

Marketing for Hippies 101

How to Grow Your Green, Local and Holistic Business



Complete Workshop Transcript

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Hi there,

My name is Tad Hargrave.

I run a business called MarketingForHippies.com and for the last decade, I've been traveling around North America working with green, local, holistic, conscious entrepreneurs who are struggling with their marketing and struggling to figure out how to get enough of the kind of clients that they're looking for without doing things that feel gross or cost a fortune.

In this workshop, we're exploring the idea that marketing can actually feel good, not just delivering our products or service but the marketing itself can feel wonderful.

This is the best that I've come up with over the last decade learning from my colleagues, learning from the clients that I've worked with, and people who are really doing it and growing a sustainable right livelihood in their communities, how they've gotten more of the kind of clients they're looking for.

I'm excited to share with you.

warmest,

Tad

Introductions: A Bit About My Story

Welcome everyone.

It's good to have you all here.

A little bit about my story of how I got into this, I grew up in Edmonton, Alberta. Did I hear a woo-hoo? Awesome.

I grew up going to a Waldorf school, hippie school. Any Waldorf kids here? I went to that and grew up in this hippie milieu. My mom was a dealer for the homeopathic medicines Weleda in Edmonton for years, distributor, whatever so I grew up around this.

Then around high school, I started getting into a lot of personal growth stuff, Tony Robbins kind of.

From grade seven, I was reading those kinds of books and... you can healthy yourself sick at a certain point with that. I really got into, I worked for a franchise of a leadership development company and learned a lot about marketing and sales.

Some of it was great but a lot of the stuff around sales was really... the technical term I guess is ... gross and pushy. All the things we don't want it to be... but I was 18 so I just drank that Kool-Aid and thought, "Well, that's what you have to do I guess if you want to sell, you've got to do these things that don't feel good, that feel uncomfortable."

Then over the next ten years, I was unpacking how did that happen and is there a way to do marketing that feels good.

That's my core thesis, that marketing can feel good.

Why I Run My Workshop on a Pay What You Can Basis

A bit about the pricing thing, today is a pay what you can structure.

I know that's not always usual for workshops so I just wanted to say a few words about it. Raise your hand if you're familiar with Charles Eisenstein, his work, this whole idea of the gift economy. This idea of us sharing our gifts with each other really resonates with me.

As much as I teach marketing, I feel fundamentally anti-capitalist in my leanings *and* ... we have to sustain ourselves but I also wanted this work to be accessible. When I first started in this, I went to some Marketing Trainings. One was a five day training in the states, this fellow Jay Abraham who is sort of a guru of the marketing gurus and had a lot of brilliant things to say but the workshop was about \$5000 US, not including travel, accommodations, food. That was all on top of it.

It struck me that the people who I saw doing the most profound, meaningful work in the world that was most needed would never even hear about these workshops, would be offended by the language in them because it was so businessy, capitalist, and also would not be able to afford it or would have to go deep into debt to go and that seemed so wrong to me that the people doing such important work in the world wouldn't get access to the information that could help them get the word out about what they're doing and so wanted this to be accessible.

I think the other place pay what you can came from me was when I was a kid, I wanted to be a street performer. I was 12. I would go down to the street performance festival and take notes, and I would steal their jokes basically. I was trying to put together a show. I just thought it was the coolest thing. The festival doesn't pay them to be there. They pay their own travel. The festival puts them up but the only way they make money is they have to be really good.

If you're not good, you don't make money on the street. I thought that was so ballsy and that there was something so beautiful about that, of the performer taking the risk on themselves and saying, "You shouldn't have to be at risk. I'm going to give you the whole show first and then I'm just going to try to be good enough that it inspires you to want to support me to continue doing this." I feel the same about these workshops.

The risk shouldn't be on you.

The risk should be on me.

For today, your marketing is my problem. At the end of the day, it's back on you but enjoy the desk eight hours of that burden being taken off.

In terms of payment, the payment happens at the very, very end so it will be in the last seven minutes or so, you'll have a chance to pay. I'll pass out some envelopes, you can put the payment in it, bring it up, and I'll have a little bag. You can put it in the front.

I'm saying that now because I did a two and a half day workshop in Seattle. I was going through to make sure I had gotten the payment from everyone and there was a couple who was very lovely. They didn't seem the kind that would stiff me on a workshop. I sent them emails, "I didn't get your payment." They're like, "Oh, we totally left it in an envelope in the back of the room. It was \$1000 in cash," which is gone forever, remains only in the story so that I remember to remind you to put the money in the bag.

Five Reasons Why Marketing Matters

I want to start with five reasons why I think marketing matters so much. I really don't know if this is worth taking notes on but this is how I see it and it may be useful. There are five reasons why I think it's important for us to pay attention to this conversation around marketing.

Reason #1: More Money and Clients.

The first one, the obvious one we'll get out of the way is you'll make more money and get more clients period.

All things being equal, your product, quality, and the service, all that being equal, better marketing is going to mean more money. I know though for a lot of us who are not driven by becoming gazillionaires, money isn't a huge motivator. Often, the lack of money becomes a significant motivator but it is true.

Reason #2: Creating Awareness of Alternatives

The second reason that marketing matters is... when I look out at the world and all of the multiple crises we're facing right now that we could all name and spend a lot of time talking about, I see that the solutions to those challenges already exist in many cases. We have the work represented by everyone in this room, alternative medicine, we have permaculture, there's solar power. There are so many incredible alternatives already there.

The challenge is if people don't know that those alternatives exist or don't understand what they are, they functionally do *not* exist and people finding out about stuff and understanding it is marketing. I feel like as a movement for social change and making the world a better place, we need to be a hell of a lot better at marketing than we are. That's number two.

Reason #3: Our Success Inspires Others

Number three, in my experience, there are so many people in the world who would love to be sitting where you're sitting right now. They're working a nine to five job doing something that they hate and the thought of having their own venture, whether it's a social enterprise, a for profit, nonprofit but not working for the man doing something that's crushing their soul, they love the idea of that. It's too scary because there's this question of, 'Could I sustain myself doing it?'

Those people look at people like us for encouragement. Is this a viable thing? Can I do it? My guess is you started doing what you're doing because you probably saw somebody who was doing something similar and was able to sustain themselves in some way but they look at people like us and if they see that we're broke, miserable, and struggling, they don't move.

I think our own examples are a lot more powerful than any talk or book. People seeing people like us really making it work matters because we don't just need to lead the horse to water. We need to lead the herds to water at this point. We need a lot of people stepping up. We need everybody who

has a gift sharing it at this point because of the crisis that we're in. You making this work for you has a very direct impact on that.

Reason #4: Marketing Makes You Better at What You Do.

The fourth reason for me that marketing matters is I believe that marketing will make you better at what you do in two ways. Number one, you get better at marketing, you get more clients. More clients equals more practice. More practice equals you're better at what you do. There's a very direct way there but also, and I think you'll see this as we go through, marketing forces clarity on a lot of very simple questions that they're simple but they're not necessarily easy to answer, questions like, "What do you do? How do you do it? What's your story? What's unique about what you offer? What's your niche?" all those questions.

They're real simple questions but they're not easy to answer and, in my experience, most people's marketing challenges stem from a lack of clarity around those things. As we get clear on them, not only does our marketing get better, we get better at doing it because we're clearer about what we're doing and I hope that will show up throughout the day but marketing makes you better at what you do.

Reason #5: You'll Be Better Able to Help Your Friends With Their Marketing

The fifth reason that I think marketing matters so much is because... I don't know if any of you have had this, I've had this experience a lot, of looking at my homepage on my website or something I've reworked a million times and I just get cross eyed immediately and I can't see it. I show it to somebody else and they're like, "Oh, that's terrible, you should move this here," and they give me all these ideas to make it better that I could not see anymore.

Does anyone else have that?

It's hard to get perspective on our own stuff. In some ways, you're like the worst person in the world to work on your own marketing because you're so close to it. Other people, just because of their perspective, can often give us insights we wouldn't have but if those people don't have any understanding about marketing, sometimes the advice cannot be the best advice.

I love the idea of a movement for social and environmental change full of people who are also very literate in the language of marketing and who get it, and can give each other objective feedback that's meaningful and on point, and that we can all be helping each other get better because there's no way that any of us are going to be able to make our own marketing as good as it could be if as a community, we're supporting each other in that way.

Marketing Can Feel Good

The theme of this day, the core message of it, is that marketing can feel good.

I would even go further. Marketing *needs* to feel good. If marketing doesn't feel good, everything falls apart so this is the first exercise I'd like you to do with the person sitting next to you, hopefully someone you don't know or know that well. The question is this. I'm going to give you about a minute and a half and you're going to go back and forth answering this question. Actually, I'll give you three minutes for this.

You'll go back and forth answering this question. The question is "when marketing feels bad...", fill in the blank. When marketing feels bad for you *delivering* it or the person *receiving* it, what's the impact of that? What's the impact on yourself, on the other person, on the sales, on the result you get? When marketing feels bad, what does that result in?

What Happens When Marketing Feels Bad?

Any quick thoughts, what happens when marketing feels bad, what's the impact of that?

Participant: Feeling fundamentally like there's something defective, wrong, bad about us that needs to be fixed and you're going to help us fix it. That implication is I don't feel good.

Tad: Right, when that's the pitch, "You're broken but I can help fix you if you buy this product. If you don't," and the other twist on it is, "If you don't want to spend the \$10,000 to sign up for my weekend program, you have to ask yourself, don't you think you're worth it? Aren't you worth it?" That's just like screw you. "You don't want to spend it? That's a disempowering belief," or... it's just that I don't want to sign up.

What else when marketing feels bad? What's the impact of that?

Participant: You tend not to show up fully as yourself.

Tad: Right, if you're the one marketing and you're feeling bad doing it, it's really hard to be authentic. I'm doing something terrible. I hope they don't notice. I'll just cover it up over here. They'll never notice I'm doing this thing to them. They noticed, oh God. What else?

Participant: The overall frustration about having a gift that is heartfelt that we really want to share and it gets a speed bump or sometimes a brick wall, and that frustrating stifled experience gets carried on to the rest of my life. That doesn't work either.

Tad: Totally. It's like, "Ah, I have this beautiful gold. I'll just put it in this cow patty here." We're wrapping it up in something that doesn't feel great even though it's an authentic, beautiful thing. That's frustrating.

Participant: The conversation gets started and then the feel bad comes in, and it ends. It was just getting started. I've had a lot of good talks with people but when marketing comes in, all of a sudden, that great conversation is gone to not so great.

Tad: Totally. It can stop because we feel bad, "Oh, I shouldn't be pushing this," or it can stop because they feel bad and they're like, "Something feels off," and they just want out of the conversation. Then objections start coming up. Then in traditional sales, they're trained to overcome the objection.

Here's the next question. The question is to imagine if marketing really felt wonderful, if it really felt good, both for you doing it while you're like, "This feels great, I could do this all day," and for the person receiving it unbelievably, not just the service but the *marketing* of the service actually felt wonderful, what would the impact of that be? Let's take another three minutes and discuss.

What if Marketing Felt Good?

Participant: That brought up the idea of safety, inherent safety. From the beginning, you don't feel like you're going to have something sprung on you, no feeling like as a practitioner or whatever you do to have to then do this little thing

Tad: The concept of safety in marketing is something we'll be coming back to a lot today. I think the notion of safety is one of the most overlooked but fundamental things we need to have in place in marketing and sales.

Participant: My experience has been exchanging love, a real connection with another human being not pain. It's more of a connection with the other person.

Tad: One of my colleagues Mark Silver runs a website, HeartOfBusiness.com and his core message is that 'every act of business can be an act of love', even the selling, even the marketing, even the conversations about the business can be an expression of that which I absolutely believe. Anyone else?

Participant: A sense of excitement and collaboration that it's not this idea of helping or fixing. It's an idea of making better so both you and the client start to vibrate with excitement and creativity and really feel like what you're building together is fantastic.

Tad: Yeah, that sense of excitement does happen in conversations when marketing feels good because we have to remember, people are looking for solutions to their problems fundamentally. When you have a problem, you want a solution. When you find one that works, that's very exciting.

