Once we did, we either chose something or we just clarified what was already there, and everything got so much easier again and again and again.

If you go to my three-day workshop, two of the days are about this question of clarity, who you are trying to reach. I've just seen how important this is. From that, I wanted to

create an e-book, which was the initial impulse, sort of everything I know; my treatise, my thesis on Niching, and putting it all in one place.

Two years ago, I had that inspiration and that idea and I just hadn't done it. I thought, "Maybe if I organize a six-week Webinar where I could walk people through it, that would give me the motivation and structure to do this thing I want to do". I decided in the end on a six-week thing, because I found that Niching is very hard to do overnight. Sometimes the inspiration will just hit you, but it often takes some time to work out, which we'll talk about later.

I decided to do this Webinar as a sort of intro to the six-week Webinar, but also as a chance to express the core of what I think about Niching. It's been interesting creating this 90-minute Webinar, because it's helped me get a lot clearer about how I see Niching. I'm really excited. I hope it will be really valuable to see what has been pretty good so



far.

Let's go to the next slide.

If we define Niching as 'a distinct segment of a market', we're taking kind of a narrow view, but that's how people usually look at it. While I would say that's true, I'd like to open up a broader definition and understanding of what a niche is or at least can be.

I looked it up on dictionary.com some of the definitions, and it was so interesting what I found. A niche is a place or position suitable for a person or thing; to find one's niche in the world or an ecology; the position of function of an organism in a community of plants and animals. I think those are really important things to consider, because I'm not just looking at the niche as this group you're pursuing out there, but it's also your place in the world.

For example, there are certain insects that only operate from ground level to ten feet in the air, and they never go higher than ten feet in the air. Or there are some that go from ten to twenty feet, and that is where they operate. It's not just a matter of who you're trying to reach, though that's the core thing, but it's really your place in the world. What's the niche in the ecosystem that you fit best in, that brings out your strengths the best?

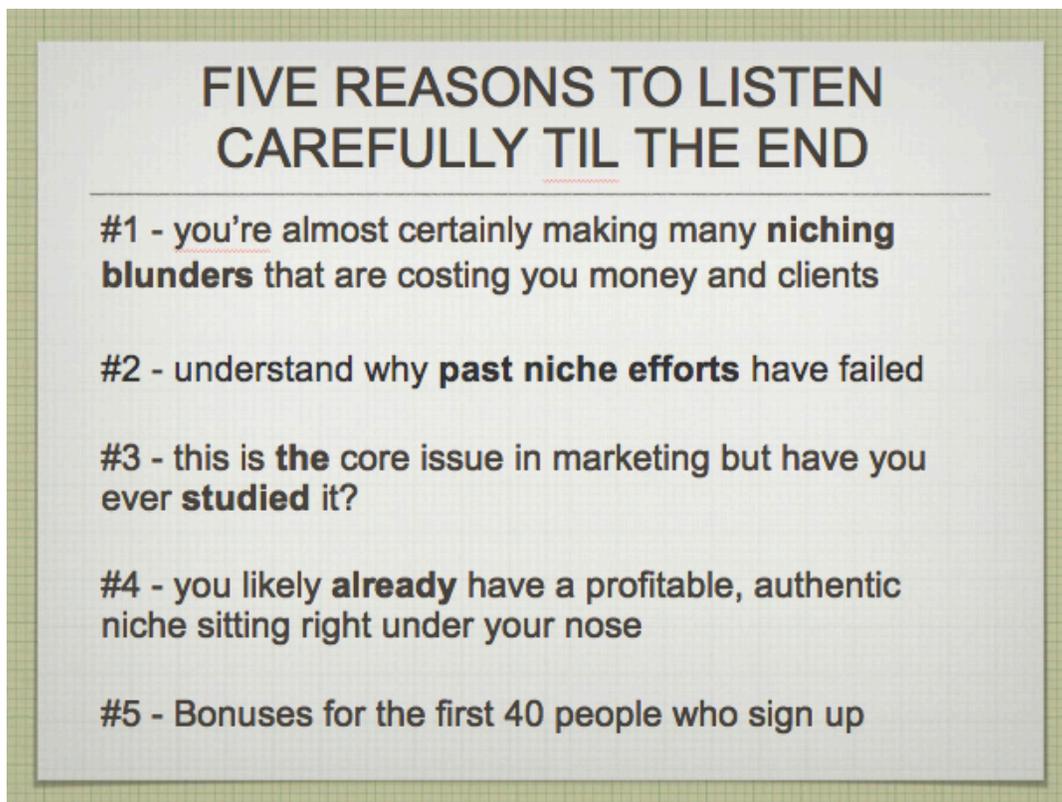
What's interesting is that when I was researching this, I had never thought of the entomology view or the origins of the word niche. It actually comes from this sixteenth-century middle French word, the verb *nicher*, which means to make a nest. That's how I think about Niching in a way. You're kind of making your nest. You're making your place



in the world where you operate from your greatest strength and your greatest creativity, that feels like home for you. That's one way to think about it, just like on the next slide where you'll see a picture of a nest.

The shorthand that we're going to be looking at is this question of **who** you are trying to reach. That's the easiest way, and ultimately everything seems to come back to this. There are some other ways that you could look at Niching. It could be what you do, it could be **how** you do it, it might be that you do something differently than anybody else in your community. It might be that you do something that everybody else does, but you do it in a different way so it's how you do it that is different.

It might be that **where** you do it is different, you have a more convenient location or a more remote location. It might be that **when** you do it is different, you do it during different hours that are more convenient, like early morning or late at night when no one else does it. It might be **why** you do it, your story is different. It can be any of those to help you find your niche.



Ultimately, it's going to get back to this question of who you are trying to reach. This ends up being the shorthand when we're looking at Niching. If you go to the next slide, you'll see the five reasons to listen carefully until the end of this call.

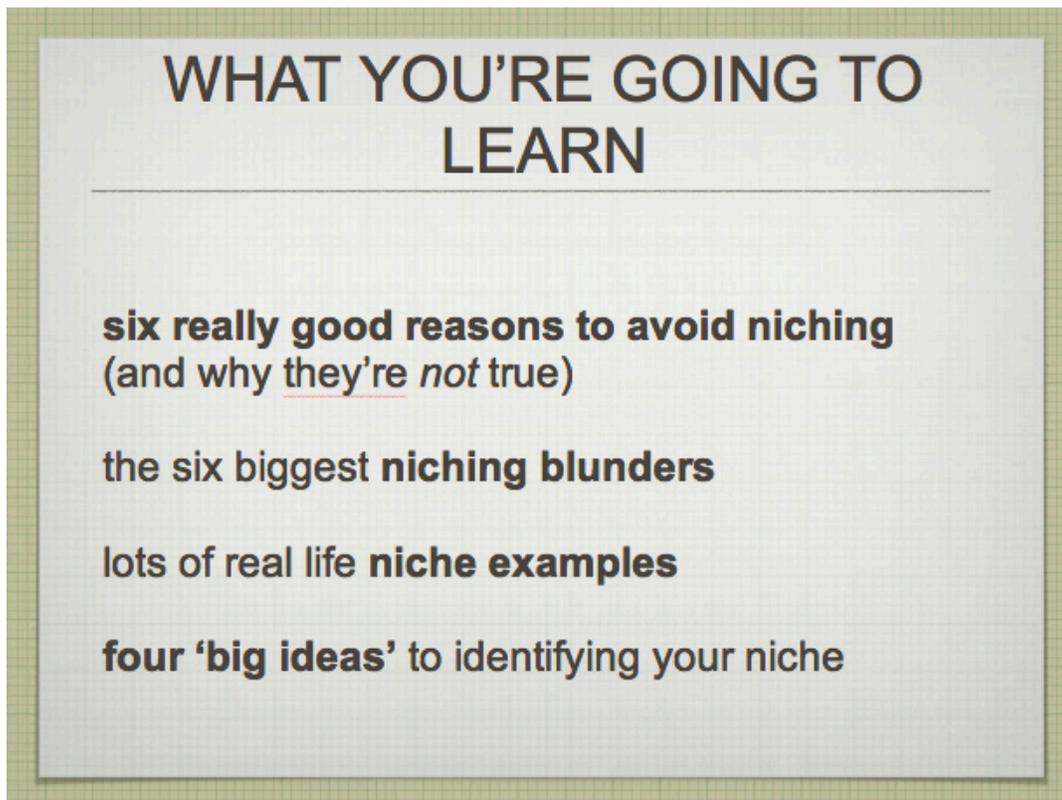
Number one: you're almost certainly making one of the Niching blunders that are costing you clients and money. I'm not saying that as a fear tactic, it just seems to be the truth.

I've seen this again and again in my workshops. People come in and most people, I would say 95 percent at my workshops, are struggling and making some classic Niching blunders, which we're going to cover and help you identify during this Webinar.

Number two, this Webinar will hopefully help you to understand why past Niching efforts have failed.

Number three, I'm going to make the case that the core issue in marketing is if you've taken the time to study it, to really look at it.

Number four, you've likely got some already profitable niches sitting right under your nose, but sometimes we're too close to see things, too close to our own situation. My guess is that you've got something that would be just perfect, at least for right now, that you can focus on.



Number five, there are some bonuses for the first 40 people who sign up, and I'll be talking about those at the end. That's why you should listen.

There are four big things you're going to learn. First of all, you're going to learn **six really good reasons to avoid Niching** and why they're not true. These are sort of six

fears or myths that operate around Niching and why people avoid it, and you're going to learn why those are actually not true.

You're going to learn the **six biggest niching blunders**. You're going to get a lot of **real-life niche examples**, plus you're going to get **my four big ideas** to identifying your



niche. These are things that are so new that I haven't even shared them in most workshops that I've done. I've really just clarified them in getting ready for this Webinar. For a lot of people, these ideas will be a bit of a breakthrough.

If you go to the next slide, you'll see the symptoms of a lack of niche clarity. This is interesting, because people often don't realize that the reason they're struggling in marketing has to do with this question of who they're trying to reach, and the fact that they're fuzzy about it.

It's like if somebody had headaches all the time, and they didn't realize it was because they were dehydrated, let's say. They would do all these things and take painkillers when they could have addressed the real thing and drank more water and feel a lot better.

It's the same thing with Niching: people struggle for years and they try all these different approaches and they think that all they need are more tactics and better approaches. They

think maybe they should be using social media and blogging, learning better sales skills. All those are great, but often it comes down to just a lack of clarity around their niche.

The symptoms are there, but they haven't learned to *interpret* the symptoms like that. I'm sure you've seen this in your own type of work a lot, that people don't get the root cause of their issue. They have all the symptoms of it, but they don't know that headaches mean dehydration.

How would you know if this were true? How would you know if niching was really the root cause of your marketing woes? I'll tell you there are a few symptoms that show up again and again and again. Here are a few of the big ones . . . when people are like, "I'm just trying to get my name out there," that's often a classic symptom. It'll get your name out there, but to whom? If you couldn't tell me a typical day of your client, when they wake up, what they think about, what they do, what keeps them up late at night; if you couldn't tell me where you would find your ideal clients, where they hangout, who's already connected to them, where they are always spending their time, money and attention, if you couldn't tell me what you do in ten words or thirty seconds at the most, it's obvious that there's a lack of clarity around your niche.

