



22 Myths About Building Your Practice

(how to transform your business by embracing reality)

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Introduction: myths and assumptions

Let's get started.

This is my belief: most practitioners fail not because it's inevitable, but because they believe certain myths about building their practice. They are like lenses or filters they look through that colour everything.

When I say 'myth' I mean the assumptions that most practitioners operate under about what is normal and what is possible.

These myths determine what they do and don't do in their marketing.

These myths prevent them from seeing what is possible. To quote author Derrick Jensen, they "*blind them to real opportunities and bind them to unlivable situations.*"

These myths are incredibly common. There's an old saying that 'the fish were the last to discover water'. Why? Because they're swimming in it. They're surrounded by it all the time. We tend to miss what's most familiar. We're too close to the forest to see the trees.

Together, these myths form a sort of group, consensus reality that we all agree on.

These myths are not true.

One of the myths is that it takes a long time to build up a practice. This is not true. You could double your practice in 90 days (with the right strategy). People have done it and you can too.

Or can you? Not if you don't even see it as an option.

When you talk about healing and helping people, everyone smiles and says, 'awww . . .' but when you start talking about selling, marketing and money, everyone frowns and says 'ewww . . .' There is a lot of discomfort around these issues. In some ways, the myths that we are going to explore are like coping mechanisms. We don't see an alternative and so we come up with beliefs to explain why we don't have what we want.

When these myths are named and questioned directly - sometimes a certain freedom emerges. This e-book can't give you all the answers of what comes next or how to do things differently, but it can be the 'thin edge of the wedge' prying open the door of possibility.

I genuinely hope this is useful for you.

Warmest,

Tad
Radical business

Your Myth-Diagnosis:

There's nothing wrong with believing any of these myths. And, you might hit a point where you see that they're costing you more than they give you. So, here's a chance to look at them one by one and consider how true these feel for you (even if you intellectually sense it isn't true).

Your Myth-Diagnosis	How true does this feel for me? 1-10? (10 = very true)
MYTH #1: "It takes a long time to 'get my name out there' and once I do, the clients will just come to me. Building a successful, full practice takes years."	
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A Common Story
Jane the Practitioner
(in seven chapters)

All of the myths listed above lead to a lot of suffering for practitioners. In fact, these myths are so pervasive and their effects so predictable that they often lead to an all too common story. You may find what follows disturbingly accurate . . .

Chapter 1: The Itch

Jane looks at the lives of her family and friends and shudders. Many of them seem to be trapped in jobs and relationships that don't inspire them and, more often than not, drain them. They eat foods that she knows are hurting their health. She doesn't want that kind of life.

She wants to feel alive. She's not quite sure why she's so unsatisfied, and can't put her finger on it . . . or even clearly articulate the alternative she's craving. But something feels . . . off. It's like a vague itch that she keeps trying to scratch but can never quite reach.

Chapter 2: Inspiration Strikes

But then it happens.

A friend introduces her to a holistic healing modality or perspective that makes a huge difference in her life. She is skeptical at first but the more she looks into it – the more 'sold' she is. And, as she applies it to her own life – she begins to notice changes. Her health improves, her relationships get better, she's better able to set boundaries and she is feeling more and more at peace.

And then a light-bulb she goes on. A lot of people seem to be making it as holistic practitioners and coaches . . . why not her? She could do this for a living!

So, she does some research and decides to get certified in the technique or modality.

She spends years (and thousands of dollars) doing this. She spends years learning the philosophy and practical applications of her craft. And the more she learns, the more she loves it. It's implied that once the program is over she'll have everything she needs to run a successful practice. "*If you build it,*" she tells herself. "*They will come.*"

Eventually, she graduates.

Chapter 3: Reality Strikes Back

And immediately feels overwhelmed . . . “*how do I start a business?*”. She has no idea. So, she looks around at what everyone else is doing. And spends even more money on a gorgeous logo, business cards and flyers. And she tells all of her friends.

But a few years later – despite her best efforts - she still finds herself struggling to attract as many of the kinds of clients she is most wanting to work with. She places a few ads in the local new age magazines but gets an abysmal response on them. Each day she checks her voicemail and email hoping to find it full of bookings from people who saw her flyers or ads or posters at the local organic food store but . . . they never seem to come in at the levels she’s hoping for.

She has never made more than \$20,000 per year (on her best year).