Here's what kills the excitement... pressure.

We've all probably had this experience where you go to an electronics store or something. You go to buy something. You find exactly what you want. You're like, "This is so great, I found it." Then the person starts trying to push you and sell you, and you're like, "I'm going to not get this thing that I need right now because screw you, I'm out of here," to spite ourselves.

It's not just sales but it's in any relationship where it's like, "Boy, I really want this thing," and somebody else is like, "You should do that. You really need that. You have to," and you're like, "I won't do that thing that I really want to do, just for our own need for autonomy, we'll push back. Everyone try this, put your arms up like this. Put your hands together. I want you to push as hard as you can with your left hand. Push with your left. I didn't say push back with your right but push with your left as hard as you can. I didn't say push back with your right.

Why aren't any of your hands still up at all?

Do you feel me?

I said put your hands up together and push with your left. I didn't say push back with your right but what did your right hand immediately do? 'You will not oppress me!' You don't have to push back with your right, but you want to.

The idea here is when we push people, they push back, even if that somebody is *you*, there's a push back from it.

How Do We Not Want Marketing to Feel?

I'm going to give you two minutes to do something. In the two minutes, I want you to write down all the words you would never want anyone to say about your marketing, all those bad words. Imagine this scenario: You're at a party and you overhear some people talking about you behind you. As you listen more, they're talking about your marketing.

They're like, "Oh my God, Tad's marketing is so..." whatever they say. They start listing off words like desperate, pushy, aggressive, insincere, whatever those words are for you, words that if you heard them, you would have to leave the party. You would just be like, "Oh no, I have to go." What would you never want anyone to say about your marketing? Make as big a list as you can.

There may also be words that are like the words you associate with marketing that you think is gross. You have two minutes to make as big a list as you can

about the marketing or selling of it. I encourage you to steal from your neighbour liberally. Look at what they're writing down.

You might look over and be like, "Oh, fake, ouch, yes, add that to my list." I want you to pick the top three, the three that you're like, "I can deal with most of these but if anyone ever said these three, it would just crush me." If this was your reputation, if everywhere you went in town, people are whispering, "Their marketing is so gross," pick the top three, the ones that you want the least.

Once you've got those, I'm going to invite you to pick the worst one, the one that's like, "Oh no, not that one." Then in 30 seconds, share your list of your top three with some of the people around you. Maybe they'll have one for you that you're going to, "Oh, I should take this one off my list and add that one."

Sorry to take you into that trauma. This is where the healing begins. I'd love to have people shout out some of the words. We'll get some of them down. What is the worst one, only the worst one, the one you least want people to say? What are some of them?

Participant: Fake, sleaze, manipulative, dishonest, aggressive, condescending. Meaningless.

Tad: Ouch. Could you imagine somebody saying that about your marketing? "It's so meaningless." What else?

Participant: Desperate, creepy, no boundaries, irresponsible, hypocritical, two-faced, phony, vague.

Tad: People are liking this, "This is my chance to heal, don't leave me with this." It's no doubt we avoid marketing. We avoid it in terms of receiving it but also doing it. I just want it to land the *financial* impact of that. If marketing feels bad to the people you're marketing to or when they're receiving your marketing, I just hope you get the money impact of that alone, how many conversations get cut short that could have become really wonderful conversations to explore a fit, how many people who might have been a good source for word of mouth and told five or six people about you who don't just because they don't want to subject their friends to the marketing.

Raise your hand if you've ever had that where it's like, "They're great but their marketing is so terrible, I don't want to." I know I've had that. Here's what's interesting. It often stops here, the conversation. We have a vague sense, the marketing feels bad. We don't usually break it down like this but there's a vague sense it feels bad but I think we often don't go the next step of, "What if it felt *good*? How would *that* feel?"

What I'm going to invite you to do is look at your list again and pick the top three. I want you to come up with the opposite of those three. Maybe if it was manipulative, the opposite for you might be direct, honest, respectful. Instead of meaningless, it might be obviously meaningful. Instead of condescending, it might be respectful, gracious. Pick the words, the three words that again, if you're at the party and you overheard somebody talking about your marketing, they're like, "Oh my gosh, their marketing is so uplifting, inspiring, and gracious." You're just like, "Yes!" Pick those top three. Again, once you have those top three reworded, the number one, the one that's like, "Oh, if people felt this about my marketing, it would be such a joy to do it because I would know that they were going to feel good about it." Then let's get some of those.

What are words how you want people to feel about your marketing? One word per person

Participant: Sincere, genuine, honest, fun, vivacious, inspiring.

Tad: Let's hear from people who haven't shared anything yet.

Participant: Interesting, substantial, supportive, new, dynamic, informative, mutual, trust building.

Tad: We'll end it there. Beautiful, so many good words. Imagine if all marketing felt like this. It would be great but imagine if your marketing felt like that and again, the financial impact of that in terms of conversations that just keep going, explorations that get to happen, the ways that people would feel more comfortable talking about what you do.

This seems so airy fairy in a way, I get it. 'When are you going to talk about marketing?' you might be asking yourself. But this is where it starts because if marketing feels bad to either side, everything gets thrown off. When it feels good, that's the base line.

But, I want to take it a little further. Those three words you wrote down, the top three you want your marketing to feel like, that's your compass in marketing. I would run every piece of marketing you ever do through that filter of does this piece of marketing feel genuine, sincere, honest, whatever those three words are for you? They're going to be different for everyone in the room. I've been to some workshops and somebody's like, "I want my marketing to feel gentle, loving, and beautiful," and somebody else is like, "I want it to feel fun, edge, and bad ass." It's different. It's a different vibe. You have a different vibe for who you are in your business. Those three words may change over time but this is really the heart of it, how does it feel? If it doesn't feel good, it doesn't matter how - we've all seen the sales letters. Technically, you can check the box. They've done everything right. They started with a good headline. There was an ask at the end. They told a story. There are testimonials, all the things you should do and yet it feels gross, so we don't buy. When it feels good, people are a lot more likely to move forward.

Why does marketing feel bad? Posturing, Collapsing and Composure

That lifts up the very important question ‘Why does it feel bad when it feels bad and why does it feel good when it feels good?’ This is my take on that. This next piece is something I got from my friends at Authentic World out of California. They used it in the context of relationships. Everything in this workshop could also be for dating. I’m going to put that out.

We do not want dating to feel creepy and no boundaries, and irresponsible. We do want it to feel like this. It’s a multilevel workshop to get whatever level you want to take it at. You’re welcome.

It comes from the relationship context but it fits nicely here. It’s this idea that people tend to vacillate between two polarities in their life. One is *collapsing* and the other is *posturing*. Just to give you a sense, I think of collapsing as the high school nerd hunched over shoulders. This shows up in business a lot around money where it’s, “What do you charge?” “I charge \$100 an hour,” and the person winces, maybe because they have gas, you don’t know but you saw them wince so it’s like, “Or \$75? \$50? \$25? \$10?... Free. It’s free. How about I pay you? It’s the first time. I should just pay you.” Ah. I hear the laughter of recognition.

Very fundamentally, collapsing is a lose/win orientation. I lose, you win. Your needs matter more than mine. I should just give it away. This is kind of the realm of the martyr. This is you know you’re a collapser because after awhile, you start to feel this feeling, “What is this feeling?” and you’re like, “Oh yes, it’s deep resentment.”

This is the feeling of, “I give so much to the community. Why doesn’t it support me back?” Because you never asked and you never let it, because there’s always this giving because my needs don’t matter, your needs do. I’m just going to keep giving. People tend to make themselves feel very small here. There’s a feeling of being less than in collapsing. There’s self pity is a big one here, very much the victim orientation.

Now, on the other side though, posturing is very much I think of this as the Donald Trump archetype. This is the puffing up. It’s very plastic. There’s a lot of pretending to be more together than we are in posturing. There’s a lot of, “I’m fine, whatever. I don’t care then,” is posturing. Oh, you apparently *do* care from your tone. This is a very win/lose orientation not because when people are posturing they *want* other people to lose but they’re very concerned with winning.

This is where things get slick and seem kind of fake. The feeling that starts to show up with posturing over time is fear, specifically the fear of being discovered as a fraud but only, to be fair, because you’re *being* a fraud when you’re posturing. It’s a legit fear but we start to feel scared like people are going to discover I’m not so together.

People who are posturing try to make themselves feel very big, more than other people whereas here, there’s self pity. Over here, there’s a lot of self importance. Whereas the collapsing is the victim, over here is the bully. Here’s what’s interesting too. Underneath driving *both* of these is a

hidden agenda. The hidden agenda with collapsing sounds something like, “Love me, please,” and the hidden agenda with posturing sounds something like, “Respect me, you will respect me.”

Does that all sound familiar as a generalization? When I was younger, much more posturing. I would say I'm more collapsing if I have a tendency. I think most of us go back and forth and most of us tend to have a tendency here. That's all interesting. Where this gets more interesting is when we throw the business context on it because now there's another hidden agenda.

That agenda is to get the sale.

Here's a conversation you've never had in the history of your life and I don't think has ever happened in the history of humanity. Let's say you're going to go buy a car. Here's something that's never happened, *“Hey, you're looking to buy a car. Sure, I'd be happy to show you around. By the way, while I'm showing you around, I'm going to be using a variety of techniques to make it more likely that you buy at the end of this. One of the first things I'm going to do is I'm going to pretend to like you a lot more than I actually do. I'm going to be asking you a lot of questions about yourself, getting to know you, try to find things we have in common. I might even lie, make some things up that we have in common. I'll also be matching and mirroring your body language to get a sense of nonverbal responsiveness between our nervous systems so if you talk quiet, I'll probably talk real quiet too.”*

“I'm also going to be listening for the verbal predicates you use, whether you're visual, auditory, or kinesthetic in your orientations so I can feed you information in a way you're going to be most responsive too. I'll probably also be trying to listen to your motivational buying strategies and your meta programs so I can also give you information in the sequence and order that's going to be most motivating for you to buy.”

“This is the best part. At a certain point, I'm going to have you sit in the car and actually imagine being in it. I'll ask you questions like, 'Where do you imagine driving this?' It's called future pacing. It makes you feel like you already own it so it's hard to say 'no' at the end. I'm going to be asking you a bunch of questions that you say 'yes' to throughout the conversation so it's harder to say 'no' at the end because you've been saying 'yes' all along.

“Then at the end, I'm going to sit you in a chair. I don't know if you've heard about the studies but if you sit in a hard plastic chair, you're a lot more likely to negotiate hard at the end as a client but if I put you in a really comfy chair, you just don't negotiate as much so this is a cushy chair. Then at the end, I'm probably going to do an assumptive close which means I'm just going to assume you're going to buy, and then the hammer... I'm just going to start filling out the form because some people have a completion strategy and if you start something, they have to keep it going and finish it so I'll just start filling out the form and give you the pen. A lot of people just can't say 'no' to the pressure so they buy so I'll probably be doing that. Let's get started over here.”

You know what I'm saying? That's never happened. Yet *that's what's happening*. That's over the top. Few salespeople would use all of those techniques but there are a bunch of techniques driven by this hidden agenda to get you to buy and we feel that, and we resist it as we should. That agenda to get the sale doesn't work. That lifts up a problem.

If we don't have the agenda to get a sale... oh no because what do we do *then*? Somebody's like, "Can I buy from you?" "Whatever, I don't care. I've got no agenda." Do we just *not* have conversations about our business anymore because we no longer have an agenda? It's not that.

The thing that they suggest at Authentic World is there's a third alternative. I think most of us go back and forth between posturing and collapsing. Most of the mainstream business scene is posturing. Most of the sales training I've had the misfortune to go through was very encouraging of this posturing, dress a certain way, speak a certain way. Most of the holistic, conscious scene is right over here in collapsing but it's interesting because sometimes, people though they're collapsers, they think, "Oh, this is what I have to do. That's what they say at the seminars. I've got to do these things. hey don't feel good but they work and I got to pay the bills. I'm in debt, so okay."