If you're not in love with your clients, if you're not having fun, if you just kind of run out of marketing ideas and you feel like you've tried everything and you're out of ideas, or



you just don't have enough clients and you're not making enough money, there's a really good chance it has to do with a lack of clarity about your niche.

If you followed my work for any period of time at all, you will be familiar with this picture above. This picture, as you can see, is Island A and Island B. Island A has this person who is very sad, and they're sad because they have some sort of a problem, they've got some symptoms they don't like. This is them in the future on Island B, where they're really happy, where they want to be, because there is some result that they're craving.

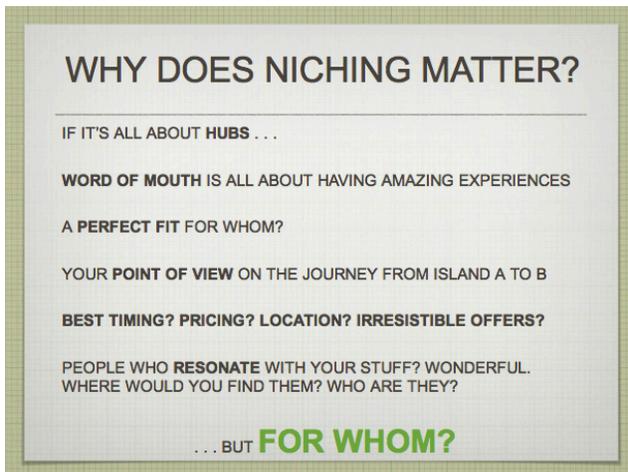
They really desperately want to make this journey from island A to island B, and your business is the boat that can take them from Island A to Island B. It takes them on a journey. What they're really concerned about is the journey more than the boat. This is the classic blunder that most people make in their marketing: all they do is talk about their boat.

There are actually very few people who really just want to hear about your boat. In fact, those people who *do* want to hear about your boat, the only reason they want to hear about your boat is because they already know or believe that your boat can help them on a particular journey.

Clarifying this journey is really the heart of marketing and the heart of Niching. This question of Niching ultimately comes down to Island A. Who is this person on this island, and what is their problem? What is it they are struggling with? There are a lot of journeys they could be struggling with. Maybe it's the journey from 'I'm unhealthy', to 'I'm healthy,' the journey from 'I'm broke' to 'I have money', from 'I'm struggling in relationships' to 'I have great relationships', 'I've got a deep sense of spiritual stress' to 'I feel totally at peace'.

Whatever the journey is, it's really good to be clear about it. We're going to come back to

this metaphor several times during the call, because so much around Niching relates to it.



So, why does Niching matter? I know you're on this call and you already get it, but I think people don't really fully appreciate the full implications that Niching has.

Let me break this down. If marketing is all about **hubs**, which it is, the niche becomes important. The hub is the center on a wheel. The hub is the place

where all the spokes connect. When we're looking at marketing, we can try to reach people cold, where they've never heard of us before and we just try to make a great first impression. Or you can be introduced by people who already know them, who are kind of hubs in their community, people who are very well-connected, very well-respected.

For example, I went to Ottawa to do a workshop. I had never been to Ottawa before. This was a couple years ago. A woman named Heather Garret hosted me. We had a hundred people sign up for the workshop. I spent maybe two or three hours. In two or three hours of my effort there were a hundred people in a town I had never been to. I couldn't have done that myself. It was because she was a hub in that community and she helped spread the word.

Everything I know about marketing comes down to hubs. But, even if that is true, that hubs are where it's at for marketing, who are these hubs for? There are hubs for all sorts of communities. When people try to say, "I want to be a hub for everybody," there's no such thing as a hub for everybody. There are just hubs for particular communities. The most important principle in marketing, in my mind, this idea of hubs, is all about niche and word of mouth.

Most marketing involves **word of mouth**. It's the dominant force in marketing, always has been, always will be. You probably get most of your business from word of mouth. But if word of mouth is all about people having this amazing experience and wanting to tell everyone about it, who is the amazing experience for?

For some of you on this call, you love camping. The thought of being outdoors, roughing it in a tent, you love it. For some of you, that would be hell. What's an amazing experience for one person is not so amazing for someone else. I talk a lot in marketing about this idea of identifying who is a **perfect fit**. Instead of trying to convince people to buy from you, finding out who is a perfect fit is so much easier.

Still, it's a matter of creating these offers that are a perfect fit for whom?

Your **point of view** is a really critical point of marketing, your point of view about this journey from Island A to Island B. The journey itself, being able to say, "I help people who are unhealthy get healthy," as a general thing establishes the relevance of why anyone would pay attention to you and want to learn more about your boat.

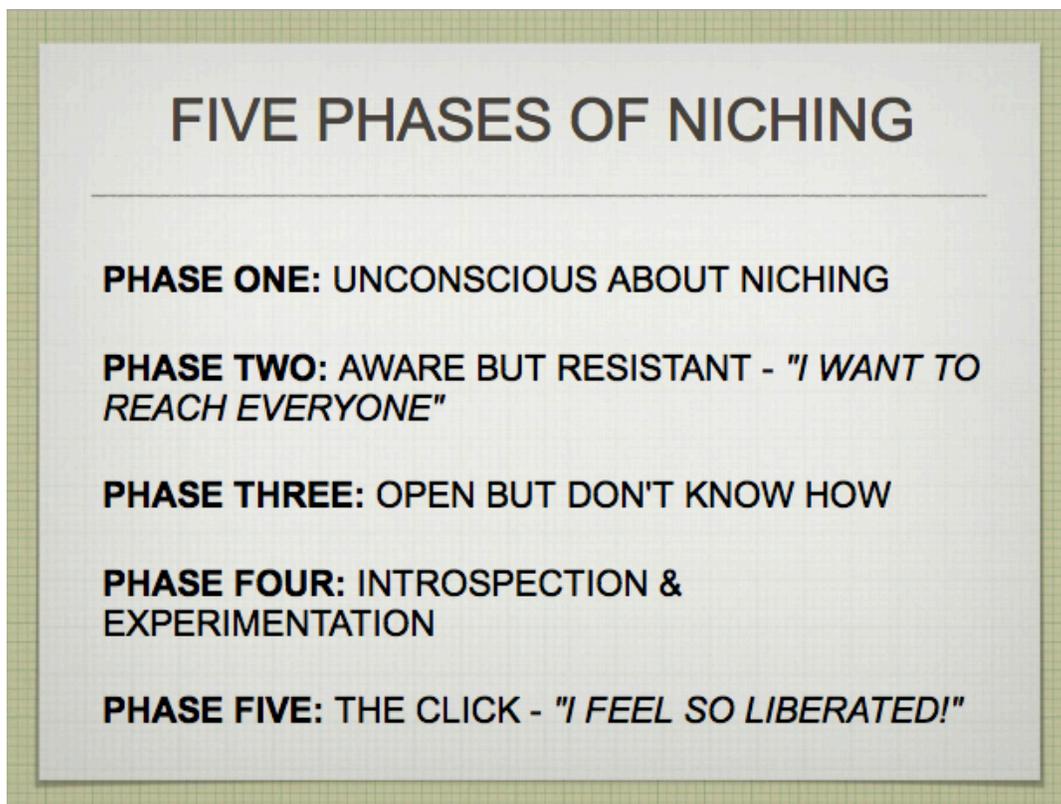
Relevance comes from the journey, but **credibility** comes from the point of view, their trust in your map from Island A to Island B, their trust in your perspective, your philosophy, your system that you have created to get people from one island to the other.

Your point of view is the core of your credibility, but the point of view is entirely based on having a particular journey. Otherwise, you're just left with your point of view and

your perspective about your boat and how awesome it is and people just don't care that much. What's going to build their trust is the credibility of the journey, but the journey of which person struggling with which issue? Point of view goes back to this question of niche.

Trying to figure out your best timing, best pricing, location, how to create irresistible offers comes back to who you're trying to reach. People will tell me, "My niche is just people who resonate with my stuff." That's wonderful, but where did you find them? Who are these people that resonate with your stuff? It always comes back to this.

Next slide, we'll see the five phases of Niching. This is what I am finding over the years:



there tend to be predictable phases that people go through.

Phase one is people being unconscious about Niching. They haven't even heard about it, it's not a thing on their mind.

Phase two, they're aware of it, but they're resistant. They still kind of want to reach everybody.

Phase three, they're now open. They realize that reaching everybody is not an option, but they don't know how to do it and they feel kind of stuffed. They're just not doing much about it, often because they just don't know how.

Phase four, introspection and experimentation. This is where things really start to happen. This is where they say, "I'm aware I need to do it," and they start really thinking about who they want to work with in a much deeper way and testing things out and trying new things. That can take years for some people.

Phase five, there's the click where they just get it and they have a niche that feels really wonderful and authentic for them.

What I often hear from them is this phrase, "I feel so liberated." I have never heard anyone say, "I feel trapped." When they come up with a niche that is really authentic, they feel so liberated. I share these phases for a few reasons.

First of all, I would love for you to write in the comments below, where it says 'Leave a message', just letting us know which phase you think you're in. I'd love for you to post which stage you are stuck at.

Is it phase three or phase four? My guess is for most of you, you're stuck at phase four. Everybody seems to be stuck on phase four. That's been my experience. Most people are somewhere between stages three and four.

The reason I bring up these phases, as you're sharing that, has to do with a few things.

Number one, you can't skip phases. You sort of have to go through each of these phases. Phase four probably takes the longest, especially if you're trying to do it alone. You can't skip any of these phases.

The second point about it is phases three and four often have so much **pressure** about them. There's so much conversation around Niching and finding your tribe, your audience, your perfect customer or however you say it. There can be this pressure and sort of a guilt of not having this worked out. People beat themselves up for not having it all sorted. We really want to explore Niching in a way that's not just effective but also pressure-free, easy and fun.

But the biggest thing I want to flag about these phases is **how hard it is to go through these phases alone.**

If you've struggled for years around Niching and you're wondering why, I would submit that the big reason people struggle around Niching is because they're trying to do it by themselves and it's just really hard to go through these phases. It's hard to get over your

resistance just by yourself if you can't talk to somebody who has been there and can reassure you. It's certainly hard to do the introspection by ourselves, just because we are so close to ourselves. It's hard for us to get a really good perspective on ourselves.

Most entrepreneurs do *everything* by themselves by necessity often. That can be our greatest strength, but it can also be our biggest weakness, because we have a limited perspective on things. Here you are getting some support, so good for you. Let's go to the next slide.

Six good reasons to fear niching. At phase two, people are aware, but they're resistant. This often is sneaky, because it holds people back. They don't even realize how resistant they are to Niching, so they think they're at phase three, but really they are at phase two because they are so nervous about it. Here are the six reasons people tend to fear Niching, and just see if any of these feel resonant for you as we go through them.