And a lot of the clients she works with don’t seem to want more than a ‘bandaid’. They don’t really seem willing to take full responsibility for their own healing. They just seem to want her to ‘do her thing’ on them.

And then there are the disappearing clients . . . Some people would come in for a session or two, seem very happy with it, even tip her and then . . . just . . . vanish. And Jane is left wondering, ‘*did I do something wrong? What happened?*’

And the worst part is . . . she has no idea why she’s still struggling.

Chapter 4: A New Hope

Then she realizes what the problem is: she’s only offering *one* modality. So, she goes back to school (and spends a lot more time and money) to learn some new modalities and techniques to offer her clients. Some of them seem thrilled – others don’t seem to care.

But then she starts to see a problem it’s created. Instead of just being able to say, “*I’m a massage therapist*” she now has three or four other modalities to express and so she finds herself saying, “*Well, I do a unique combination of shiatsu massage, traeger, reiki and quantum touch.*” And now people seem more confused than ever by what she does.

Chapter 5: The Dawning Realization of the Missing Link

She feels clueless about marketing. She wonders why she never learned this at her school. She learned how to do what she does – but not how to market it, articulate it or sell it. Often when she tells people what she does she notices them glaze over and not ‘get’ what it is that she *really* does.

She knows she needs to market her business but when it comes to actually talking about her business to people – she can't bring herself to actually ask people to come in for a session without feeling pushy.

Her friends tell her to 'go online' and so she spends even more money and time to create a website – but gets little to no business from it. She realizes she has very little ideal of how to make the most of it. Great. A website. Now what?

And hell . . . maybe the people she wants to reach aren't online. Or . . . maybe that's just another 'excuse' she's created with regards to her business. Argh!

Secretly, she dreams of someone else showing up and just handling all the marketing for her. If only she could just show up and help people and other people could send her the clients. If only she didn't have to worry about setting her fees.

When she tells people her **fees**, she often sees them flinch as if too say, *'that's way too much . . .'* and so she often just offers them a deal and drops her fees. After all, if she loses them there are hundreds of others who offer something similar to what she does. She feels like a commodity someday.

Her friends encourage her to stay positive. Some of them even imply that her feelings of doubt are what are manifesting the shaky results in her world. *'Maybe'*, she begins to think, *'this is about my self worth . . .'*

Others tell her that she just needs to keep trying. To be more persistent but . . . the truth is – she's exhausted and overwhelmed. She wants to spend time on her marketing but . . . it always seems to slip through the cracks. With spending time with friends and family, doing sessions, time for herself and her creative pursuits, tidying, doing the books and more . . . she never seems to find the time. And even when she does, she feels daunted. She has no idea where to start. She doesn't know if she has any more effort or energy to give.

And secretly she feels incredibly inadequate. She tells herself that if she were more enlightened and healed she would just 'know' where to go and what to do and that it would all feel easy. She begins to suspect that her lack of business success is a reflection of her own lack of inner growth.

Intuitively, she understands how important it is to be **online** – but she doesn't know how.

She knows she needs to learn how to '**sell**' what she does – but has no idea where to begin or how to 'sell' in a way that doesn't feel pushy, inauthentic, slimy or insincere. She feels shy in social situations with new people and hates the idea of tooting her own horn or meeting people just to 'convert them into clients'.

She knows she needs to get better at **articulating** what she do – but she feels to close to it. She can't see the forest for the trees.

She knows she needs to articulate what makes her **unique** but . . . she hates the old-school notion of competition. She wants to see the other practitioners succeed too! How does she express what makes her different, without slamming other people who do what she does?

She finds herself wondering, *“How do I market while maintaining integrity? How do I paint a picture so that others can see what I see? How do I teach people that herbal medicine doesn't have to be "alternative", but instead "normal" health care? I feel so overwhelmed by all the marketing advice...do this, do that...I feel so torn...what do I do first? And what next? And how do I stay focused on my passions and do marketing at the same time...I don't want my marketing to distract me from the work I love.”*

She looks at her brochures, flyers and posters and knows they could be much better – but doesn't even know where to begin.

Her practice is going nowhere fast. She does pretty much what others have done and *their* practices have flourished (or so it seems). She's beginning to think this is not what she's supposed to be doing.

She started with such a passion for her work and such clarity that she was doing what she came here to do – but as she looks at her bank account and stacks of bills she finds herself wondering if it really is . . . did she make a big mistake? Maybe she should take a full time job for a while.