I had one of my friends, a huge collapser, who went to this seminar, learned all this stuff and came back feeling kind of empowered, "Wow, I have a way forward, great." She brought a bunch of her friends and colleagues together and did a little intro workshop and did the hard close at the end, "Normally, this would be \$10,000 but now it's \$7000. I like you people," different colour marker.

Her friends were just like, "What the heck? What happened to you?" They were hurting. Then she was like, "Oh, I'm sorry," right back to collapsing – and we can feel trapped in that. But, there's a third alternative - composure. This is more like the Dalai Lama or something.

The orientation here is win/win or no deal. It's like let's find something that works for both of us and if it doesn't, we're not going to do it because when people are collapsers, they will often take clients that don't feel great for them. Has anyone had a client that did not feel great? You know it's a drag but we'll say yes because, "Well, they need the help and I should help them. I'm a healer and I should want to help everyone," even though it doesn't feel great.

Composure is very win/win. Is this a win for me? Is this a win for you? There's a lot of peace in this. It's not fear or resentment. There's a lot of peace. There's a real feeling of equality here between people. When you meet somebody in a composed place, they're not pulling rank on you. They're not trying to be bigger than you. They're also not pushing rank on you. They're not giving you authority. They're just meeting you as an equal.

If this is the victim, that's the bully. That's kind of the hero archetype I guess but there *is* an agenda and that's important. There is *still* an agenda. The difference is it's not a *hidden* agenda. There's nothing covert about it. The agenda is about getting to the truth of the question, "Is it a fit?" That's the agenda. Is this really a fit? Is this a win/win for both of us?

In the selling one-on-one conversations, in the marketing as a whole, that becomes the driving force. Also, whereas collapsing is trying to get love, when people are composed, there's a lot of self love. Over here, there's a lot of self respect so we're not trying to get that. Also, a really important distinction, you need people to buy from you. You need money to pay rent in this culture. If you live, that's how you're working it.

The distinction is though when we're in a composed place, we get it, "I may need a sale but I don't need a sale from *you*." You know what I'm saying? I don't need a sale from that particular person in front of me. This lifts up though of course then 'how do we make sure we get enough clients so that we can sustain ourselves?' which is what we're moving into.

What I'd like to do is give you four minutes with people around you just to share anything that came up for you to unpack some of that. Where do you feel you fit in this? Where do you notice some of you are like, "My in-laws, I see it now!" Also again, dating, this is great dating stuff so at whatever level you want to discuss it, just have four minutes with each other.

Polarizing: The Three Kinds of Prospectors

Marketing doesn't feel good often.

The reason it doesn't feel good is because of the hidden agendas that get brought to it for the most part. It's just interesting how much our hidden agendas cost us in terms of clients, the hidden agenda, something feels off, it feels bad, people pull away.

I want to talk about this is a piece I got from a fellow, Mark Manson but it wasn't in the marketing context originally but I think it fits very well in it.

And I want to introduce a new word, the word 'prospector'. This is the three kinds of prospectors. Another way to say this would be the three kinds of potential clients you could run into. I like the word prospector. I got it from Mark Silver at Heart of Business. It comes from this idea, one of my colleagues, Corrina Gordon-Barnes from England, she had a line she said, "Stop looking for your ideal clients. Stop looking for your ideal clients because your ideal clients are already looking for you."

We tend to, I think, look at marketing as a search light. We're desperately searching for people. Another way to look at it is as being a lighthouse. We're shining the light and drawing people in to safe harbour, who are looking for just what we're offering. It's important for us I think to sometimes reframe the marketing conversation. It's not just that we're going out there searching for people. They're also searching for *us* actively. People with problems, they want solutions. They're looking for us so they're prospecting. They are prospectors, not just prospects for us.

There are only three kinds of these people you'll ever meet, three kinds of potential clients. Everyone you ever meet will fit into one of these three categories and each of these three requires a very different approach. Basically, here's the three: yes, maybe, and no. Clients, the people you meet who are yes to you, these are the people who you meet and they're just like, "I love it." They're resonating with you right away. They're leaning in. They're curious. They're asking more questions. They want to buy. They're a yes for you.

Here's the mistake people make with the yeses. They keep trying to sell them. They've bought already, "But let me tell you more about it." "I don't need to know more," "But you really should." Again, also with dating. "I really like you." "Duh, okay, that's great but I feel fundamentally inadequate so let me tell you more about myself. I can't receive your love until I've proven it in some way so I'm going to keep going," "Oh fine..."

People who are a no are just a no. They hear what you're doing, they roll their eyes, "Oh my gosh, what a quack, another hippie, great. They're just not into what you're offering." The big mistake people make here is trying to change their mind. Just the strategy here is bless and release. Let them go. Again, dating. This is important information. "No, but you really could like me. I'll change. No, I like that kind of music too since yesterday." Let these people go.

That leaves the maybes. The maybes are, of course, the people who are like, “Oh, I don't know.” There's polite interest. They're not shutting you down but they're not leaning in. This all seems obvious. Here's the interesting thing. I would say, for most business, you have maybe 10% that are a hard yes, 10% that are a hard no, leaving 80% maybe. Maybe it's 20, 60, 20, whatever it is in your case.

What happens then, there's 10% of people who say yes and that's who is of course buying from you. What's the strategy with the maybes if we have 80% of them? Before we look at the strategy, we should probably look at *why* are there so many maybes in the first place. I think of the maybe sometimes metaphorically as the white blood cells in your business. You're probably always going to have some. That's okay but 80% is a sign that you're ill.

It's not a good sign for your business when there's that many maybes. The illness, the sickness in my mind has to do with a lack of vulnerability, a lack of willingness to be honest and transparent about who we are, how we see things, etc. The reason we get a neutral response from them is because we are putting something neutral out from *us*.

Another important thing about the maybes... they do not buy from you. Maybes do not buy and yet there is the illusion that they will because they're on the fence so the feeling we get is like, “Oh man, there's only this many here but the pipeline is so full. You wouldn't believe how many people are about to buy.”

Here's the other thing about maybes. Unless something changes on your end or pretty dramatically on their end, maybes always turn into nos. Why would they change? If nothing has changed in what you're offering and they were a maybe to begin with, it's very rare that they're just going to change their point of view. What usually happens is they're a maybe, nothing changes with you, somebody else comes along with a product or service that's better, that's more of a yes for them, they go with them.

They still like you but they're not going to buy from you because they found somebody better and so they should. Knowing that, it becomes really important to shift this ratio as much as possible. How do we get more people saying yes?

Participant: Question there. If you have a one-on-one, face-to-face business and you get a call for a consultation, would that automatically make them a yes?

Tad: It depends. If somebody just calls you up for a consultation, it means they're probably a strong maybe. They're leaning in but I wouldn't necessarily say they're a yes. I know most of us have probably had times when we wanted to explore something with somebody and, as we got to know them, it was more of a yes or more of a no. If they call you and they're like, “I just want to hire you and give you money,” that's a yes.

Participant: Why did you compare the maybes to white blood cells? I didn't get that.

Tad: I compare the maybes to the white blood cells because you're always going to have some people who are maybe or ambivalent. They're not totally sure but you have some white blood cells in your body, but if you have so many, it's a sign of some infection or something your body is trying to deal with. It's an immune response. It's not a perfect metaphor.

Imagine this. If I'm a nutritionist, I get up at the front of the room. I say, "*Ladies and gentleman, I'm a nutritionist and I've got a few minutes to pitch myself here so a bit about me. I think health is a good thing, not all the time. I think food is often a part of health. Anyways, I work with people with healthy food eating stuff. There's a lot of perspectives about how to eat healthy if you want to do that. I just think they're all pretty valid so I'm pretty open minded. If you want to work with me around being healthy or not,*" you know what I'm saying? That's very neutral.

Nobody is going to sit there in the audience and be like, "I hate this guy," but nobody is going to sit there and be like, "Bravo!" either, "That's what I'm looking for, a vague nutritionist, finally. I've been too clear, the stress of knowing what to do! But this person, I won't know what to do again. This is wonderful, no responsibility for me, yes!"

But what if I got up on stage and said, "*So I'm a nutritionist. I want you to know I come from a raw vegan standpoint. I think a raw vegan diet is obviously the diet that humanity was evolved to eat. If you consider where humanity came from near the equator, we would have had just so much fruit that we could have eaten and there would have been such an abundance. When you cook food, it kills the enzymes. When you look at our dental structure, the way our digestive system works, we're clearly designed to eat and live on plant products. That's when we're the healthiest. Most of the diseases in our culture come from meat based diet, animal product based diet and also factory farms and deforestation, etc.*"

Even in this room, describing that, there's a polarizing that's happening. This is the dynamic we want to explore, that it's okay to polarize the response. Raise your hand if you agree with what I just said, raise your hand high, about the diet. Wow, the hands dropped fast. A bunch of you were like, "I used to be, but not anymore." Hello, recovering vegetarians. Raise your hand if you agree strongly with the raw vegan thing. I'm curious. Okay, a much more polarized response.

What if I got up and said, "*I'm very offended by what the last speaker just said about diet. I think that's bullshit that we were designed to eat a raw vegan diet. First of all, I think it's racist and colonial. I think it's utterly dismissive of every indigenous population on the world. The longest lived healthiest cultures in the world have always incorporated some portion of animal products. I think in fact we need to be eating more animal products but raw, a lot more raw milk, raw meats, raw animal organs because they're so rich in minerals. We need to be eating more of that and not less. Of course factory farms are bullshit but you can get local. We need to be supporting more local.*"

Raise your hand if you really agree with that, if you're more on that side. There's a polarizing that starts to happen. That's okay. It's okay to polarize. But this is where it gets sneaky. This isn't a tactic to get people to buy, "Ah, get on stage and say something very controversial and polarize." It's not that.

It's that if you're honest and real about who you are and how you see things, it *will* polarize more. Most of us just, not out of trying to be disingenuous, I think just out of not having thought these things through, haven't really honed our perspective or maybe we're a little uncomfortable with who we are so we don't show up fully like that so we put out a very neutral front. The more clear we are, the more honest and vulnerable we're willing to be about that, the more we'll polarize.

The Three Roles of Marketing

To talk about marketing, we need to I think get clear about what the role of marketing is because I think for a lot of people, they feel, “The role of marketing is somehow to get people to buy. The role of marketing is to get people to say yes.” I want to suggest that's actually not the role of marketing at all.

There are three roles I want to describe. These roles will probably result in more people buying but that's not the *role* of it. Any piece of marketing you ever do from now on, if it is effective, will be so because it played these three roles. If it's not effective, it's because it did *not* play these three roles.

The first thing that marketing needs to do is it's got to get their **attention**. It's got to get their attention, bottom line. If they don't notice it, these following two roles are pointless.

The second thing that marketing has got to do is it's got to help **establish if there is a fit**. It goes back to this question, the whole agenda, the overt agenda in marketing, ‘is this a fit?’ focusing on the truth of that. That's what our marketing needs to do.

Number three, marketing has to **lower the risk of taking the first step**, or the next step depending on where they're at in the process. Again, it's got to get their attention, it's got to help establish if there's a fit, and it's got to lower the risk of taking the first step. Those are the three roles it's got to do.

That seems simple but this is everything in marketing gets rolled back here.

First of all, because this is an experience you all have in common being here, how did this workshop get your attention? How did you even hear about it in the first place?

Participant: Social media. Rochelle.

Tad: Raise your hand if you heard from Rochelle. Raise your hand if you heard from Nicole. Who else heard from a different source?

Participant: Lisa Phelps, city council.

Tad: Whoa, the government is endorsing me. I am clearly not to be trusted then. Did anyone come here who did not hear about this from a friend? How did you hear about it?

Participant: I've been following you on Facebook and signed up for your email newsletter.

Tad: How did you come across me on Facebook, just randomly?

Participant: Yeah, you came up in some news feed and I was interested in what you were saying, that you weren't a hard sell so I started to follow your logs.

Tad: Just a random note on Facebook. Anyone else?

Participant: Facebook but I was introduced to you through Tracy.

Tad: I love her.