REASON #1 TO FEAR NICHING

YOU DON'T WANT TO FEEL CONTRIVED AND 'PACKAGED'.

A photograph of a man in a dark suit, white shirt, and red tie. He is wearing glasses and has a confident, slightly mischievous expression. He is pointing his right index finger directly at the viewer.

REASON #1: the first reason people avoid Niching is they don't want to feel contrived and packaged. They don't want feel slick like some salesperson, and they don't want to feel fake. There is a fear that if they take this niche they will look so polished and slick, and they don't want that.

REASON #2 TO FEAR NICHING

YOU DON'T WANT TO SAY 'NO' TO PEOPLE. YOU LOVE THE THOUGHT OF HELPING EVERYONE YOU CAN.

A graphic of a red circle with a thick border and a white center. The word "NO" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font in the center of the white circle.

REASON #2: you don't want to **say no to people**; you love the thought of helping everyone you can. People are often scared that if they pick a niche they will have to turn people away and that would feel awful.

REASON #3: you don't want to miss out on all the **variety** of the clients you enjoy. It's like having all these colors of crayons and having to pick this one forever and that would feel terrible.

REASON #4: people are scared that if they narrow their focus, then they're going to **lose out on business opportunities** and go broke.

The fear that they are going to pick this niche and only work for single dads going through a divorce, then the next day someone asks, "Can you get involved with this business opportunity that's not about that niche." People are afraid of saying, "I just chose my niche, now I have to say no to all of that and lose all this money and turn down all these opportunities."

REASON #5: what if I change in a few years? I'm an acorn right now, but maybe I'll be an oak then. Will this niche still be relevant. Five years ago I was a different person living in a different place in a different relationship with a different job, so if I pick this niche, is that just going to be a lot of work for nothing? That's a great thing to consider.

REASON #6: where do I even start? Even if I have all these great ideas, where will I even begin with them? Those are the six that people have. I would be curious to hear which of these is your biggest fear. Just put in the comments which reason is the thing that would hold you back the most from Niching. Let's just take a minute for people to do that.

Where are you stuck? Someone just wrote on the wall, "None of these are holding me back right now. The advantage of being older is that I've struggled with bad fits in several areas of life and no longer want to do it."

That's such a great way of saying it, because it really *is* about finding good fits, finding out who is a good fit for you and not settling for anything less. Thank you everybody for the honesty around that. That's great. Let's go through these one by one. I have a funny relationship with these fears, because they are all untrue in my experience.

REASON #3 TO FEAR NICHING

YOU DON'T WANT TO LOSE OUT ON ALL THE AMAZING VARIETY OF CLIENTS YOU ENJOY.



REASON #4 TO FEAR NICHING

SCARED THAT IF YOU NARROW YOUR FOCUS THEN YOU'LL LOSE OUT ON BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES AND GO BROKE.



REASON #5 TO FEAR NICHING

WHAT IF I CHANGE IN A FEW YEARS?



REASON #6 TO FEAR NICHING

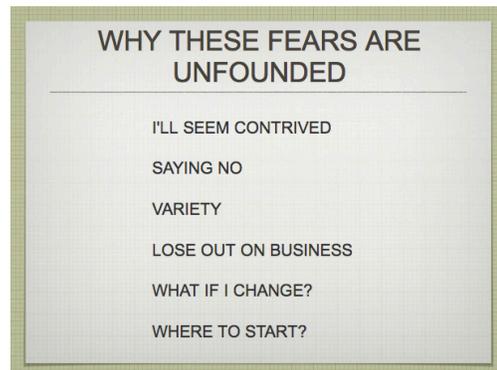
where to start?



They're all oftentimes the opposite of reality, but they're the kind of things that if they *were* true would be very good things to consider. In fact, I would be more worried if people *didn't* get concerned about these things, because if we're going to be smart about how we run our businesses, we should be considering this stuff.

On the next slide you'll see them all again.

Let's go through them one at a time. The first one is being scared of being **contrived and seeming fake and slick**. That's a great concern to have because none of us want that. We would love to have a more organic down-to-earth feel about our businesses, instead of so contrived. It's an important thing to consider because if you were to make a business decision that had you seeming contrived, you might repel a lot of the clients you would ideally love to work with. It's a really good fear to have.



Here's what I've noticed, and see if this feels true for you too: the businesses that seem to me the most contrived and ungrounded and slick and hyped-up are the ones that say 'We can help everybody. Come to this workshop. It will help you with every issue you have in your life.' The ones that overpromise in that way because they are promising everything to everybody, to me that is actually the thing that seems to land us as the most untrustworthy.

What I found is that the ones that really focus on a particular area and really say 'We specialize in this,' those are the ones that come across as very grounded and down-to-earth. The relevance is immediately established in general.

The second fear is saying no. I want you to write this down because this is such a freeing notion and much more based on reality than the fear. The fear is that if you pick a niche you have to say no to everybody who's not exactly in that niche. That's a terrifying feeling and you would be smart to be concerned about that. But here's another perspective on it, so write this down: you can be explicit without being exclusive. I'll say it again: you can be explicit without being exclusive.

If you think about it like playing darts, there's the dartboard and in the center there's the bull's eye, and that's worth the most points. Let's just say the number of points represents how good the fit is. As long as you get the dart somewhere on the board you're still getting points. The closer you get it to the center the more points it's worth, the better a fit it is.

You can be explicit without being exclusive.

Here's what I mean by that. You might decide to focus your efforts on single dads going through a divorce. That's who I want to work with. You can be very explicit about that. All of your marketing materials, your business cards could say that. That's what you could say when you do talks and introduce yourself at parties. Your website and everything can say this, and yet if you chose that, twenty-five to thirty percent of your clients will have nothing to do with that or just be loosely related.

How is that possible?

You can be explicit without being exclusive.

Just because you explicitly name a group as someone you want to work with doesn't mean you have to turn everyone else away. It doesn't mean you have to say no to people. What will happen is you're working with this single dad who is going through a divorce and often because you focus on helping them you get very good at it, and they say *'This was so useful to me. Could you help my friend? They're struggling with something to and I think what you do could really help them.'*

You don't have to say no. You can tell them *'Yeah, sure.'* You actually don't have to say no to anyone ever. The fact that you focus on a particular group makes you much more attractive to that group, and they will be the ones who spread the word for you, rather than you having to try to get everybody. Even if you're not getting people who are directly in the bull's eye, you'll be getting people who are close and you can decide how far you are willing to go before it is not a fit.

With variety it's a very similar thing.

Again, you can be explicit without being exclusive.

You'd be surprised how much **variety** you can have. You don't have to have just one niche. You might have more than one. With the number of projects you can do for each niche, you'd be surprised how much variety you can still have.

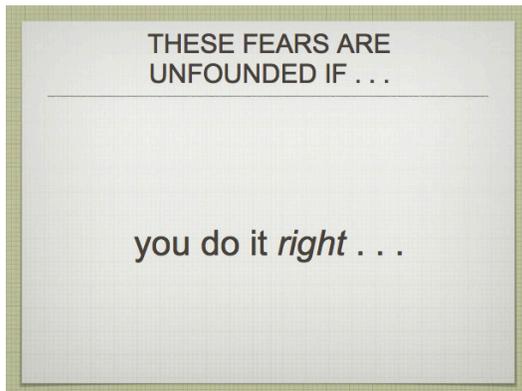
Losing out on business, to me, is the most crazy or wild one because it is such the opposite of my experience.

It's often the un-niched businesses that tend to go broke. It's the businesses that are trying to be everything to everybody that struggle the most and have the hardest time because they can't figure out how to get word of mouth for everything they do. It's hard to articulate their point of view on what makes them different. The un-niched businesses

tend to go broke. The ones that really focus on a particular niche, those projects tend to be the most successful.

But what about the question of “What if I change?” Well, you *will* change. You can count on that. In five years you will be a different person, but when people really do that phase four, which is why you don’t want to skip phase four, and they really do the introspection, they really do some experimentation, they often come up with some niches that are really deeply authentic. The more authentic the niche is, the less dramatic the shift will be down the road.

Here’s another thought. Let’s say you spent ten years creating this very niched business and after ten years you’re like “*I can’t stand this niche any more. I want out.*” A niched business like that is going to be a lot easier to sell. It’s going to be way more attractive for someone to buy.



For this question of where to start, well you’re on the call, so let’s keep moving.

Next slide: these fears are all unfounded if you do it right. If you go about niching the right way and really pick an authentic niche, these fears are unfounded. When people try to do this on their own, by themselves, with no learning like you’re doing right now, they often struggle a lot and the fears become real, but it’s just because the way they are Niching has created the fears.

Then they say their Niching doesn’t work right. What stops people is that there are a lot of blunders they go through.

On the next slide you will see the title The Six Biggest Blunders. There are six blunders that I see holding people back in their Niching.

These aren’t anything I learned from a book and these aren’t things that I learned from anyone else. These are things I have noticed in my workshops over the last decade as the things that keep coming up. With each of these blunders, people think they’ve got it and they’re actually screwing it up in a way.

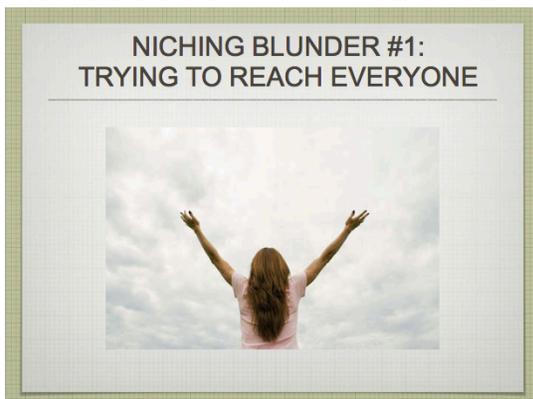
Slides 24 - 31 were a brief pause for a charming commercial message for my six week Niching for Hippies virtual coaching program. You can learn more about it here in it's current form at:

[http://
marketingforhippies.com/
niching-for-hippies/](http://marketingforhippies.com/niching-for-hippies/)



Again, these are blunders I see time and again in my workshops. Part of the benefit of figuring out these niching blunders is that it will help you figure out where you're stuck. These are things I see again and again. If you can identify them, just sometimes the awareness of it is curative. You just go, "*I'm doing that,*" and it can help a lot.

Let's move to the next slide. We'll take these piece by piece.



NICHING BLUNDER #1: trying to reach everyone. Here's this lady with her arms open to the sky, and she's open to everything. This is what I see time and time again with people around Niching. This is the classic thing. This can help anyone. My boat can take anyone anywhere. This is the first thing that we have to let go of. There's no basis in reality for this. You can't reach everyone. Not everyone is going to like you personally or like what you do. There are so many reasons why you are never going to be able to reach everyone.

It's kind of this illusion. It's ironic, because when people resist any limitations that they would put on themselves, any restrictions they put on their businesses, it is the most constricting thing they can do. But when people decide on a focus, it's actually liberating. It's actually liberating when people choose some sort of a focus, even if it's just for a project. You can't reach everyone. Let that idea go.