Chapter 6: Resentment & Helplessness

She finds herself beginning to resent the very work that once brought her alive. She resents putting in so much effort and getting back so little.

Her life begins to feel imbalanced but she still can't seem to find the time and energy to take care of herself, in order to do her healing work from a balanced place. She knows that healing or therapy work, don't work as well when she's burnt out and frazzled.

And it makes her secretly feel like a bit of a fraud – who is she to offer others healing when she's still struggling at such basic levels?

And she feels "wrong" for not knowing what to do. Her friends tell her that since what she offers is so great, she should simply be grateful and "attract" her clients. *“But how?”* she thinks. *“By osmosis!?”*

In the end, she has to take a part time job (in addition to going to school and spending a fortune to learn another modality!) all of which prevents her from having the time to do any of the marketing she should be doing

She even notices herself start to see her clients as the hydro bill. She finds herself falling into the trap of counting how many clients she's seen that week or month and comparing them to the bills, "one more and I've got the rent!" She feels horrible when she catches herself doing that.

She wants to make it work but, after thousands of dollars, and years of effort, still has no idea how. She feels lost, alone and helpless and sometimes, ready to just give the whole thing up.

Chapter 7: Everything Changes

One day she has an important realization.

The skills she uses to help people heal are different from the skills she needs to grow her business. She realizes that she has spent years learning how to help people get better but almost no time in learning the skills of how to grow her business. She realizes that she has spent years working IN her business but very little time working ON her business.

For years, her practice was more of a hobby. But now she knows she needs to get serious about learning about business and marketing.

So she does a huge tidy of her office space, and sits down with a pen and paper. But she's stuck. She doesn't know where to start. She knows she needs to handle her marketing but has no idea where to start.

So, she goes to the bookstore and buys a book, does some googling and finds more resources. One day she hears about a marketing workshop in her area and goes to that. And then, she does what would have been unthinkable before - she hires a business coach.

They talk once a month and she gets assignments to do and she really applies herself. And things start shifting. Slowly at first but within a year - she is astonished to find that she has more than doubled her practice and also raised her rates (with far less drama than she'd imagined).

She finds herself attracting a better and better quality of client - people who are conscious and genuinely open to change (rather than looking for a quick-fix, bandaid solution). She feels more and more excited about her work every day and, because she's making better money - her heart feels totally free to just be present with her clients. She's no longer worrying about paying her bills.

But the best part is that she is now able to help her friends who have lived through the same story. She finds herself sitting them down and revamping their own marketing plans – and is delighted when they start seeing results too.

Her life is filled with a sense of freedom as she feels an incredible sense of clarity about how to articulate what she does and how to attract more perfect clients. It no longer feels like a mystery to her.

Does that sound familiar? I bet it does – right up until Chapter 7. But, my intention is that you get your own version of the 7th Chapter. And soon.

If you are feeling lost and discouraged - pay attention – what you are about to read may be very, very important to your future as a practitioner. I think it may help you feel better about yourself immediately.

MYTH #1: “It takes a long time to ‘*get my name out there*’ and once I do, the clients will just come to me. Building a successful, full practice takes years and costs a lot of money. The most important thing is to just get your name out there.”

Many coaches and practitioners believe that if they wait long enough, the phone will ring... they try a few things but get little (if any) results from their efforts...they hand out a few business cards, hang up flyers, advertise in the yellow pages or the local paper and wait ... and then they wait, and wait and wait...you get the picture.

Waiting for your ‘name to get out there’ doesn’t produce clients...no matter how long you wait.

They might even be bold enough to talk with people they know...who say they are “Interested...” but when it comes down to it, they aren’t seeing enough clients to get by... They might even hope “word-of-mouth” will get around and their current clients will send them enough referrals so they can FINALLY make a living doing what they love...

We’ve even seen people believing this myth that have been in practice for years and still don’t have the number of clients they need...

Reality: This is 100% not true. With the right strategies, you could have 60 new clients in 60 days. You could double your practice in 6 months (and if you really applied yourself you could do it in half that time). That’s not an exaggeration. The idea that it takes a long time to build a successful practice is a myth. It’s absolutely, categorically, not true. It’s only true if you don’t know how to attract the right types of clients to you. Without the right strategies, you’ll stay frustrated and disappointed while you wonder when your “name will get out there” enough that the clients will just call you.