Participant: I saw it on Facebook and what caught my attention was there was a picture and it was pointing towards the heart versus money and I'm like, "Okay."

Tad: Last one.

Participant: I heard from Lisa but I also got an email from someone else

Tad: Cool. The point is, when we think about getting people's attention in marketing, I think the default where we go to is that equals outrageous things, using provocative language, pictures of naked people, that's how we get people's attention.

I want you to get that what *actually* happens in marketing is fundamentally a word of mouth situation. That word of mouth gets people's attention better than anything because you're talking to your friend and your attention is *already* there, and then they mention it. That seems so obvious but I want to lift that up.

Establishing if there's a fit, that's a lot of what we'll be talking about today so I don't want to go into that too much but again, this becomes the orientation of marketing. This is so important because consider this. There's a sort of upward spiral or a downward spiral that can happen with marketing. Let's say that I think the role of marketing is to get people to say 'yes' and I want to get as many people into my coaching programs (which I don't actually have and won't be offering today) but let's assume I had and I'm trying to do that.

I'm trying to get a lot of people to say 'yes' and so I'm also thinking I just want to fill the room as full as possible. If that's my overall agenda, what I'm not doing is necessarily filtering super carefully who gets in the room. I'm just trying to fill the room. If I can get 500 people in the room, that seems better to me. Does that make sense?

But what happens then is you have a bunch of people in the room who it's not a fit for because that wasn't the goal in marketing. The goal was just getting the sale, packing it full of people. What that means is those people in the room for whom it's not a fit are not going to have a very good experience, mediocre at best, possibly terrible.

That means that when they *leave* that room, and people are like, "What was it like?" they're going to say, "Eh, it was okay," or, "It was total shit, what a waste of time." Does that make sense? But if I see the role of marketing being establishing if there's a fit, the marketing becomes very clear, overt, and explicit like here's who this is for, here's who it's not for, here's what it is, here's what it

isn't, and there's an ongoing process of honing that and making it more honest and more clear so that the people who show up in the room really want to be there and are the right people.

What that means is they have a much better experience which means that, when they leave, the word of mouth is great and there's an organic upward spiral of that. Has anyone ever been to a workshop that you were like, "Oh my gosh, I got sold totally wrong into this. It's not what I thought it was." Has anyone had that? Yeah. I went to one and it was all about how to use Myers Briggs, the four personality types in marketing.

I'm like, it's still too advanced for me. I've been doing this 12 years and that workshop was still 'whoa!' There was somebody next to me, a massage therapist who started a year ago who hadn't even thought about target market or any basics. I was like, 'How are any of us in this room?' You know what I'm saying? I came out of the workshop clear that, "Wow, this is not a fit for any of us. This isn't really going to be useful."

This matters even just in terms of word of mouth. I think most of us would rather our businesses grow in a rapid way, hopefully, but organic, not in a forced way.

Ok. So, lowering the risk and taking the first step, this is so huge. We'll talk about this again a bit more in a little bit but sometimes people say, "If you had one magic wand, the magic bullet for marketing, what would it be?" this is a lot of it.

Here's the reality of your business, whatever it is. There are certain risks that people perceive about working with you, certain reasons they would not want to hire you. Depending on what the business is, it will be different things. It might be like, "What if I spend all this money and it doesn't work? What if people find out I went to that workshop? What will my spouse say if I spend all this money on this workshop? What if, it's an emotional workshop and the facilitator is not very good and it's traumatic?" You get all these risks.

One of my clients who was a fitness trainer, he's like, "I finally figured out this totally risk free offer. I'll come to your house for an hour. I'll lead you in an exercise thing and that's a free hour. That's totally risk free." I was like, "Risk free, huh?" You get what the risks are already. First of all, "Oh my gosh, what if my house is a disaster? I have to tidy." That's small but still.

"What if I'm a female and he's this big guy coming into my house alone, terrifying." Third, what do you think is coming at the end of that free hour? Big sales pitch. That may not be true. It may not be a real thing. He might just be like, "Great, call me if you ever want to work." It could be so gracious but the fear is there. There's the risk.

Unless that is addressed *directly*, the risk perception will be there and every business has these. You all had a risk coming here. This is pay what you can. What if you paid an amount it's so small, it offends me? What about that? Let's talk about that. Raise your hand if that was a concern. "What if I can't pay an amount?" honestly, I'm curious. That's a risk.

When I do my weekend workshops, three and a half days, pay what you can, I promise you that's a much bigger feeling so when I do my intro workshops to talk about that, I have to talk very directly about that feeling. You have to address it directly in your marketing.

If you can make the list, and this is hard because we're so close to our business, we can't see it, you probably can't legitimately see why people would not want to work with you. You can't see the risks. This is where it's good to ask friends and be like, "Why would you not hire me or somebody like me?" If you could make a list of those risks and find a way to lower them, eliminate them, or even reverse them where you take the risk on yourself, this workshop I went to, the \$5000 one, five days, he had 600 people there.

A bunch of them were comped in, maybe 100 but still, 500 people paying \$5000. How did he do it? It was all this because before, he offered a bunch of incentives before when people came, a day and a half in, if you don't like it, you don't feel you've already gotten \$5000 worth of value, I will refund the money no questions, no funny business, no hard feelings, etc. There was more he did but fundamentally, when he asked people who had been students of his for years, "Out of everything I've taught, what's the most valuable thing that has actually brought you the most money?" I would say half got up to the mic and said this.

This is something to pay attention to. This is the safety thing from earlier, the more we can make it safe for people to check us out, the more willing they're going to be to do so.

The Three Core Elements of Your Marketing Strategy: The Platform, Paths and Container

Just to refresh what we just went over, we have the yes, the maybes, and the nos. One thing I forgot to say is to consider the impact of really getting the yes, the maybe, the no, just really letting go of the no's will save you a lot of time and a lot of energy. That's important to get.

Here's a question. Normally if I would do a day like this, if I were charging, a lot of my colleagues would probably be in the ballpark of \$200 let's say on average. Some might charge more, some less. Raise your hand if you would have come if it was \$200. Notice that. A few, a fraction. I just want to drive home the economic point of that.

This room is full because I lowered the risk of you taking that first step to come. That will make me more money than if I charged the flat rate. This isn't an argument for pay what you can, though it's interesting but it's something to consider because I think sometimes we don't get the impact. Oh yeah, reducing the risk. What does it do? It does *that* often. We'll talk more about that as we go.

My hope for today, by the way, is that some of this, especially some of the stuff to come may be new but my overall hope is that it's confirming for you of what you already know, that it's confirming of 'yeah, that is what has felt true for me'. That's my hope. We're going to get a little more tactical at this point.

These are the three core elements of your marketing strategy. When I look at somebody's marketing strategy and I'm trying to see how good it is and I'm looking for the leaks in it, this is where I look. These are the three things I look at as I go through it, and consider of course for your own marketing strategy, where you're at, three things.

Your Platform: What You're Known For

The first thing is what I would call the platform. The platform is, to use Suzanne Falter-Barns definition, 'what you're known for'. We could talk brand, your identity, your reputation. It's what you're known for. When people talk about you, how do they talk about you? The importance of the platform is for **clarity**, and also for **authenticity**. This is the kind of DNA of the business, the platform.

When we talk about this whole dynamic of polarizing, it comes from the platform. In half an hour or so, we're going to go into the seven different things that you can be known for. There's probably more but there are seven in my mind at this time.

Those seven things, out of them, most entrepreneurs pick *one* of them. It's almost always the same one. I think the fear in marketing is often that marketing is going to ask us to change ourselves in some way. We have to posture in a certain way, to appear a certain way to get the response we want from the marketplace.

It's the story of there's a square who's kind of getting bummed out about being such a square. He sees all these sexy triangles. "God, they're so minimalist. Here I am, this clunky square. I'm so awkward. I just want to be more like a triangle." The square hatches a plan to fit into triangle society, tries to bang its corners in a bit, wear hats that cover so you can't see that it's a square and it tries to fit in. At first, it's very exciting but it doesn't ever... squares are never really a very good triangle. It doesn't fit in that well and it eventually burns out on that whole attempt. Down at the beach one day, bummed out, the circle rolls by, "Hey bro, what's wrong with you?"

Speaking of hippies circles... Do you know why all the hippies moved to Nelson? They heard there was no work there. Do you know what kind of cigarette hippies smoke? Yours. Do you know how you can tell if a hippie came to visit you? They're still there. Do you know what the hippie said when the guy asked him to leave finally? "Namaste." Do you know why the lifeguard didn't save the hippie? "He was too far out, man." You're welcome. These are the additional pearls you get at this workshop.

Do you get terrible magic tricks and corny jokes at other workshops? Thought not. So, the circle rolls by and is like, "Hey, what's happening?" He's like, "Oh, you know. I'm a square but I tried to fit into triangle society and now I don't know where I belong." He's like, "Man, chill out. You just got to roll with it. You should be more like a circle." He's like, "Yeah, that sounds so much more relaxing than all this effort," so tries to become a circle and fit in but was a very clunky circle and it never really works out.

The point of this is that if you're a square, then let's see the whole *cube*. Let's see more depth, more dimension on you. If you're a triangle, let's see the whole *pyramid*. If you're a circle, let's see the whole *sphere*. That's where we're talking when we talk about the platform. We want to see *more* of you, not less. We don't want to see you change, we want to see more *dimension*.

The Paths: Making It Easy to be Found

The second element of the marketing strategy is this idea of paths. These are the tactics and strategies. This is when people come to a marketing workshop, this tends to be what we want. Give me some how-tos, which we will get into but the paths, I think of it as if your business was a cabin in the woods but there were no actual paths to your door, think how much harder it would be for people to find you.

Maybe they could geocache you. That would be fun, hack through with a machete. But it would be very difficult to find you. Because it's so hard to find you, less people would do it so the goal with any of the paths, any of the ways you've even heard about this workshop, those are all paths, Facebook, word of mouth from a friend, getting an email from somebody. Those are paths but paths could be public speaking, networking, PR, advertising, hosting events. Those are all paths. Those are ways people could hear about you.

The goal of the path is to **make it easy to be found**. Going back to this idea of the prospectors versus prospects, your ideal clients are already looking for you. How easy is it for them to find you? Critical. We want to look at the paths.

The Container: Making Your Business Safe & Sustainable

The third thing, I wish it started with a P but it doesn't, is the idea of a container. The container is once they show up, then what? They show up. Are you ready to receive them? A lot of people have this feeling, "If I could just get on Oprah, it would be great. Problems would be solved." Really? Not really.

Most people, they win a million dollars. A year later, they're broke. There was no container to receive it. You go on Oprah. Do you have a website? If you don't, great, then what? Are they going to find you on Facebook and add you as a friend until you hit the limit of 5000? A website is a great example of a container.

If they go to your website, is there a place for them to sign up to be on your email list? Can they find you on social media through your website? Can they get to know you and explore in a safe way who you are and what you're about, and get to know your platform through the website?

The container is your business model. It's the structure of your business. It's your offers. It's all of that put together. What's interesting is people tend to think of marketing as the thing that's going to make you more money. But the paths don't make you money. That's actually this, your container. Whether or not you are actually sustainable and make money comes down to the container. It comes down to your business model and your structure. The marketing just makes that work easily. If the platform was like we're going to throw a pirate themed party, that's the idea. That's the seed. It's going to be a pirate themed.

Do you know why the pirate went to the movie? Because it was R rated. Do you know what a pirate's favorite letter in the alphabet is? The C. Do you know what a pirate's second favorite letter in the alphabet is? P because without a p, a pirate would just be irate. You'll use it later. Don't look at me like that. I see you taking notes on these jokes.

Participant: Maybe you're going to expand on this. It didn't register what you were saying about the container.

Tad: I will expand on that. If the idea is pirate theme party, the paths are invitations that go out to let people know about the party. The container is people show up, "Look, it's a pirate ship in the house," and it all decorated like that. It's ready to receive people. If you take any one of these three pieces out, the business doesn't work as well.

Participant: The platform is the invitation?

Tad: The paths are the invitation. That's how people find out about the party.

Participant: What is the platform?