NICHING BLUNDER #2: fuzzy niches. You see this picture below, and it's kind of fuzzy. You can't make the people out, and that's what it is for a lot of people. In the beginning, people will say, "*You're right. I can't reach everybody. That's foolish. I won't try to do that, so I've got a niche.*" Then they'll name something. These are three things I

NICHING BLUNDER #2:
FUZZY NICHES



hear a lot. I want you to notice if you say these things, because these are things that sound like niches, but they're actually not.

The first one people will say is, "*I work with people who are stressed.*" The challenge is that stress is just a human condition. Can you name anyone who's not stressed? There are different types of stress, and if they were to focus on a particular type of stress, then we

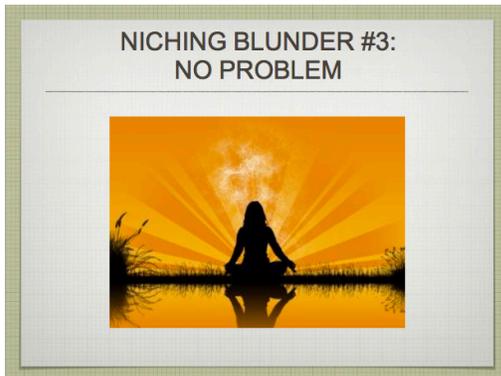
might have something: job stress, the stress of divorce, the stress of teenage kids. Those are very particular kinds of stress, but stress in general is just a fact of life, so again, we're back to everybody. We're back to all of humanity as a niche.

The second thing I hear a lot is, "*I work with people who are in transition*". Again, transition is just a fact of life. It's just something that happens. We're back to everybody, because everything in life is a transition. There's nothing clear about that. We talk about transitions, and there could be the transition of divorce, the transition of retirement, the transition of empty nesting, the transition of a breakup, the transition of getting married. Those are all transitions, and if we pick a specific one that would at least be a beginning. But transitions include everybody.

The third one I hear is "*people who are open to change, who are ready to do the work, ready to take responsibility*". When people say they want to work with people who are ready to take responsibility and who are open to change, that's actually an important thing we're going to talk about when we talk about big circles and little circles in a minute. It's a good quality of an ideal client, but here's the challenge with it: most people think they're open to change, most people think they take responsibility in their lives, and yet they don't. It's a fuzzy niche.

We don't want to have a niche that's fuzzy. We want to have something that's clear so that when we say it, people can actually get a clear picture in their mind of us instead of a fuzzy picture or no picture. If somebody says, "I work with people who are really open to change in their life," I don't get a picture. But if somebody says, "I work with single dads who are going through a divorce," I'll probably know somebody, and I'll know if I'm that person or not. It's immediately clear. The confused mind says no, but the clear mind might say yes.

NICHING BLUNDER #3: No Problem. Check out this lady here. She's meditating. This lady clearly has it together. The sun is rising right in front of her, she's meditating in nature. She is sitting on top of water, she's floating on the water. She is clearly enlightened. She has spiritual sparkles coming out of her head. This woman clearly has it together. Wouldn't you love for all of your clients to be like that?



That's the idea. We just want all of our clients to be these enlightened, perfect people, which is great, and it's wonderful to have standards of who you want to work with. But the question I have with this picture is, "What's her problem?" What's Island A for her? Where is she struggling that you could actually help her with? This is where so many people fall down, that there's no problem that they name that they're helping people with. There are no symptoms they are addressing. That's a critical part of the

niche.

Think about Island A. It's a person on an island with a particular problem. Some people don't name a problem. They're just like, "*I work with single moms who do a lot of yoga and meditating.*" I'm like, "*Great, but why do they want to get on this boat? Why are they trying to get off Island A in the first place?*"

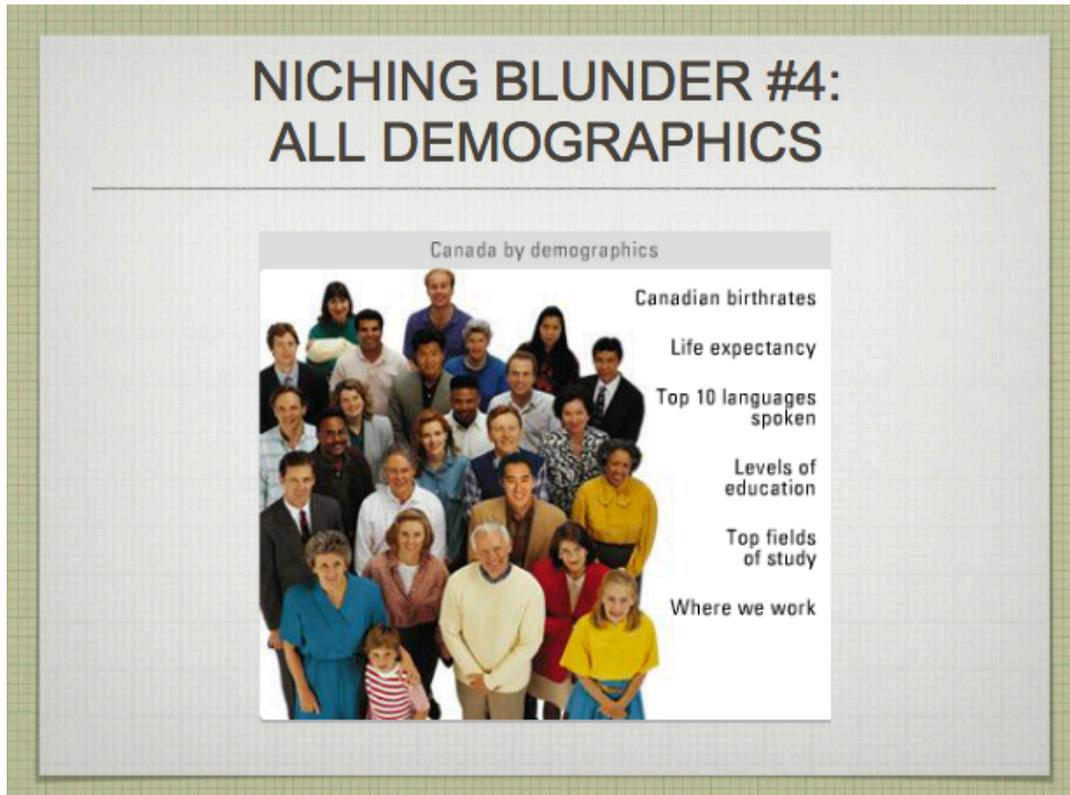
The subtler, sneakier trick that happens here is the idea of **diagnoses versus the symptom**. Again, with headaches you might know that headaches are really about dehydration, but consider which ad might be more effective. One ad says, "*Do you suffer from chronic migraines?*" The next one says, "*Are you dehydrated?*" Do you get that the person that has chronic headaches will be attracted to the ad that speaks to headaches right away, rather than the one about dehydration?

People will say, "*People just need to be more balanced, they need to be more grounded.*" Your thoughts about what people need to be, how they should be, are irrelevant in the initial part. It's your point of view, which is extremely relevant later, but in the beginning your thoughts that people should be more grounded, they should be more loving and more forgiving, less judgmental, is your diagnoses about them.

Maybe they're going through relationship problems and you're like, "*That's because they're so judgmental.*" That doesn't help them. That doesn't help your marketing, in terms of reaching them. Imagine that you're talking with somebody and you're struggling in a relationship and they're like, "*That's because you're so judgmental.*" Consider how open or not open you are to that person for that comment. We don't want to lead in our marketing with our diagnosis of their situation. We want to lead with an empathy, sort of an understanding of "*That's hard. I get it.*"

People often miss that in their marketing.

NICHING BLUNDER #4: all demographics. You'll see this list of demographics in Canada, where I'm from. It lists Canadian birth rates, life expectancy, top ten languages spoken, levels of education, top fields of study, where we work. These are all examples of demographics. You'll have your gender, ethnic background, level of income, type of profession. All those are outer things, external things. These are graphics.



A lot of people, when they think about niche marketing, that's all they think about, the demographic. There's more to Niching than just demographics. There's also the psychographics, the internal things, which can often be the problems that people experience. People will say, "I know my niche," and it will sound so clear, but it misses out on crucial things.

Your target market may be black males ages forty to fifty living in Seattle making \$60,000 to \$80,000 a year. That all sounds so clear. The demographics are so tight. You can picture that person. But what is left out is anything internal to them, like what communities they are a part of, what scenes they are a part of, what they believe, what they value. It makes it much harder to find them just based on demographics.

NICHING BLUNDER #5: umbrella labels. There are a lot of umbrella labels that we use for our clients that are really meaningful for us but not that useful in marketing. An umbrella label might be 'Cultural Creatives'. If you've read Paul Ray's book about the

**NICHING BLUNDER #5:
UMBRELLA LABELS**



cultural creative, that term makes a ton of sense. If you haven't, you have no idea what it means. It's useful for you to sort of get that umbrella sense of who you want to work with overall, but it doesn't resonate in the marketing world.

You could say you work with people who are in the Creative Class. If you've read the book about the Creative Class that will make a lot of sense. If you haven't, it's just jargon. I work with conscious

entrepreneurs, but nobody wakes up in the morning and says, "I'm so glad to be a conscious entrepreneur, glad to be a part of a creative class today. Isn't it good to be a Cultural Creative?" People don't do that.

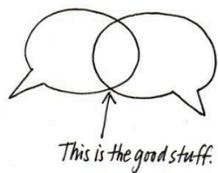
Maybe you work with people with chronic pain. Here's the thing, most people don't think of themselves in terms of having chronic pain. They think, "My joints always hurt. I always have these stomach aches. These headaches never go away." They think about their particular type of chronic pain and they identify with that much more than our umbrella diagnostic terms.

The umbrella labels are useful for *us*, but it's one part of it, not the whole thing. People say, "My target market is spiritual people." What does that mean? People don't identify with being a spiritual person. They have a particular slant on it to identify with. Umbrella labels can be a blunder.

NICHING BLUNDER #6: no conversation.

Not only do entrepreneurs try to do everything themselves and not ask for help, they even will design their programs and products on their own, which is a tragedy. There's this idea of Marketing 1.0 versus Marketing 2.0. Marketing 1.0 is like billboards, brochures, business cards. They talk to them, but you can't talk back to it. It's a one-way conversation. Marketing 2.0 has really always been there, but social media has made it much easier. It's this idea of conversations.

**NICHING BLUNDER #6:
NO CONVERSATIONS**



This is the good stuff.

It's not just a contrived conversation, but where you're like, "*I'm trying to design this new thing,*" and you start talking to people in your niche, in the group you want to work with and you ask, "*What do you want? What would be perfect for you?*" You actually engage them in conversation to help you understand their situation and to help you design

the very thing you want offer. If you do that, you are guaranteed it is going to work, because they told you what they want. You're guaranteed a good response because they have described it, they have broken it down for you, if you have enough conversations.

Even the comments that I've been asking during this call are part of a conversation. I've been asking you where you struggle with your niche, what's working, what's not working, what blunder you are struggling with, what phase you are at. That's part of a conversation. I'm asking because I'm genuinely curious because if I'm going to design a six-week program on it, I'd love to get a sense of where people are at. Are there certain things that are the biggest areas of struggle?

The more you can be talking with people in your niche, or a niche you want to work with if you are experimenting with a particular one . . . don't just try to design the program yourself, or whatever you're offering. Talk to them. Get it down on paper. Take them out for coffee and say, "What do you think about this?" The response you're looking for is "*Hell yes! Wow! That's Amazing! Where have you been? I would totally pay for that.*" That's the kind of response you want.

If you get a response that's like, "*That's really neat. Good luck with that,*" keep going. You want to keep making it more and more irresistible and perfect for them.

Here's the list of blunders again.

Leave a comment with what blunders you feel like are your top two. If you had to pick two blunders, which two blunders would you say are your top two. If you could write those in the comments, I would be very curious to see.

Even *identifying* a blunder is so useful, because just knowing it can free you up and help you see what you haven't been seeing before.



I'm curious; which blunders are the biggest struggles for you? If there are any blunders that you just happen to realize you're making that aren't on the list, of course I'd love to hear those. What are the top blunders for you? Where are you screwing up?

The fuzzy niches is a big one. So many people struggle with fuzzy niches. The real downfall of fuzzy niches is people think they're done. They think, "I finally have a niche," then they try their marketing and it doesn't work because the niche is so fuzzy.

Then they think that they've failed. They think they're a terrible marketer. It's not you, it's just the niche is fuzzy. Fuzzy niches are a real problem. That will kill the marketing cold.

No conversations can be a problem. Even if you have a good idea of who you want to work with, you need to have a conversation. It's amazing when you just start talking to people in your niche how it just starts opening everything up. Just talking to them, you'll get ideas you never thought of before. You'll get perspective and encouragement, etc. I'm so happy for you all that you have a sense of clarity for what those blunders are. I think you'll find it helpful.

Here's an interesting thought I want to talk about. I want to invite you to think of a favorite business, a business that you love.

Maybe it's a retail store, a Website, maybe it's a life coach, somebody you tell everybody about. The picture I see is the Solstice Café in Victoria. It's one of my favorite cafes in Canada, and I love it. I love going there. Whenever I go to Victoria, that's kind of my hangout place.



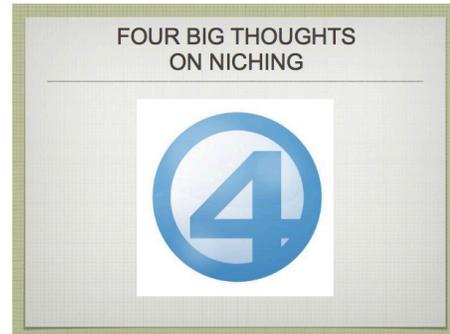
I want you to think of your favorite business, and here's what's interesting: whether or not that business owner has ever sat down and thought about niche, has ever gone to a workshop on Niching, isn't it true that this business serves a particular crowd? Maybe it's the neighborhood, maybe it's a particular scene for regulars. Isn't there something that unites all these people? There's some vibe, some aesthetic, some kind of point of view; something they share.

This is what's interesting for me: even when people don't think about Niching, don't even try to do it, it still happens. What will happen is you put what you have out there and the people who resonate with it will say yes. There is something in common with those people, but what I'm talking about is the possibility of that not happening unconsciously, but actually consciously thinking about how you can look at who's coming and refine that.

When you engage in niching consciously, things move a lot faster. It becomes a lot more profitable. Marketing makes more sense. You'll have so many more ideas when you do it consciously, versus unconsciously.

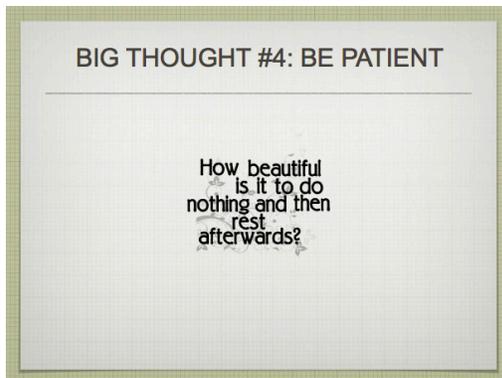
The part we're going to go into is probably the most valuable part, which is my four big ideas on niching. Thank you all for sticking around, because with these four ideas, any one of these might be an idea that totally opens up your mind and liberates you around niching. That's my hope. These ideas are also the four big ideas we're going into that the six-week program is based on.

Next slide, **four big thoughts on niching**. That's the Fantastic Four logo from Marvel Comics. I'm a nerd . . . I think we just discovered why I'm still single. Let's cover them in reverse order.



BIG THOUGHT #4: Be Patient. Here's this proverb: *"how beautiful is it to do nothing and then rest afterwards?"* We can be so hard on ourselves. I see it so much in the marketing world. I notice how people feel so ashamed of themselves for not having figured out their niche yet, and it can just take time.

Sometimes it takes years to really figure out what the authentic one is. That's not what people want to hear, but it's real. There's no magic pill for niching, but there is a magic



process. Sometimes what happens is our niche finds us. You've been working at home for years and years and it's not at a marketing workshop, it's in the shower where it comes to you. Sometimes all you can do is really cultivate the soil for this and make conditions ready to get an insight like that.

Sometimes just being asked to write questions can help. It's like you free up space and things start moving around in way that they didn't before, and somewhere down the road something pops because you started exploring, because you started being open to it. I find when people start exploring and experimenting, they start getting real-time feedback from the world like, "I thought this niche would be great but it actually doesn't feel very good."

Then that has them start to wonder what it was about that group that didn't feel good. There's a part of our brain and ourselves that just gets really activated and it makes it happen faster when we do that, but we want to be patient, because stress and judgment of ourselves does not help this process go faster. I think of it a lot like making tea. You can't just take hot water and dip in a bag of tea for a second and expect to have a beautiful cup of tea. It's got to steep.

These six weeks are kind of like a six-week steeping process. Originally, my initial thought was to do a weekend retreat on Niching. But then I realized that Niching tends to take more time. People tend to need to sit with things and steep with it and let it bubble a little bit. You've got to let it sit. That's my big thought number four: be patient. Patience will have you relaxed, and when you're relaxed, you'll get more ideas.



BIG THOUGHT #3: Niche Projects.

You'll see this little birdhouse. In the six-week program we're not going to be trying to figure out the niche for the rest of your life. That may happen. I'd be thrilled, but that's not the point of it. Our whole goal is to help you not just build a house, but to build a birdhouse. It's not to create a niche for the rest of your life but to create a niche project, some specific, doable, achievable project that you can create around a particular niche that will allow you to do the experimentation without committing everything.

It's still something that could make you money, generate income so that you can be paid to learn. Some of you might even be able to do this project during the six weeks and get support from other people in the program, if you've got some time and you can hustle. We want to help you create something doable, something realistic. Your niche project might actually end up expanding to be the whole thing that you do.

For example, I worked years ago with a group called YES: Youth for Environmental Sanity in Santa Cruz, and we did summer camps all around North America, Youth Environmental Justice camps. I did that for three years, because ever since I was nine years old I wanted to be a camp counselor. It kind of fulfilled this dream for me, and then I was done. I didn't want to do them anymore.

But the people running it at the time said, "*Please come back. We really want to work with you.*"

I was like, "*I really want to work with you guys, too, but not on the camps.*"

Then they asked the magic question, "*If you could design any project, what would it be?*" They did an event in 1996 that I wanted to do another version of. In 1999 I created a project called Youth Jam. I brought together 30 leading young change-makers from

around the world for a week. It was kind of a camp, except there were no guest speakers. It was just a chance for these people who were icons and heroes in the community, because they are the ones everybody leans on, but they didn't have someone else to lean on. It was a week for them.

We did it and it was a huge success.

We did it again the next summer. It was an even bigger success.

We did two the summer after that, 2001. One of them was a huge disaster, and the next one was wonderful.

Fast forward to 2012, thirteen years later: there have been over a hundred jams in every inhabited continent around the world. It's now the core project of YES. It is where all of their money and their funding comes from. It's what they're known for. It started out as just a project that they were extremely hesitant to do, and now it's their whole thing.

I've seen this time and again. I started out with *Marketing 101 for Holistic Practitioners*. It was just going to be one workshop in Toronto, and then it became the core of what I was doing for the next two years. You can start small and it can grow into a lot. It may not, but even if you do a project that is a disaster and you discard it, you will have learned more about what an authentic, real niche for you is from that than all of the meditation and thinking you could have done.

Whether it wins or not, you win. That's a big thought. Don't just think about trying to niche your business. That's stressful. Try a niche project and give yourself permission. Bill Baren, one of my colleagues, has a great analogy around dating your niche versus trying to marry your niche. Imagine if I said, "*Today you're going to go out and find someone to marry,*" assuming you're not married. Get how stressful that would be, to just meet somebody that you barely even know.

Maybe you have the most romantic night together, but that's still one night. If you were going to get married and you were not stressed about that, if you were not concerned about that, I would be concerned about *you*. It's the same with your niche. This idea of trying to pick a niche arbitrarily and have that be the niche for the rest of your life, you need to slow down. Be patient. Date them. Get to know your niche, and that will help you refine, because maybe they're not the niche for you, even though you thought they were.

BIG THOUGHT #2: Big Circle, Little Circles. This was a breakthrough I had a year and a half ago. I think it's one of the most useful things I've ever thought of around niching. Check this out. I call it big circles and little circles. The big circle in this picture represents the umbrella term, the jargon. It's the conscious entrepreneurs, cultural creatives, people in chronic pain. The big circle is just generically who you want to work

with, and inside the big circle is all the qualities you want most in your clients, all the clients you want to clone where you're like *"I love this client. I wish all my clients were like this."*

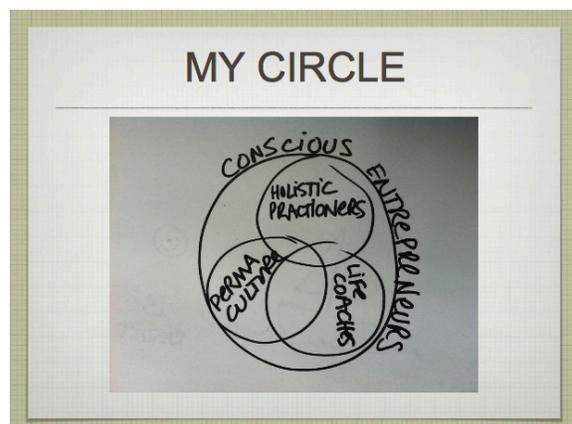
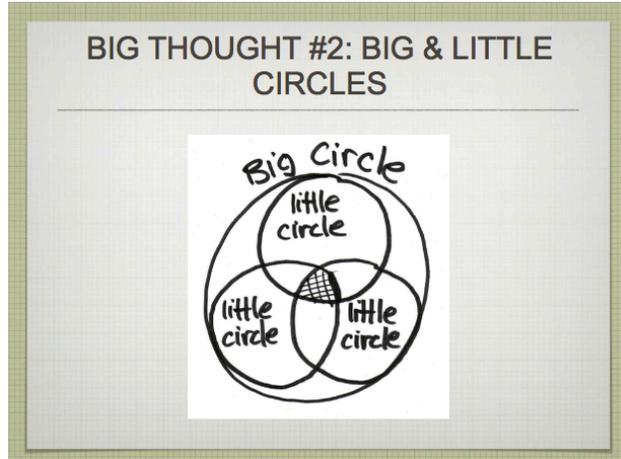
This is the fact that they are open to change, they're ready to do the work. This is where it would actually fit, inside the big circle. These are people who show up on time. They pay you on time, they tip, they refer other people. They're into organic local food, all that stuff. That fits into your big circle. The big circle is really wonderful as a filter for you to get a general sense of who you want to work with and who your ideal client is. What it's *not* that useful for, honestly, is for marketing, because that big circle label, that umbrella term, isn't that useful to the client; some will get it, some won't.