Tad: The idea of a pirate theme party. The container is you decorate your house in that way. If you take away the platform, you've just got a party. It's okay but there's not a theme party, not really exciting. If you take away the paths, you have this great idea for a party. Your house is all decorated ready to receive people and nobody knows about it. Take away the container, you have this great idea for a party, invites going out, and then disappointment when they arrive and you're still in your sweats, "Oh yeah, come on it." "What? I thought this was a pirate themed party?" As my friend said, trail mix is made of two ingredients, M&Ms and disappointment. That's the capital T truth for you right there.

We want all three of these but let's talk a bit more about the container and then we'll work back to the platform, and then paths. The container is the business model. It's your structure. I think of the container, one metaphor I like to use for it is a bucket. If you think of the paths as almost a faucet pouring water and the water represents money and clients and all that, there's a question of how good is this bucket?

Often, there are leaks in the bucket. The feeling is, 'I don't have enough water in it. I just need to turn the faucet on harder.' Most often what's the case is we need to plug a lot of the holes in the bucket. Here's an example. I know a guy who does appreciative inquiry work. Raise your hand if you know what that is. Wow, more than most. It's a way of listening and dealing with problems, very nice and positive.

Anyway, that's the worst summary. Everyone is offended who knows what that is now. He did a talk for a group probably a little bit bigger than this at a conference. He calls me up. He's like, "Hey Tad, I just did this workshop at a conference. I had some questions." "Sure." "It was 70, 80, maybe 100 people at this conference. My room was packed. The workshop went so great. It was this hour long thing, really interactive. The vibe was so good."

I was like, "That sounds amazing!" He's like, "Yeah, people really loved it. In fact, it was rated in the evaluations after as the best part of the conference, better than keynotes, better than everything. It was the best part but I didn't get any clients from it." There was a lot of water in that room and he left with a dry empty bucket.

I said, "Okay, what did you offer them at the end as the next step?" Wind whistling. "You can email them and offer them something else. Did you get their emails?" No response. Does it make sense? It's not an issue of enough water. The water wasn't *captured*.

If he had just given everyone a little postcard size form of, "Hey, if you like this, put your contact info and here's a bunch of boxes you can check of ways we can follow up, if you want a free one-on-one session to see if it's a fit. I have a workshop coming up if you just want to be on my email list, whatever," or even just passed around a piece of paper, "Hey, if you want to be on my email list," as a minimum, he might have left there with a lot of leads for business but there was no bottom on his bucket so water just went right through.

Often, the first thing we need to do is reevaluate our bucket. There's this idea from some of you may know Andrea Lee. She lives around here, WealthyThoughtLeader.com, lovely woman. She wrote a book called Pink Spoon Marketing. This is where this comes from though this idea of the sales funnel is certainly older than that book.

The Sales Funnel

Here's the idea. If you go to an ice cream shop, there are a number of things that you can get. The first thing you can get at an ice cream shop is the **pink spoon**, the little sample, the free sample of ice cream. If you really like that, you can get an **ice cream cone**. If you really like that, you can get a **bucket** of it. If you like that, you can get a **cake**. If you really like that, there are actually ice cream **clubs** you can join that you can get flavours that nobody else gets, you learn how to make ice cream. There are worlds within worlds that would shock and appall you.

If you go to a yoga studio, there's a **free class**, free pass to check it out. There are **drop in classes** you can do. There are the **ten pass or month pass** you can get. Are there any yoga studios here in Victoria? There's **workshops and retreats**, and then there's the thing that actually pays the bills at the yoga studios that if you remove it, yoga studios collapse shortly thereafter... **teacher trainings**. We're familiar with the bronze, silver, gold. We've seen the sales funnel before.

We don't spend a lot of time thinking about this in our businesses. I don't think we spend enough time getting the financial impact that this has in terms of our sustainability. Whether your business is sustainable or not, whether you really make money or not comes down to a lot of things, all three of these but I want to emphasize this part of it and the importance of having your container and your business model figured out.

Often, when a business is struggling, it's because they haven't figured this structure right or they don't have one. Here's some terrible business models I'll give you...

1) **Nothing but pink spoons**. That's like you at the park giving out pink spoons of ice cream and at the end of the day, you have no ice cream and you're alone and sad, and no ice cream to console you, the worst. That obviously doesn't work, just giving away things for free all the time, little samples.

2) Here's another one that doesn't work, **only the teacher trainings**. Imagine how ludicrous it would be to go to a yoga studio and be like, "Hey, I was wondering if you have any drop in classes." "No, we haven't done that for awhile but we have this amazing teacher training in Tulum. It's so beautiful there this time of year, and this teacher, Cole, he's so great." It would just be a little too much too soon. I'm not ready to commit because I don't know who you are. I don't feel safe yet. Why would I drop \$4000 or \$6000 to go there with no sense? Clearly crazy.

3) Here's though the model that I typically see that is also equally crazy but is the most prevalent, no pink spoons or very few, none of this, **just ice cream cones**. Here's what that looks like.

"Thanks for coming in for a session. Would you like to book another session? Thanks for that session. Should we book another session?" one at a time.

Metaphorically, it's like you love to swim. Swimming is so great. There's an island just over there. You swim back and forth to the island. One day, your friend comes over and is like, "Oh man, I really want to get to that island but I can't swim." In this metaphor, there's no boats in this world. You're like, "Oh man, that's a bummer. It's so close." He's like, "Yeah, I just can't swim. I try and it just doesn't work. Hey, could you swim me over on your back?"

You're like, "I guess, sure. I love you, okay." The friend gets on his back, you swim him over. It's kind of exhausting but you get there. In this metaphor, that would actually work and not drown you. You deliver them there. They're so grateful but when you get back, there's a huge lineup of people because they texted their friend. In this metaphor, there are no boats but there are cell phones.

They texted their friends so their friends are there being like, "Oh my gosh, we just heard you swam your friend over. Can you swim us over too?" You're just like, "Oh, you know what? I can't. I've got a job." In this, there's also jobs, money, cell phones, but there are no boats. You're like, "I got to work my job." They're like, "No, we'll pay you."

You're like, "I could do what I love, swimming all the time and be paid for it?" So you start swimming people over and you quit your job. Life is great but pretty soon, you get tired of doing that and you're like, "Darn, I have to keep doing this to pay rent." Rent also exists in this world. You have to keep doing it. Eventually, you drown and you die. It's a terrible, tragic end of the story.

This is what happens. People get burned out. Eventually, you want to get a log you can fit a couple people on, build a raft eventually, maybe a boat. The boat isn't just so you can get more people on it. It's also for *you* for this to be sustainable. When we look at the pink spoons, the pink spoons are about safety for *them*. The rest of the sales funnel is about sustainability for *you*.

Is it sustainable? If you ever went for venture capital, the first thing they'd be looking at is your business model. What's your plan? What's the structure?

4) Here's the worst business model I've ever seen was an astrologer in Winnipeg, not only just was like book a session, "Would you like to book another session?" It was just like, **"Do you want to book a session? Great, you're done for life."**

She would do one reading, a 90 minute life chart reading, and then that was it, nothing else, which meant if she wanted to get more money, she had to get a new client. There are a lot of studies that have been done and the general number I've heard thrown around is it costs six times more to get a new client than to keep an existing one.

For most businesses, the money, the real money is not in getting new clients. There are three ways to grow your business. Let me throw this in here, three ways to grow your business. This is from Jay Abraham. Everything you can do in business to grow your business fits in these three things.

The first thing you could do is get **more clients**. You just get more people in the door. That will absolutely grow your business. The second thing you can do is you can get **more money per client**. Sometimes, that can be raising fees which a lot of you I would suggest may need to do at some point but also having other things to offer. Another would be the clock representing getting people to come back **more often**. If you're a video rental store and people rent from you once a year but you find a way to get people to come in twice a year on average, you've just doubled your business. These are the three, yet out of those three, what do you think everybody focuses on? New clients but the business model, the container are these two things.

This has such a profound impact on the bottom line. I can give you example after example, a few examples. There was a web design company in Edmonton and they were working with the Edmonton Oilers. Henry Singer closed, a lot of clients with money. They brought me in, saying, "We want you to help us grow our business."

What they meant was get new clients. I was like, "I get that you want new clients but you already have 20 clients who are awesome. I would be more curious to look at these two things." What we did is we made a spreadsheet, all of their clients and all of their services. There are about 30 services and products that they could offer.

I had them go through and colour code it. They blacked out anything that their clients already had so the Edmonton Oilers have this, this, and that. In red, they put the things that that client should not ever had. If a client was like, "Hey, can we get this widget?" they would be like, "No, you don't need it, we refuse to give it to you."

Yellow was for maybe. Green was for go, a sort of 'why don't they have it already? We should be talking to them.' It was this Rastafarian looking spreadsheet in the end. I then had them look at, "If you sat down with the Edmonton Oilers and went through this whole process of sharing this, how many of these things do you think they'd say yes to?"

They said 'Easily 80%. Our clients do whatever we say basically, they trust us.' I haggled them down to 20% because I wanted to work with extremely conservative numbers. 20% of all of that would have been more was about \$120,000, just sitting there.

Another example from my own business. I've traveled around doing these workshops, weekend workshops. I mostly do them in Canada, some in Europe. I don't do a lot in the states because it's illegal to do it in the States and I've been turned away from the border twice. I don't want to talk about it. Apparently you need a round trip ticket and bringing a wedding ring when you cross the border is not a great thing, a heads up to you all.

Anyway, I don't do a lot of workshops in the States and yet there are people in the states who want me to come down. I get emails from people in Chicago, New Hampshire etc. They want me to come down. Yet I'm not going to go down there. That's money on the table. A couple years ago, I said, "Why don't I do a virtual program over the phone? I'll take the content of the weekend, and divide it over six weeks."

It was the first time I had done it so I offered it up \$200 per person for the six week program which to me was super cheap but it was the first time so I just put it out. 40 people said yes. That's \$8000 that had not existed for me before when I added that to the sales funnel because up to that point, all they could do is maybe work with me one-on-one but at that point, I was charging \$200 an hour or they could fly in to see me, or buy maybe the one product I had on my website which was \$29. Those were their options.

Now they actually had something they could buy. You might be shocked how many more things your clients might want from you in different ways or different formats.

Then I was really getting into helping people figure out their niche so I created a six week program called Niching for Hippies and I offered that out for \$300. I was raising it \$100. I had 50 people sign up for that which was \$15,000 that hadn't existed for me before but was always there. Does that make sense?

Just because I had never offered something so they had no chance to say yes or no to it. Then I did it again the next year. I charged \$600 and still got 40 or 50 people which is more. Figuring out how to build my sales funnel out has made my business a *lot* more financially sustainable. That's my hope for you because there's this idea in business of a lifetime value of the client. We won't get into it in a lot of detail but it's this idea of thinking what is the back end financial worth of a client.

Most of the time, people think, "Well, this person comes here. They spend \$75 on a massage." I wouldn't ever want to spend up to \$75 to get a new client but what if that client was coming back five times a year for three years? That's more than \$75 is the point. Most of us don't think about the lifetime value, the back end there but I would invite you to ruminate on what that lifetime value might be for you and your clients.

I promise you it's more than \$200 or \$300 and yet sometimes we're so stingy about spending money to get clients but long term, the value is there. That can be expanded by making the business, the sales funnel more robust when you figure out something else to add.

Fundamentally, when we're talking about the sales funnel, there are products, programs or packages you might add that you could sell, there are programs you might decide to offer beyond just one-on-one treatment. Packages might be offering a series of 10 sessions or a series of sessions focused on a particular issue.

If you're really interested in more on this, I would check out PinkSpoonMarketing.com. It goes into a lot more detail in this whole philosophy.

Participant: I just had a question. One of the things I struggle with is trying to figure out what would be the pink spoon amount to not give too much away and not too little.

Tad: It's tricky. Does anyone else resonate with that where it's like what do you give away for free? How much do you charge? It is tricky. That's something I know I

wrestle with all the time. I have a book coming out called The Niching Spiral. It's not ready yet but you can see the sales letter in process at www.NichingSpiral.com.