The qualities of somebody are really good to know because when you're meeting somebody, it can help you see if they're a fit or not, but it's not that useful in marketing. What is useful in marketing are the little circles. The little circles are sort of specific target markets you might build a project around. When I talk about Niching and ask people to pick one niche, they freak out. If I say pick twenty niches, they freak out because that's too many.

The clearer your big circle, the better. Within your big circle, have three little circles. Have three that you focus on. You might have other target markets, but have three that you focus on. The truth is there's probably going to be one of those three that is your dominant focus.

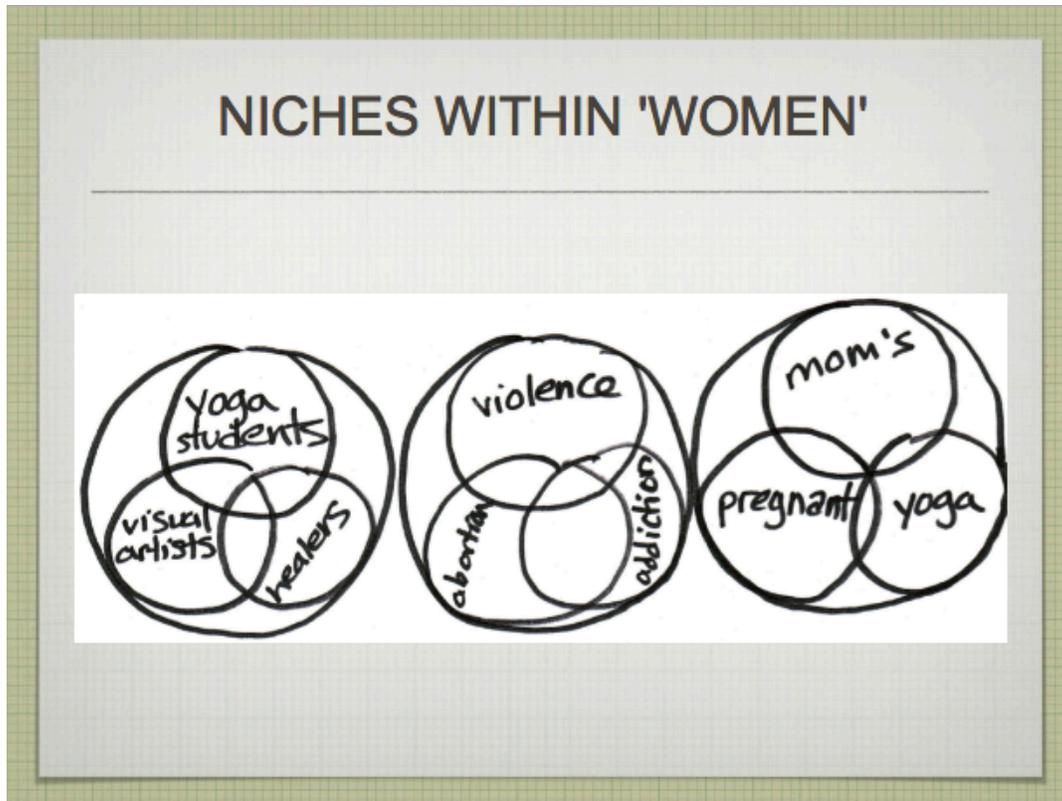
For me, for example, you'll see big circles, conscious entrepreneurs. Small circles: holistic practitioners, permaculture practitioners, and life coaches. Those would be my three little circles at this point. Three little circles within a big circle.

When I was in Toronto, one of my dear friends Erica Ross, who has a business called www.DanceOurWayHome.com, did this incredible empowerment work with women, and



she brought me in to work with some of her people because she was teaching them how to take Dance Our Way Home and spread it.

Of course, when I went to talk to them about marketing, I was like, “Who do you want to reach?” What is so interesting is that each of these women, even though the big circle for all of them was just women that they wanted to reach, the little circles were all different. I want to share some of the examples of this.

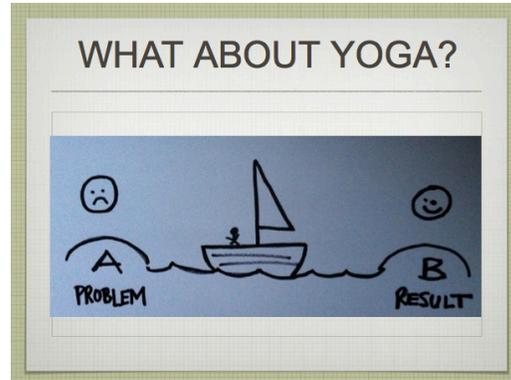


One of the women said, “I want to reach yoga students, visual artists, and healers.”

Another woman who had a very rough life said, “I want to work with women who experience violence, addiction, or even gone through an abortion and never had a chance to even process that and have carried that with them.” Another one said, I want to work with moms and pregnant women and yoga students.”

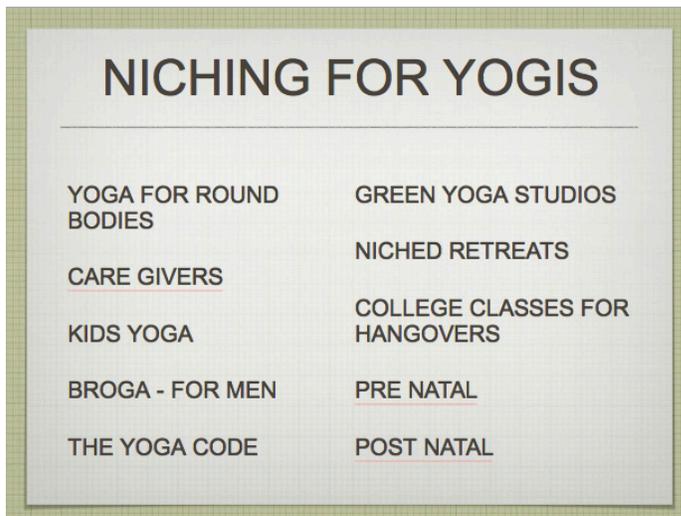
I wanted you to get this. This was only three of them and there were twelve. Out of those nine little circles, there’s only overlap of two. Same boat, Dance Our Way Home; totally different target markets.

What about yoga? Yoga is one of these things where people are like, “This can help anybody with anything.” This really is one of those boats that can take anyone anywhere. I’m not actually going to argue that. What I am going to say is that if in your marketing you say, “This can help anyone with anything,” that’s not that compelling.



The fact it has such broad appeal means there’s a lot of room for different niches.

Here are a bunch of yoga niches:



Yoga for round bodies. One of my colleagues in Toronto, Tina Veer, she’s got a rounder body. She doesn’t look like a Barbie doll. She would go to yoga classes and feel kind of awkward because she was bigger than the other people and the teachers couldn’t adapt the poses for her, which she really needed.

With just a chair or a block or something the poses could have worked for her, but the teachers didn’t even notice and wouldn’t

have had an idea of how to adapt it. She created this class of yoga for round bodies, and they loved it. People were just over the moon to have a class that was totally tailored to them.

Beth Martens in Winnipeg is a single mom, and she experienced the stress of the utter exhaustion of being a caregiver. She created this day-long retreat called Yoga Cream Pie, and it was all a day of taking care of the caregivers. People who never get a chance to take care of themselves because they are taking care of kids or the elderly or their parents get a chance to just be rejuvenated through yoga, plus they get a massage. It’s incredible.

Kids yoga. Broga, as they call it, yoga for men.

Jackie Dumaine in Calgary has a business called the Yoga Code where she does workshops about the Yamas and the Niyamas, the ten ethical codes of yoga. What about

green yoga studios? They're a niched retreat. There's a yoga studio by a college, and every Sunday they have a hangover recovery class, where it's restorative yoga specifically working for the people who partied really hard. It's brilliant.

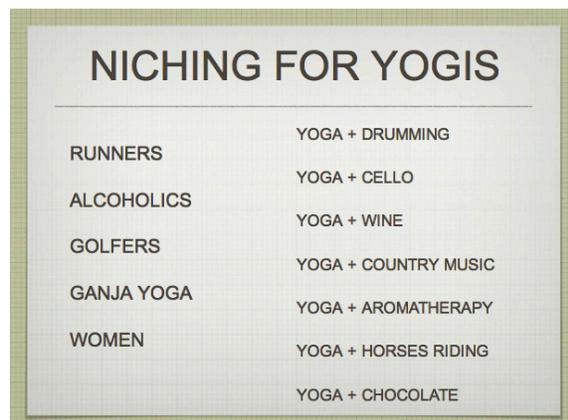
Some people are like, "Everybody is already into yoga." That's not true. There are so many untapped markets that, if there was a class specifically for them, they might be into it in a way they might not have even considered before. We've got yoga for the unemployed, yoga for those with back injuries. We've got laughing yoga; yoga for inmates; yoga for travelers. Tots yoga; yoga for parents. Keep them coming if you've got them. There are so many different kinds. I hope you get this. It's one boat, and this one boat can take so many different journeys. Yoga for weight loss. If you do a project around one of these specific niches, it will be so much easier for you to market and come up with articulation and figure out the hubs.

Yoga modified for those with injuries. That's great. If you even went into the specific types of injuries, like back injuries or broken legs, you can find even more. Yoga for the unfit. You people are amazing. If that wasn't compelling enough, go to the next slide.

Here are some more:

What about yoga for runners; yoga for alcoholics; yoga for golfers? One of my friends in Vancouver does these classes where they smoke up a little before class and do yoga.

Yoga for women specifically. Here's another way to think about your niche; this is a bonus thought around Niching. A niche is that place in the world that you occupy, and consider this: you are in so many different scenes and crowds in your life; there are so many communities that you're a part of, and usually those communities don't overlap very much. If you can be the person that helps them overlap, that can be an interesting place to occupy. That can be a niche.



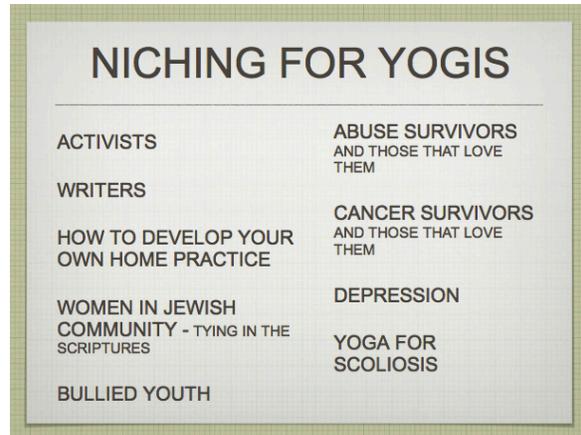
NICHING FOR YOGIS	
RUNNERS	YOGA + DRUMMING
ALCOHOLICS	YOGA + CELLO
GOLFERS	YOGA + WINE
GANJA YOGA	YOGA + COUNTRY MUSIC
WOMEN	YOGA + AROMATHERAPY
	YOGA + HORSES RIDING
	YOGA + CHOCOLATE

What about yoga plus drumming, bringing in African drumming? Yoga plus cello where it's classical music brought into yoga. Yoga plus wine, where they'll drink a little bit of wine before and after class. Not much, otherwise it would be drunk yoga. They do a toast to the spirit and talk about how wine gets better as it ages just like we do. Yoga and country music; yoga for rednecks where they would have classes where they would play country music. They would pull out the Christian lyrics from the country music and then they would tie that back to the Christian implications of those lyrics and then tie that back to basic philosophy.

Yoga plus aroma therapy. Yoga plus horse riding. Yoga plus chocolate where they do a little cocoa ceremony and talk about the mystical properties of cocoa. One boat: yoga; so many different particular journeys and each of those journeys has its own hubs and its own way to market it.

Next slide, even more:

yoga for activists, yoga for writers. What about something about how to develop your home practice? Yoga for women in the Jewish community tying into scripture. Yoga for bullied youth; yoga for abuse survivors and those they love; yoga for cancer survivors and those they love; yoga for depression; yoga for sclerosis. I hope you get how many there are. I don't want to go overkill on this, but I really want to drive it home, because people will be like, "I don't get it, but I can help anyone."



BIG THOUGHT #1: Your Niche is You. This might be the most important one. This idea gives people so many breakthroughs. This is the core of what we're going to be focusing on and designing the niche project around; this idea that your niche is you. You see this person looking in the mirror. This is what happens so often, I can't tell you how many times I've seen this: people will struggle for years with Niching and one day wake up and be like, "*My niche is me. It's who I was years ago.*" If finally hits them.

It can take years to do it, but this is the best shortcut I know. Consider this: years ago, you were struggling with things that you've overcome. If you could have gone back in time and been support for that person, that younger you, how grateful you would have been. Consider that in some ways you have become right now the very person whose support you were needing back then. You've become that person because, out of desperation, you've had to learn.

You don't want to suffer, so you've gone to courses, you've gone to workshops, whatever it is. You've gotten honest with yourself, you've read books, you've talked to your friends, you've gotten whatever kind of support you've gotten, and you've had to learn and grow. You've gotten good at things and gotten certain skills and been humbled by life, and that all has made you the perfect person to help you when you were younger.

The beautiful thing is there are a lot of people who are like you in the same place that you were in when you were younger. Because you've been through the journey already, it doesn't mean you're totally qualified to help them, but it means you at least have the beginning of being qualified. You've got a lot of the important criteria to help.

Here are some examples.

In **Winnipeg**, there was a woman who was a family counselor, a spiritual counselor. She would talk about her niche and say, "I really want to work with the whole family around their issues, but I feel like a fraud about that."

I asked why, and she said, "Because I wasn't able to help my whole family heal. I kind of had to move on and walk away."

I said, "Maybe your niche isn't curing the whole family; maybe your niche is to help people who had to struggle with letting go." They've tried for years to help their family and get people to talk and be honest and their family just doesn't care; they're never going to do it. They have to now go through that grieving process of letting it go.

This woman was just like, "I can do that so authentically." Something really relaxed in her. This is what often happens: when people find a niche that's authentic, they just relax because they realize their whole life has prepared them for this.

Alex Baisley, one of my dear friends and colleagues, at www.BigDreamProgam.com is a lifestyle coach. He really is uniquely qualified because he spent nine years as a commercial driver doing something he didn't like. Even though he liked the work, he didn't like the lifestyle, and he saw how many people were coming to him with stress and that the stress was ultimately about their lifestyle. He ended up making some really big changes in his lifestyle, and how he supports other people.

Instead of saying, "*How can I make enough money so one day I can retire and have a great lifestyle,*" how do you have the lifestyle you want right now and back your business and your projects into that?

Tina Veer of Yoga for Round Bodies went through it.

And then there's me. It's embarrassing and I don't like talking about it, but I was kind of a gross high-pressure salesperson when I was just out of high school. I just thought that's what you had to do. I drank the Kool-Aid and I was so pushy and so gross.

It's worse than you think. Whatever you think I was, it was worse than that. I didn't sleep very well. I didn't feel good about it. I grew up with some hippies and environmental stuff, and suddenly I'm this gross high-pressure salesperson, and my friends started calling me on it and saying, "*What's up with you? You're so slick.*" It felt terrible to hear that. Here I am years later helping people figure out how to market in a more authentic way.

There's a woman in **Black Diamond** who was going through my workshop, and she was like, "*I'm so frustrated and angry. These exercises don't work. None of the small circle niches I'm coming up with feel right.*"

I said, "*How did you get into this, doing massage?*"

She said, "*I was doing this stupid dead-end job and I hated it, and I found massage and I was really good at it and found I could make money doing it.*"

I said, "*Imagine this: imagine a younger woman called you up and said 'I'm working this dead-end job and I hate it, but I found something I'm really passionate about that I could make money at but I'm just so nervous to make the transition; I'm wondering if you'd be willing to meet for tea?' Would you meet her for tea?*"

You should have seen the smile on her face. She was like, "*I would love to.*"

I was like, "*What if that was one of your small circles, to work with younger women who are in that place and want to make a transition but are too scared? Don't you think they could use a massage and some love and support and encouragement and that it's okay to make that leap?*"

You should have seen the smile on her face. She started crying and was like, "*That's it. Thank you.*"

Sometimes it's really hard to see into ourselves and get that. I was just reflecting a very simple observation about her life. We could have probably gone deeper and spent more time on it. It was just a very simple thing, but sometimes we just need that reflection from other people. Sometimes we can't see it ourselves.

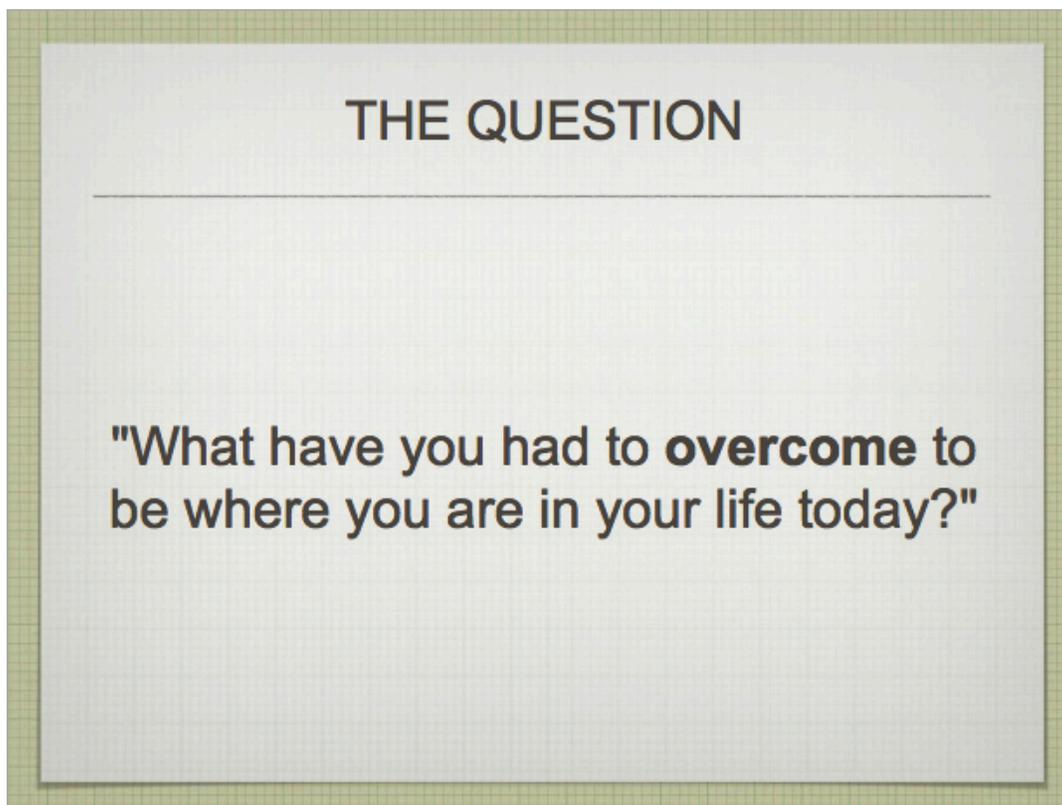
She was sitting there in a workshop about marketing and doing exercises about Niching. She was trying really hard and just couldn't. If you feel like you're in that place, it's not you. You're not stupid. It's just hard to see it in yourself. **Blair Finney** in Victoria was

institutionalized in a straight jacket and anti-psychotic drugs. That made him very curious about holistic healing, because he didn't want to be stuck on those drugs for the rest of his life like he was told.

He got himself off the drugs and is just the most beautiful grounded guy. Imagine one of your family members got institutionalized and they don't want to be on those drugs their whole life; you don't want them to be on those drugs. You have a choice of talking to somebody who has a Ph. D in this, or somebody who's been through it. Who do you think you're going to trust? Somebody who's learned about it intellectually, or somebody who's actually been there? You're going to trust the person who's been there.

Next slide: here's the question.

This is the most important, direct simple question I can ask you to help figure out your niche.



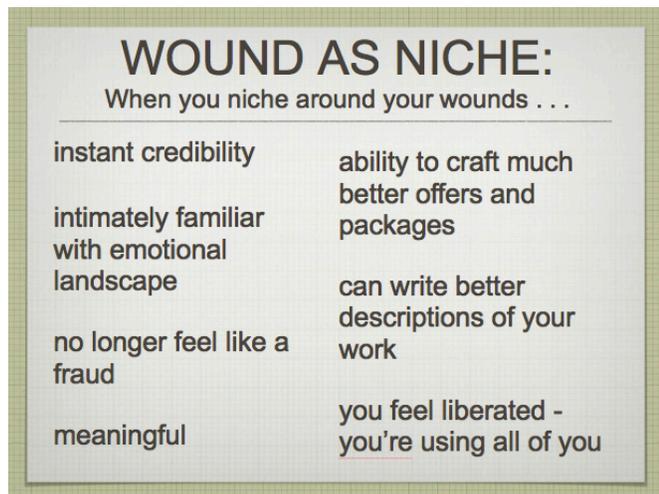
If you've signed up for the program, start working on this question right away, because if you can be bringing this into the six weeks with some clarity, it's going to help you so much. If you're not in the course, start working with this because it is the most direct thing I can give you.