There's parts of it that I'm like I want to give away for free and there's a video. I'm not sure whether to include that, just on the sales page so people get what it is or to put that as a bonus. It can be tricky, yeah.

Participant: One thing I've also found is that if people go too far in giving things away, it leads to a perception of you're not as valuable, not worth as much.

Tad: Yeah, there's an art to this. If you give away things that help people understand your platform and how you see things, that does *not* diminish. If you give your services away for free, I imagine everyone here has had this experience where you're like, "I like you. I want to help you. I'm going to give you my service for free," and they did not value it, maybe didn't show up on time.

You're like, "Ah, I just gave you this for free," and it's so frustrating. When we talk about the pink spoons, by the way, here are a few examples of what this can be because the safety thing that got brought up earlier is so important, lowering the risk of taking the first step. This is where pink spoons are invaluable.

The pink spoon is just a sample. It's just a taste of what you do. This gets used a lot. Bakeries use this, grocery stores use this. Perfume stores use this. The point of the pink spoon specifically is *not* to try to get you to say yes. It's not there to *convince* you of anything. It's genuinely there to help you figure out if it's a fit. That's it.

What can a pink spoon be? There's a number of things it could be, video. An **online video** is a great pink spoon where people can actually see you work or see you talk, see you sharing a how-to. A plant store might say, "Here's a video on how to pin back your plants without killing them."

Or a coffee shop might be, "Here's one of the secrets. We're not going to tell you all of them but here's one of the mistakes people make when making coffee we wanted to tell you in case you can't come in one day, you're sick, have your coffee at home," or whatever. Byron Katie who does the work stuff, she's got a ton of videos of her doing the work with people.

People might be like, "She's giving it away. She's giving away too much." What she's doing is giving *clarity* to people, "Here's what I do. Here's what it looks like so it's not so scary for you so you might want to check it out." It could be an online video or even a nugget, a tip, a how-to based on the work that you do, a

certain part of your perspective or point of view like here's a critical distinction I want to share.

Participant: A couple of months ago, I started making my own posters online for my Facebook page and putting my own.

Tad: Like memes, quotes?

Participant: Exactly, my own wisdom, how I'm connected to the business and posting them different places. That to me is a pink spoon.

Tad: Yeah, it's interesting. Part of the thing with the pink spoon, there are a few criteria. It's got to be **free**, **no cost**, ideally **no risk for them**, and it has to be of **value**. It has to give them a genuine taste. It can't be just the scent of it. They have got to be able to taste it unless what you're selling is a scent I guess.

It has to be of some sort of value. A commercial is not a pink spoon because it's not actually giving any value (unless the commercial in some way gives value). It could be video. It could be **audio**, downloadable meditations, audio of a talk, audio of a coaching call you do with somebody could be a pink spoon. It could be something **written**, a blog post, a special report, a transcript of a coaching session. That can be a pink spoon.

It could be a **quiz**, a self assessment type thing could be a pink spoon where they answer these questions for what personality type you are. People tend to love those. It could also be a **free intro**, a talk or workshop that's free. The only thing is it starts to get a little riskier for them then, "Now I have to show up, be in a room, maybe I'll get a big sales pitch. Maybe they're going to make me do something I don't want to do there," so there's a little more risk.

A **free teleseminar** could be a pink spoon or **webinar** or something, anything that gives them the taste of what you do. It could be a **free sample session** but there's a little more risk there because now they're actually interacting with you. The more you can give them a way to taste what you're doing before they work with you, the more likely – I was going to say the more likely they are to work with you, but that's not true. The faster they're going to know if it's a fit or not. That's what you want because you don't want people showing up who are not a fit for you.

I'm going to leave that there because we may come back to that. The afternoon is pretty much entirely Q&A so maybe we'll save any questions until the afternoon but that's the whole focus of the afternoon, whatever questions you have, we'll do our best to explore those.

Paths: A Deeper Look into The Three Levels of Marketing

The paths, being easy to be found, there's a few things I want to say about this.

There are so many ways that people could find you. We can make a list but I think you could probably make your own list. You see them out there around, public speaking, advertising, networking, hosting events, social media, all of that. Those are all ways, tactics you could use to make it easy for people to find you.

There are a few things I want to put out about this. First of all, which one do you choose because there's so many, too many to list really? What do you choose? Weight Watchers has this great line. If you know the answer, don't shout it out. They say there's one form of exercise that's actually been proven to be the most effective for weight loss. There's actually no debate about this. This is the most effective for weight loss specifically.

Any guesses? If you know the answer, don't shout it. *The one you'll do.* Somebody knew the answer. Yeah, the one you'll actually do. People will be like walking, running, swimming. Swimming might actually be proven to be the most effective but if you almost drowned as a child, if walking is the best but your knees hurt or you have a dysfunctional relationship with your feet, "Why do you always get places before me? Why are you following me?!" it's not going to work.

That's the same with marketing. Public speaking is a great form of marketing unless you are paralytically shy and cannot get up in front of people. Raise your hand if you love writing. You just write all the time. You're always writing, great form of marketing for you. If you hate writing or can't do it, it's not the best for you.

Raise your hand if you love social media. You secretly love being on it. Great. Raise your hand if you hate it and are trying to get off it, some of the same people. If you hate it, it may not be the best thing for you.

Networking is great. Some people, I could throw you in a room full of strangers and by the end of the night, they would have met everyone, introduced everyone to everyone. They would be sitting there regaling their new friends, crowding around them with stories. Other people would have drunk themselves into oblivion in the corner quietly and just waited for the evening to go. For the profound introvert, networking may not be your best thing but for an extrovert, it might be. They all work.

This is the main thing I want to say. Everything works.

I know people have built their businesses by doing morning radio talk shows. That's their main path, "I love being in my pajamas on the radio. I get a kick out of it. I'm an early bird." Some people do it just through talks and presentations but if you go to workshops, they'll be like you have to blog, you have to do public speaking. You don't. You don't have to do *anything* but you have

to do *something*. There have to be some paths. There's got to be some way that people can find you but it doesn't have to be any particular thing. It can be whatever mix works best for you.

The second thing I'll say, there's one thing you can do to boost the effectiveness of any path. Let me describe it this way. There are three levels of marketing. There's the **cold**, there's the **warm**, and then there's the **hot**. These are the three levels.

The cold level is cold calling, direct mail, billboards. There's no preexisting relationship. There's no real warmth. You're a total stranger. At the cold level, you're investing 10 units of effort and you get one unit of reward. The cold level is kind of like the old TV show Cheers except nobody knows your name and nobody is glad you came. Yet this is how most people think about marketing.

As soon as I start talking about marketing, people think cold level, "Oh, I have to go to random business mixers with people I don't know and hand out my business card for no reason just to make sure everyone has it," as if to say, "Hey, so good to meet you. Hey, can you throw this out for me? Thank you so much. I was going to do it myself but you just seemed closer to the trashcan." That's the cold approach. This doesn't work very well from an energy system standpoint. It's unsustainable. You're putting in so much effort and you're getting so little reward.

The other level is the warm level. The warm level is more of a one to one ratio of effort to reward. This is all about partnerships and hubs, identifying your hubs which we'll talk about in a second what that means. Basically, instead of trying to do it all yourself, most solo entrepreneurs are solo entrepreneurs and it's a very lonely process. We can build things a lot stronger together in partnership and supporting each other.

For example, raise your hand if you're on my email list. Wow, a bunch of you. Darn, that doesn't work well for the example. When I went to Ottawa the first time, *nobody* was on my email list. I had never done a workshop or maybe there were some people who had just found me randomly but I had never been to Ottawa and yet we filled two day-long events like this with 60 people each. I spent maybe three hours working on that. How is that possible?

Because Heather Garrod who runs Planet Botanix in Ottawa hosted me. She's a hub. She's very well connected and well respected in the scene. She endorsed me to her community. They trust her. They came.

Any tactic that you can think of, I promise you will work better if we figure out a way to connect it to a hub. Planet Botanix is a holistic store. They sell soaps and crystals, all those things. She hosted me. Any strategy works better with a hub attached to it.

For example, you write an article or a blog post. You put it on your blog. It sits there lonely. Nobody ever sees it for the rest of time versus you write that same article. Let's say you're a yoga teacher and you write an article and post it on ElephantJournal.com that is seen by millions of people and they can go back and find you and your website. Does that make sense that that works better a lot?

Doing a talk and trying to fill it yourself with your own crowd, you'll fill the first one or two but eventually, your crowd is like, "I've seen your stuff," and it goes down versus you find a conference that has already gathered your ideal people together and you get booked as a speaker at that conference and talk to 1000 people who are all your ideal client. That's better.

Networking, two ways you could use hubs in networking. One is, most people when they go networking are in the mindset of I'm trying to find clients. I want to suggest that's a stressful way to do networking because now we're in the mindset of trying to get the sale somewhere. This is from Bill Baren, a colleague of mine. He suggested when you go networking, don't go networking for clients. Go networking for hubs. Go networking for people who might in the long term be really good partners for you who could refer dozens of clients.

Again, the value of this, one really good hub for you, dozens of clients who not just are paying you a front end but the back end. Let's say the back end for you is \$300 of an average client right now and you get one hub at a networking event who ends up over the span of their relationship with you, just ten clients they refer you. That's \$3000 from that one. You get it? There's an impact here.

You can network for hubs. Here's another way hubs can work in networking even better. Let's say you go to the networking event and you're still networking but it's cold. They don't know you versus the host of the party introduces you around to the people you need to meet. That's better because you're not just, "Hey, I'm a stranger. I'm going to try to build rapport." Some people are really good at that.

It's like the host being, "Here's a really great person. You need to trust them. They're great," because there are people in your life who when they recommend a band or a movie to see, or a book to read, you're just like, "I'll get it." They are your filter. You're just like, "Your taste is amazing." You say yes to everything. There are other people, "Man, I just saw the best movie. You've got to check it out," and you're like, "Let me write down the name of this movie so I can make sure I never see it. Thank you for your consistent terrible taste in all things cultural." There are those people too.

Hubs is really key here no matter what tactic we talk about. You tweet it yourself, so many people see it. It gets shared or retweeted by somebody who has a following of 100,000, that's better. We want to have our eye toward that.

Of course, the hot level is where you put one unit of effort and you get ten units of reward. This is where you have become a hub. This is where you are the go-to person. You're the trusted adviser on a certain issue. You're the trusted adviser on whatever issue it is.

For example, if you have scoliosis and you want to do yoga in this town, who do you talk to? You talk to Yoga Cat. She does yoga for scoliosis. She is definitely the hub, and a hub just in the scoliosis scene probably in general.

Another example of hubs by the way, also from Victoria, there's a lovely fellow, Ahmed Miles, does anyone know him? He's a white British sufi Chinese medical practitioner, quite the mix, one of the loveliest men. If you're looking for an acupuncturist in Victoria, Ahmed Miles, I don't know where he practices. Ask around, he's great.

I asked him, "Where do you get most of your clients?" He said, "Mostly two sources." I'll get back to those sources in a little bit. Two main hubs gave him almost all of his clients. It doesn't have to be a ton.

Warm Marketing: Identifying Your Hubs

There's a realtor in Seattle, real person, Phoenix Rudner. His niche that he mostly focused on is dog owners. If we looked out of the window at most – not here, because it's the harbour, most windows in the city, you would see an ad for a realtor somewhere, not surprising. What's surprising is they're all *identical ads*.

He was like, “How do I set myself apart?” One of his friends was like, “You are crazy about your dog. Your dog is a family member. Why not pet owners because they have different needs when they move?” If you've ever had a pet and you move, where do I put them when I'm in between places? Is it close to a ravine or park? Do they spray pesticides on the grass? There are considerations you have that other people don't. “Why don't you focus on that?”

Phoenix has the option of doing the cold approach. The cold approach would just be going to random business mixers and trying to meet, walking down the street, “Hey, do you have a dog? Are you thinking about moving? No, okay. How about you?” It takes a long time and is kind of creepy, not that effective but what if he started to get strategic and went for the warm approach of finding hubs?