The question is, “*what have you had to overcome to be where you are in your life today?*” I’m not talking about one hundred percent overcome, but where you’ve made progress. Just the fact that you struggled with something is not a good indication of a niche; it’s got to be something where you had to struggle and overcome something. Maybe it’s like you were really overweight and now you’ve lost some weight, but you’ve made progress.

Maybe it’s where you were really insecure and now you’re a lot more secure. This isn’t about being perfect, but you had to overcome something to be where you are, and my guess is you’ve had to overcome a lot. Health challenges; heartbreak; loss of loved ones; cruelty from other people. There are probably a lot of things that have happened in your life that were very hard and just to be standing here today, just to be alive today, to still be kicking and alive today, to be on a call about niche marketing, to start a business, you probably had to overcome so much.

Those things you have overcome are steps that you’ve taken in your life. You don’t have to be a million steps ahead of people. Sometimes it’s just a few steps to be able to offer support. Sit with that question: what have you had to overcome?

Here are the benefits of niching around your wounds. This is the idea that your wound is your niche, this idea that your deepest wounds are often a doorway to your truest niche. When you niche around your own past life experiences, a number of things happen. You get instant credibility with people. You are so intimately familiar with the emotional aspects. You know what it was like to be there, and there’s an incredible empathy that comes from that. You no longer feel like a fraud, because you are just speaking from your experience. It feels so meaningful.



WOUND AS NICHE:	
When you niche around your wounds . . .	
instant credibility	ability to craft much better offers and packages
intimately familiar with emotional landscape	can write better descriptions of your work
no longer feel like a fraud	you feel liberated - you're using all of you
meaningful	

You are able to craft better offers and packages and write better descriptions of your work. You just feel so liberated because you’re using all of you. You’re looking at your life like, “*This has all trained me and prepared me for this.*” You’ll have something different in the future. You’ll have grown more, you’ll have learned more. This is such a powerful starting point. It’s the best one that I know. There are other things to look at, but they’re often connected to this as well.

In recap, if you explore Niching and you really work on this, whether it's with the six-week course or with something else, you're going to be able to articulate your point of view on this journey from Island A to Island B so much better. The map, your point of view, your perspective, your diagnosis of that journey, that situation will be so much easier. You'll be able to figure out the timing, the pricing, the location so much better.

You're going to attract clients you love. You're going to be able to identify hubs so much more easily, and that will make everything you do so much more effective and powerful. You're going to be able to craft offers that are so much more irresistible to find what need is a perfect fit. In short, everything gets easier as you focus on this.

If you don't, it's usually a struggle. This is what I see. This isn't a fear tactic, but I see this again and again. People who get stuck at phase two in resistance to Niching, they struggle. There are all sorts of rationales for it. They'll say, "*I do have a niche,*" but it's a fuzzy niche and they won't listen to me when I say it's not a clear niche. They struggle and they struggle and they struggle, until they really are willing to focus on this.

Question and Answer:

At this point, I'm just going to open it up to Q & A. I know we're like fifteen minutes over time, but I'll stick around to answer any questions. If you want to ask a question, just put it in the comments. I'll just restate it and answer it for people on the call.

One of the questions is, **would this workshop help fine-tune my niche if I already know my niche?** I would say almost certainly. Most people think they're a lot clearer on their niche than they actually are. I would encourage you to write your niche out in a reply to your own comment. I'd be curious to hear what your niche is so we can see how clear it is. I'll give my honest opinion about that.

My short answer is yes, it would help in fine tuning it, because a lot of people think they are a lot clearer about it than they are. Even in the last *Marketing 101 for Holistic Practitioners* one of the exercises was having people write out their niches. It was kind of crushing, in a way, because people would put out these things that they thought were so impressive and clear, and other people would respond with "I totally don't get it."

We're so close to it and sometimes we have too much jargon in it.

"Do we have to have been through our clients' struggle to be more progressed than our clients and be authentic?"

I would say no, but would advise that you frame it differently. The most important thing is making sure that you're not posturing as something that you aren't. If you're trying to

help someone get over a heartbreak and you're still totally stuck in a heartbreak, I think it's really unauthentic to say you can teach them to get over it when you haven't gotten over it yourself.

If you're halfway over it and you give a workshop on how to explore heartbreak or how to make progress, you might be able to authentically say that. You can still do projects around it. You don't have to be an expert to do projects. There's a woman who loves straw bale homes, but she didn't know how to do straw bale homes. What she could do was organize a tour of the existing straw bale homes in the Guelph area, and she got paid for that.

You may not be through it, but you could host a series. Let's say you're totally stuck on heartbreak, and you could organize a workshop series where you bring in other presenters and other speakers. You could just tell everyone, "I'm hosting these because I need these." You may not be able to teach it.

You could be like, "I'm hosting a series of discussions for people stuck in heartbreak." You could host conversations or host gatherings that explore a theme, and you don't have to claim that you're an expert in it. If you haven't overcome it, and you aren't a few steps ahead of people, I would just be cautious about it because that's a really terrifying place to be when you start to posture something that you're not.

"Will the six-week program go into hub identifying?"

Yes, we will. The last couple of calls are going to focus on that, plus you're going to get a whole bunch of bonus materials, which I might as well tell you about. I've created a number of things about hubs and all that, and you'll be getting those e-books and pdfs. Identifying the hub is the easy part, usually, once the niche is clear.

When people struggle with it, the struggle is usually because the niche isn't that clear, and they think the niche is clear so they should be able to identify hubs, but they're not. We are going to talk about that in the last couple of calls.

"What if I wanted to reach out to organizations rather than individuals?"

That's a great question. Still, within an organization, there are going to be tons of individuals you are going to want to reach and explore. Like FedEx, for example. Of course they wanted to reach corporations, and that seems like an institution, but they initially thought that within the corporation there were the CEOs, but it wasn't the CEOs that were hiring the couriers; it was the secretaries. Once they shifted their marketing from CEOs to secretaries, their marketing took off.

If you want to reach out to organizations, still figure out what organizations they are..

“I need general help on discovering the psycho graphics other than through conversations.”

That’s a great question. I’m not sure I have any direct guidance for it. If you’re using your wound as the niche, sometimes you can figure it out. Sometimes you look at your ideal clients and ask what’s true about them. What are they into? What do they value? How do they see the world? You can learn a lot just by looking at the existing clients you have or the kind of clients you would want to work with.

There’s got to be some sort of fit in the match in the internal reality of what you value and what your clients value. The short answer is to look at yourself and what are your own psychic graphics and explore with that.

We have a response on the one about reaching out to organizations . . .

“My practice offers group facilitation.”

Let’s say it was with non-profits, for example. It’s probably going to be the executive director or the human relations person, depending on the size of the business. The way you want to frame the group facilitation is not to talk about the boat of group facilitation, but to talk about the journey of the person who is hiring you.

It would be like, “Do you notice that your team is unmotivated? Are they slacking off all the time? Is there in-fighting and gossip?” Find out what they notice from their eyes. How are they seeing the situation? That’s how you want to speak to it. You don’t want to be speaking to the diagnosis like, “Are the leaders of your group out of alignment?”

You just want to same something like, “You’re in charge here, and this is what you’re seeing happening in your group and you don’t know what to do about it and it reflects badly on you. If you handle this, you look really good to your higher-ups. You get more funding, your non-profit is a better place to work. You get to feel proud about it.”

You want to speak to what they’re craving. What’s Island B for them? It’s so different if somebody is like, “Let me talk to you about my boat of group facilitation.” Then there’s very little interest. But if you can speak to the journey that people go on, it’s huge.

I hope that helps, in terms of the group facilitation. The key is don’t talk about the boat; talk about the journey and get really clear about who it is. Again, go with big circles and little circles. The big circle might just be people in charge of organizations, and the little circles might be executive directors, the boss and the human relations person. They’re all going to have their own hubs. Human relations people have their own networks and

conferences that they go to, and if you could be going and speaking at those and running session at those, they'll be asking you to come in, as opposed to you chasing them.

It's the same with the bosses and executive directors. Bonus thought for everyone who's still on the call: if you're trying to reach the bosses or CEOs of medium-sized companies, what if you hosted a workshop just for the bosses where you led them through a group facilitation process that was really useful for them in their particular struggles?

Don't you think they would say, "I really like this person. Rose is awesome. We should bring her in. What she did here would work great in our organization." That's something to consider.

"I'm not sure what my calling is right now; do we need to be clear about what we want to do and what kind of business we want to design?"

Yeah, I would say so. If any of you who are still on this call are on the fence because you don't know what you want to do yet and have so many interests and hobbies but don't know how to fit them all together, I can't recommend the work of Alex Baisley enough. I'm just going to reply to your comment here. Check out his Website www.BigDreamProgram.com. He's brilliant.

If you're in that place where you don't know what to do, I recommend his stuff more than my stuff. He will help you figure out how to create income projects and weave together all of your strengths, your interests, your hobbies, your fascinations into something that can make you money. From that point, I feel like I can be a lot more useful. If you don't even know the 'What', he'll help you figure out the 'What' and the 'How' and a bit of the 'Who' as well.

If you've already got a business, you're already clear about what it is in the boat and now you're just trying to figure out the 'Who', this course is a great fit. If you're not even sure what the boat is yet, I would go talk to Alex. He's the loveliest man. I can't recommend him highly enough. Tell him I said hi.

I've got to run, everybody. Thank you so much. This was a really fun two hours for me. Good luck, whether or not you sign up for the course. Good luck on your ventures and we will talk to you down the road, I hope. Thanks so much. Bye.

You can learn more about my Niching for Hippies virtual coaching program in it's current form at:

<http://marketingforhippies.com/niching-for-hippies/>



About Me

Tad Hargrave is a hippy who developed a knack for marketing (and then learned how to be a hippy again).

Despite years in the non-profit and activist world, he finally had to admit he was a marketing nerd and, in the end, he became a marketing coach for hippies. Maybe it was because he couldn't stand seeing his hippy friends struggle to promote their amazing, green and holistic projects. Maybe it was because he couldn't keep a 9-5 job to save his life.

Whatever the reason, for almost a decade, he has been touring his [marketing workshops](#) around Canada, bringing refreshing and unorthodox [ideas](#) to conscious entrepreneurs and green businesses that help them grow their organizations and businesses ([without selling their souls](#)). And, over the years, he has become recognized as a leader in the wider movement towards green and local economies.

This all feels like a minor miracle as Tad spent his early marketing days learning and applying some very inauthentic, high pressure, extremely gross and pushy marketing approaches. This has made him suuuuper allergic to these kinds of approaches because he discovered they made him feel slimy (even in personal friendships), he didn't sleep well and he's very sorry to all those people he spoke with back in the day. After a decade of unlearning and unpacking that whole scene – he now feels ready and able to help other people find ways to market that feel wonderful.