This is the question. What are the hubs for pet owners? Where do they already spend their time, their money, or their attention?

Participants: Stores, parks, vets, groomers, beach, dog shows, dog daycares, dog restaurants, training. There are trainers and also there are schools, breeders.

Tad: That is the weirdest job in the world to me. I don't know how they explain their life to their friends, dog breeders. In my mind, it looks like this. “I'm just going to leave you two alone for awhile, light these candles, put on some Barry White. I'll be back in two hours.”

Participant: Dog walkers, rescue.

Tad: One of the workshops I led, somebody was like, “Pet cemetery.” I was like, ‘Great for a realtor.’ Imagine! ‘Hey, sorry to interrupt the service. Keep going. I'm so sorry about your dog dying. That's a huge bummer. I know sometimes, keep talking, I know sometimes when you have a death in a house, it's hard to stay there when your pet dies because of the memories. Here's my card.’ That's the worst. That's not a good one. What else though? There's more.

Participant: Pet massage, spas.

Tad: There's all sorts of holistic treatment.

Participant: Believe it or not, there are pet therapists.

- Tad:** Yes, animal therapists where they talk about what a bitch their mother was. Sorry. This is the sad part. I legitimately wait all day to tell that joke.
- Participant:** Animal communicators.
- Tad:** Yeah, the dog whisperers. Here's a whole chunk we've missed. What about meet-up groups? If you go to MeetUp.com and check out dog, I'm not just talking a meet-up group for dog owners in Victoria. I'm not just talking a meet-up group for a specific breed of dog owners in Victoria.
- I'm talking about meet-up groups for specific breed of dog in specific neighbourhood. You would be amazed. There are meet-up groups. There are going to be Facebook groups. There will be on Twitter, various hash tags and also radio stuff around dogs. There's TV. There will be newsletters you can be on to find out all sorts of stuff about people's dogs.
- Participant:** Dog magazines.
- Tad:** Thank you, totally.
- Participant:** Blogs.
- Tad:** Yes, etc. That's it for now. That's a lot of hubs. Here's the warm approach. The warm approach is where Phoenix would start to map out who's who and build relationships, get to know these people. Notice what's happened here. Phoenix has now become a bit of a hub in the center of the wheel. That's how it works in marketing.

Marketing is all about building these relationships but strategically, asking yourself, "Who is already connected to the kind of people who are my ideal clients, the people who are a perfect fit for me? Who is already connected to them? Where do they already go? What events could I find them at?" building relationships with those people, being in those places, not just writing articles on your website but putting them in magazines or blogs of other people who are already reaching those people.

Three Strategies for Connecting with Hubs

There are three strategies I want to toss out. We can explore them more this afternoon but three strategies around hubs I want to toss out.

Number one strategy, create a hubs database. This is huge, literally a spreadsheet for your hubs. My brother, who just had a little baby, is a stand-up comedian actor but did stand-up professionally for a long time.

The difference between a professional stand-up comic and an amateur is that the professional, when they're really building their career, writes down every funny idea they have. Every funny thing that comes to their mind gets written down in a little notebook, on their iPhone. They capture it. The difference between a hobby business and to me one that is serious is one that's serious keeps track of the hubs because this is your business.

If you don't know how to use a spreadsheet, there's a teenager in your life somewhere who does. They will teach you. It could literally just be a Word document. It could be a page. Wherever it is, capture it. Eventually, I would say have a spreadsheet so you can organize it in a way that makes sense for you but start to figure this out. We'll talk about where you find hubs in just a bit.

The second thing, once a week, weekly coffee dates with hubs. If it's virtual, over the computer, have a weekly Skype date with a hub. That means in a year, you've had 50 connections with hubs. A lot of them will not be a fit. That's what you'll discover but some of them will be a perfect fit. That could benefit you both beautifully financially.

The third idea is hosting a gathering where you bring a bunch of hubs together. Phoenix could say, "Hey, as a realtor, people are always asking my opinion on trainers and shops to go to and all that. I imagine you're in the same position. If you're a trainer, you still need to refer out for walkers, breeders, and all this. It just makes sense that we should all meet each other and invite everyone together," kind of host that, bring people together where he is the host of that event. They will not all remember each other but they will all remember him.

It could be as simple as we just mingle, I'm going to cater it, spend a couple hundred dollars, we mingle, and we could do a go around circle, 25 of us, two minutes each, everyone just saying, "Here's where I'm at. Here's what I need. Here's what's coming up next for me," and get to know each other.

Throwing events like that is actually surprising amount of how I've built my business, by bringing hubs together and then you become a hub of those hubs. Database, weekly meetings with hubs, consider throwing a gathering. If it's virtual, you can do a Google Hangout. You can do something online where you bring people together. You could do sort of a telesummit. It's a little different because the point of this is literally to connect with the hubs, introduce them all to each other, you all meet each other.

If you work globally, you can be like, “Hey, you 20 are all amazing. I want to have a call. We'll start at 1:00 pm sharp. Everyone just gets two minutes to introduce themselves. You're all so great. I just want you all to meet each other.” Imagine if I went to you and said, “Hey, those ideal clients you want? I know 20 people who are all super connected to those people and I'm having a potluck at my place with them. Do you want to come?” Is anyone going to say no to that?

They're not going to come for you. They're coming for the networking. Those are three ways you can do it but in permaculture, from my limited understanding of permaculture, there's just this idea of guilds. There are certain companion planting, certain plants that grow really well together. A real typical one is corn, beans, and squash because the beans give nitrogen to the soil which the corn and the squash need. The corn gives a stalk, a trellis the beans can grow up and the squash gives the big leaves which gives shade in the beginning which the other two plants need. I don't know if the corn gives anything to the squash, selfish corn, but they grow better together.

These grow better together and businesses are the same thing. We all grow better in partnership with each other. We're all stronger together. This can also turn into the type of thing where you do collaborative workshops or events. There's a woman in Nova Scotia who sells cloth diapers. We were talking a lot about workshops. She's like, “I can't do a workshop for cloth diapers because you either have them, use them, and love them or you think they're disgusting and why would you go to a workshop about this disgusting thing?”

I said, “They may not but what if you did a workshop on natural parenting where you collaborated with a bunch of other people who offer how they do infant massage, how to feed your baby healthy food, how to get rid of the toxins in the home, how to communicate with your spouse when you've just had a kid. What if you did that and everyone involved promoted it, everyone wins, everybody walks away with new clients?”

Moon Dance Paints was one of the first eco-friendly painting companies in California, in the world, actually. They knew. They had this thing, “We've got this product. We know there's a whole bunch of people, if they knew it existed, they would buy it but how do we find them?” Very smart, they went to Whole Foods or Whole Paycheque as they call it which is a hub for their people, people who tend towards the sustainable.

They hosted, they didn't go there just for their paints to pitch them. They hosted a green home series with a green architect, green designer, interior designer, green landscaper, and their paints. All four of them promoted it and they all walked away with more clients for very little effort actually on any one individual's part. If you're looking for a form of marketing that gets more results with less effort, that's it.

The Seven Elements of Your Platform

The platform is what you're known for. I also want to suggest that this is where hubs come from. This is where we find them. Your platform is what you're known for. I said that there are a lot of things you can be known for, seven different things. Here's what they are.

Here's the metaphor I want to use. This is the core metaphor that I use in marketing. Your ideal clients, perfect fit for you are on Island A and they're very sad as you can see because they problem. They have some symptoms that they do not like. They want to be on Island B where there is some result that they are craving.

Your business is like the boat that can take them from one island to the other. Within this metaphor, there are seven different things you can be known for.

Element #1: The Boat

The first thing you can be known for, and this is what everybody tends to go, for is the boat. That's number one. What that sounds like is, "What do you do?" "I do reiki. I do shiatsu. I do conflict resolution workshops. I do permaculture. I do appreciative inquiry workshops."

The challenge with it is sometimes, the name of the boat, the lingo, the jargon of it is incomprehensible to people. It's like at a party and someone is like, "What do you do?" "I do this unique combination of reiki, shiatsu, traeger and the work that reconnects. It's really powerful." People are like, "That sounds so fascinating... I am out of punch so I'll be right back," and they never come back. You get that glassy eyed thing that can happen.

The boat is a legitimate thing to be known for because people might be searching "reflexology Victoria." It's one thing you can be known for. I want to suggest it's a very limited thing to be known for.

Element #2: You - The Captain of the Boat

The second thing you can be known for, is you, the captain of the boat. You can be known for who you are. This is where we start getting that polarizing thing. So many people squash their personality in business and Suzanne Falter Barnes has a line, "Let your freak flag fly." Be willing to be vulnerable and honest about who we are because who you are, your personality, your vibe is going to play a big role in whether people work with you.

Eventually, they're going to find out anyways so you might as well put it up front. Case in point, I'm going to give you four different people. You have to get a massage from one of these four people. Nobody gets to opt out. I'm going to ask you to pick. You have to raise your hand for one of them. You can't raise it for two of them. You have to choose. Life is hard.

Person number one, middle aged new age woman. She wears very comfortable clothes, loves to read books, loves tea, wears crystals, and secretly... huge bad ass when she was younger.

Person number two: UFC dude, muscles, tats, broken nose, shaved head but like a big teddy bear.

Person number three: Punk rock girl, just the studs everywhere, piercings and the entire Ani DiFranco collection but she's a real sweetheart.

Person number four: Sensitive and new age guy, wears his hemp t-shirts always tucked into his yoga pants, pony tail, fanny pack, gives you wonderful hugs that always last just a liiiittle too long.

You have to choose now. Again, middle aged woman, UFC guy, punk rock girl, new age guy. Raise your hand if you want the middle aged lady. Whoa, popular in Victoria. Be honest now, UFC guy, there we go. Punk rock girl, a few. Sensitive new age guy, not popular, wow. Guys in Victoria, get your act together.

Participant: Ease up on the hugs.

Tad: Totally, just like, "When I pull back, you let go. That's how this works." "No, left side."

The point is just me giving a very loose caricature description of those four people, it was very clear for you which one you would choose. Who we are has a real impact, whether it's a fit or not. There are some people who won't work with you because you remind them of their ex, period, not your fault. Just that's how it is.

Who we are, our personality, some people will think you're too this, too that. That's the way it is but you can be known for that, your personality. You can bring that out a little more. That can be a big part of your platform.

Element #3: The Journey from Island A – Island B

The third thing you can be known for, and this is the big one, the journey from Island A to B. This is where relevance comes from which is the first thing that matters in marketing. The first thing they need to know is can you help me get from Island A to B? Can you help me with a problem I have? If not, why would I get on your boat?

To say this a different way, nobody cares about your boat. To say that another way, the *only* reason people care about your boat if they do is because they believe it can take them to Island A to Island B better than another boat period. That's it. They have a phobia on Island A. I have a phobia of snakes. I really want to get over it so they go down to the harbour to go to the therapist boat.

On their way there, though, their friend is like, "Where are you going?" "I'm going to the therapist boat." "Therapy for phobias? You're going to talk for 20 years and never solve it. You should go to the EFT boat, it's amazing." "EFT? Is that better?" "Oh, EFT is way better." You start going down the road to that harbor for the EFT boat.

On the way, a friend is like, “Where you going?” “Trying to cure my snake phobia. I'm going to the EFT boat. I just heard about EFT.” “Oh my gosh, that takes forever. That is not specific. NLP, man that has come up with some incredible techniques, two minute phobia cures. You want to go to that boat.” “Okay.” They go to that boat.

On the way there, “Where you going?” “I'm going to the NLP boat to cure my phobia.” “NLP? That's so '80s. Richard Bandler was a creep. No, you don't want to go there. You want to go to the KGB boat. They'll get you over it.” (In thick Russian accent) “You get over your phobia or I kill you.” You get it.

That's why they care about your boat. They think it's going to help them. Yet, when I ask people, “Who is this person on Island A that's a perfect fit? What's the problem they're struggling with that you help with?” the response I often get is, “That's the best part. This can help everybody.” That's not that clear.

There's an old adage in marketing that says, “The confused mind says no.” When people don't get the context of the journey you help with, “I help people who are stressed. I help people who are going through transitions.” Again, NichingSpiral.com, check it out. It's all about this. This is important to figure out what is the particular journey we help people with.

As long as it's everybody, it's not going to be a draw. It's not going to be clear. Here's the fourth thing you can be known for.

Element #4: The Map - Your Point of View

The fourth thing is the map, the map of the journey from Island A to B, your point of view, your perspective. This is, in terms of credibility, probably the biggest thing. This is one of the least talked about but most profoundly important parts of marketing. This is something I didn't even come across until maybe three or four years ago, and then I was like, “Oh my gosh, I can't believe this isn't a primary piece that gets talked about.”

When I say point of view or the map, you're going from this island to that island but there's a lot of different routes, probably some smaller islands in between. Everyone has a different choice of route and time of day they go, how they go about doing that journey. Points of view, the ten commandments, the four agreements, the five elements of Chinese medicine, the Chinese meridian system, the seven chakras, the four directions, the seven habits of highly effective people. Those are all maps.

I would go even further to suggest that the reason you got into the work that you're doing is because you found a map, a point of view that made sense of the world for you. You were like, “Oh my gosh, this actually makes sense,” and that's what it was that grabbed you, something about the perspective. Byron Katie, the four steps that work, nonviolent communication, the four elements of nonviolent communication, those are all maps.

There are certain perspectives and points of view, a set of distinctions. Ahmed Miles, this acupuncturist here I talked about, one of the hubs that he had was from a physiotherapist I believe who just really loved him and recommended a lot of people go to him. The second hub was a new thought church in Victoria. I don't know which one but they have a certain perspective around masculine/feminine energies and how those worked.

They brought him to share from a traditional Chinese medical philosophy, the yin yang thing. When he went, it was as if they had the kindergarten understanding of it and he brought the PhD. People were just like, boom and all of a sudden were like, "He's my acupuncturist." He suddenly became so tight in that community, and he didn't even talk about the boat. He didn't go there to talk about acupuncture and yet they're seeing him for acupuncture just because the point of view and the maps overlaid so well, the philosophy was so in alignment.

One of the most important things here is to stop trying to change people's minds and their point of view. Here's a conversation that has never happened in the history of humanity. "Have you read the Bible? It's the revealed word of God." "Really? You say that but I think that the Bible is mostly, especially New Testament, a corruption of ancient Egyptian myths and I think that all of humanity really has a Christ myth, the divine being born into the human. I think that the Bible is actually just also a series of books that got chosen by people to historicalize and politicize that Christ myth to gain control of people. I mean, you have the Council of Nicaea. They got rid of a bunch of books. The fire in the libraries of Alexandria, that got rid of a bunch so I think we're left with a bunch of translations of books that were randomly thrown together."

"... Brother, you've shown me the error of my ways." That has never happened and the converse has never happened.

"Oh, the Bible isn't true."

"It says right here this is the revealed word of God."

"Really? Wow."

Trying to change people's minds about things that are really important to them is fruitless. This is the polarizing thing. You're just honest and real about how you see things and people make the choice they make if this is clear, and often, this is not as clear as it could be.

Often, when I talk to entrepreneurs, this is kind of fuzzy and the clearer it gets, the easier it is for people to choose themselves if it is a fit or not. This matters. If you were suffering from some health ailments and you were a raw vegan and you went to a naturopath and they were like, "We got to get you eating a lot of raw steak," and they have hunting gear everywhere, the heads of animals, you would be, "This is not a fit," and vice versa.

The Christian goes to the pagan naturopath, that's like, "Before you come in, we'd like to make a blood offering to the goddess Hecate," that wouldn't work. There has to be a fundamental

alignment in point of view. Your ideal client has to basically share your map or be open to it. If they're not, at least at that moment, they're probably not an ideal client.

Element #5: The Sun – Your Bigger Why

Number five that you can be known for is the why. There's a book written by a guy named Simon Sinek. He wrote this book called Start with Why. There's a TED Talk, 20 minutes that sums it up nicely. His main thesis is that people don't just buy what you do. They buy *why* you do it.

They buy into the bigger purpose that your company represents, your business represents if that's clear and exists. Talking about being known for something, the challenge is raise your hand if you used to be vegetarian and you're not anymore. Those same people, raise your hand if there are people who five, ten years later still think you're vegetarian. Right? People get it in their mind. They'll be like, "Oh, we were going to go out to this restaurant but we didn't know if you could eat here." "That was a decade ago."

But it also happens in business where you start off in massage, then you got into reiki, then life coaching, and now you're in to shamanic work. Your friends are like, "Oh, this is my friend Debby. Debby does the most amazing massages," That was a decade ago! But they still have you set for that. Sometimes, that's the challenge. The boat changes a bit. What do you do?

This is an interesting way to look at it. What if you became known not just for the *boat* but the why, the *bigger purpose*? For example, there's a woman in Edmonton who did breast massage. As we talked about it, that's the boat, breast massage. If that's what it's about, also, what do you put in your newsletters, research from Sweden on breast massage? Not that exciting.

But as we talked, it became clear that what it was really about for her was about women's empowerment. That's a lot more compelling. There are also more hubs for that. This is where we start to think about hubs. Who else is into women's empowerment who I could align myself with?

She might add a bunch of others. She might become a shamanic practitioner. She might do life coaching. She might open a store but people still associate her with women's empowerment as an umbrella thing.

Xerox makes what? Photocopiers. Even though they spent 15 years trying to rebrand themselves as the document company, that's still what we think. Dell makes? Computers. Xerox actually made a brand of computers that lasted a couple of years. They were very good but they did not fit in the brand. It was like, "What the heck? Xerox, computers?" It didn't make sense. Dell made an mp3 player that didn't last.

Apple makes everything and they're very successful. Why? His take is that they do have a very clear purpose, a why which is the think different. That's more of what they're known for, that vibe of think different, individuals, and creativity.

This is like the drum that you beat, that your business is about. As you get clearer on your why, clients are more loyal to you. They're much more forgiving of you because they see that your business is about something bigger.

The White Dog Cafe in Philadelphia, it's a restaurant but it's very much about local food and social justice. This was 20 or 30 years ago she started it. Her line was, "I use good food to lure innocent customers into social activism," but because she was so ethical and had such a strong why, if the service wasn't great, people were a lot more forgiving of it. Clients were loyal because it's not just that they were trying to support this boat, they saw that by putting money in that boat, it was supporting that bigger vision. That's a very powerful thing.

Element #6: Island C

The sixth thing you can be known for is what we'd call the new idea. TED Talks are about a new idea. This is where they're very happy, by the way. On Island B, they're happy but on Island C, they're ecstatic. Island B is what they're craving. This is the distinction.

Island A is my lawn looks terrible. My neighbour is giving me the stink eye every time they walk by.

Island B, my lawn looks beautiful, my neighbours are happy now.

Island C is, "Screw your lawn. Tear it up. Who needs grass? Food forest!"

Here's what's not happening for most people on Island A... they're not going to sleep thinking, "My lawn is such a mess. My neighbours hate me. It's bringing down my property value. It just makes me think of forests and nobody waters a forest yet they go. Maybe we can do that with food. Maybe we can have a food forest with indigenous plants." That doesn't happen.

They're not craving it because they don't know it exists yet. Some of you, your work may be an Island C thing. Raise your hand if you know what living machines are. This is not a Terminator reference. Three of you. Living machines is a way of dealing with sewage where you basically funnel the sewage through a swamp system.

There's a city in Eastern Europe.

Island A for them is their population had grown in this town. They had a canal and all their sewage went through the canal into the ocean. It was fine when the town was tiny but now it grew so fast so you have raw sewage going through and it's gross. That's Island A.

Island B, we need a treatment facility. That's what they're craving. That's what they have in mind.

Somebody comes along, "Treatment? Why don't you just use plants? You can plant reeds and flowers that would actually cleanse the water as it goes through so that by the time it hits the ocean, it's clean or clean enough to go into the ocean, and it's flowers and smells and looks

beautiful.” That’s Island C. They’re not craving it but once it gets introduced, they’re like, “Whoa, interesting.”

Element #7: Your Message

The seventh thing you can be known for, and this is the last one is sort of tricky because I think it combines a few of them, is the idea of the message. The message is kind of a combination of the why, your point of view, sometimes island C a little bit but it’s where you really distill it down into a clear slogan in a way.

The message of this workshop, “Marketing can feel good,” that’s the message. Mark Silver, “Every act of business can be an act of love.” That’s a message. My colleague Russell Scott loves doing dyad work and he just believes that in terms of helping people develop spiritually, working in partnership actually works better than trying to do it alone. His message is, “You have to do it by yourself but you don’t have to do it alone.” That’s a message, very simple, very easy to understand.

In permaculture, there was a video, Greening the Desert, and the core message that came out at the end of that was, “You can solve all the world’s problems in a garden.” That’s a message. The clearer the message, the better.

Imagine this if I said, “After lunch, I’m going to have each of you come up. You’re going to have 30 seconds and I want you to pitch yourself to the group to convince people to hire you.” That is not going to happen. A breath of relief, even though you knew I was kidding. Why? Because that’s uncomfortable. That is not a normal thing.

I think in the cold approach, in traditional marketing, you’re supposed to be okay with just getting up and pitching yourself. That’s not a normal human behaviour. It would be uncomfortable for you to do it. I promise you it would be uncomfortable to receive, have everyone be like, “Here’s why you need to hire me.”

What if I said, “When you come back” - we’re not doing this either by the way - “we all have 30 seconds to get up and share what is the message that most inspires you?” That would probably actually be easier to share, easier to talk about because you’re actually inspired about it and we would probably all love to hear it. It would be very interesting to hear what is the message that your work is about.

Tying It All Together

Honing your platform takes time. One thing I would like to say is underwhelm yourself with figuring out your platform. This can take *years* to figure out but the clearer it gets, the more it's going to polarize. The more you're going to get people who are a very firm yes to what you're doing.

Another interesting thing about this, all of this can be funneled back into the boat so the boat becomes an expression of the platform. When you walk down to the harbour, it's not just a bunch of generic boats. You have the burning man boat, the hippie boat. You have the 1920s France flapper boat. You have the military boat. You have the dudes with barbeques boat, etc.

Just by looking at the boat, you're like, "I get what it is." That can happen on your website. If you have a retail space, I remember the first time I walked into Solstice Cafe in Victoria, "Oh, I'll be here all week. These are my people." I hadn't even looked at the menu, which actually it didn't have a lot of stuff that I wanted in the end but I was like, "The vibe here is awesome."

I go into an Italian cafe. I'm like, meh. Other people like Italian cafes. They're crazy about it. The boat is the container, the sales funnel. Your container, the boat is most powerful when it's an expression of your platform which is impossible to do unless the platform is clear.

Epilogue:

That was the workshop. This is the workshop I've toured around for the past decade or so all around North America, Europe. Normally what happens at this point is that's the morning of the workshop, and in the afternoon, we move into an open Q&A conversation where any questions that people had during the morning can be addressed directly in the afternoon. Of course, since you're reading the transcript, you're not going to have that chance so if you'd like to work with me more, first of all, there's a bunch of free stuff on my site if you go to:

MarketingForHippies.com/free

There are hundreds of [blog posts](#), three hours of [video](#) you can check out. There's an ebook you can get if you sign up for the email list.

If you want to work with me one-on-one in terms of [coaching](#), there's the products & services tab and you can find out how to work with me in that. Also, on the [events page](#), you'll see when I'm doing live workshops and virtual workshops that are coming up to keep you posted.

If you're on my email list too, you'll find out about all of that. Thank you so much for reading this. I hope you liked it.

About The Author:

Tad Hargrave is a hippy who developed a knack for marketing (and then learned how to be a hippy again.) 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). He is does improv comedy semi professionally, co-runs Edmonton's progressive community building network TheLocalGood.ca, founded www.streetcarshows.com and the Jams program of www.yesworld.org. He speaks Scottish Gaelic and is also a huge Doctor Who nerd. You can learn more about him at www.marketingforhippies.com