But this myth is perhaps the one people fight the most. Because, if you believe it, then you can just tell yourself, ‘okay - it’s taking me a long time to build up - but that’s normal.’ You can use this belief to rationalize the slow pace of your business’ growth. And that may be fine - you might genuinely want slow growth. You might not actually want to spend any time on your marketing because your practice is a hobby - not a full business. But, if you’re committed to growing your practice and making more money than you are now with more clients than you have now . . . just know that this can happen much faster than you might have thought.

‘How long does it take to grow your practice?’ . . . That’s not the right question. The real question is, ‘how long do you want it to take? What’s your vision and how quickly are you committed to realizing it?’

MYTH #2: “If I just get more training and certificates, I’ll finally be good enough to get enough clients. If I just new how to do the latest technique or modality then I’d be flooded with clients.”

We’ve seen practitioners and coaches with a laundry list of certifications...listed on the back of their business card or as services on their websites. When we’ve asked about how their practice is going...many have told us they work another job (probably to pay for the debt they incurred as a result of going to training after training after training). Having this laundry list of modalities DOES NOT help you get clients. Truthfully, clients don’t even care about what it’s called.

Now, there’s a myth out there that if you just get more training and get really good at what you do, you’ll finally fill your practice. But it just isn’t true.

(And truthfully, many of the people who teach coaching and healing modalities do not really have successful practices...or most of their clients are students of the actual modality...there are certainly exceptions, so I’m not criticizing the teachers, just letting you know that being good at what you do is not enough to make you successful)

Reality: The skill of helping clients inside your sessions and the skill of building up your practice are two totally different skill sets. The key to overcoming this myth is to stop learning more modalities and instead, invest in business training (come back for more trainings once you know you can actually make a living in your practice).

Some of marketing is like an intuitive form of art. But some of it is a science. Seriously. There are some things you can do in marketing that will get you predictable results. Just fill in the blanks, do the steps and you get clients. There are some strategies that just, plain work.

There’s a saying, “*Getting really good at what you do will not build your practice, building your practice will make you get really good at what you do.*”

MYTH #3: “Getting new clients is hard work...if I become too successful I’ll just feel tired and burnt out.”

Practitioners and Coaches who believe this myth feel stuck because they don’t realize that if they were to just do the RIGHT things to attract clients, it wouldn’t be that difficult. They spin their wheels without the knowledge they need that actually works to attract clients. And then they feel tired because they’re spending their energy on the WRONG tasks.

Reality: When you learn what really works and stop wasting your time with what doesn’t, you’ll suddenly find yourself rejuvenated and ready to serve your clients more fully. Chopping down trees with your barehands? Painful and slow. Using a newly sharpened axe? Quick and easy. Getting new clients will always require effort and work. But it’s not a fraction as much effort and work with the right approaches, strategies and techniques.

Imagine this: I come up to you and tell you the exact, step-by-step approach that has taken hundreds of other practitioners and coaches just like you to a six figure income in less than two years. As you review the strategy you really ‘get it’ and you see that it could work for you. It feels really comfortable. It makes sense. You love it. You read the testimonials of others who have used it.

Do you think that following this kind of plan would drain you? No. It would energize you. Most folks I talk to are desperate for this kind of plan. “*Just show me what to do and I’ll do it!*” Doing the wrong thing again and again will eventually wipe you out.

MYTH #4: “I need an expensive website, a fancy logo, beautiful business cards and a snazzy brochure to get new clients”

We’ve seen this so many times...a practitioner or coach spends thousands of dollars and 6 months of their time saying “I’m *working on my brochure (or website).*” And then...it’s finally done! ... They have all sorts of people telling them, “*wow! I saw your new website! It’s gorgeous.*” Or “*Your new brochure is just stunning!*” . . . But the new clients don’t come... and they feel totally disappointed and confused.

Reality: Brochures, websites and business cards DO NOT get you clients. You could absolutely fill your practice to be overflowing with incredible clients with no website, no business cards, no brochures and no logo. Owch. Don’t shoot the messenger. They never will. Instead it’s your ability to connect with potential clients and show how you can solve an urgent problem. There are practitioners who have some really ugly 2-page websites...and tons of clients. Pretty marketing materials do not equal more clients. Cut that bond in your mind.

Brochures, business cards and websites are tools...and if used properly, *can* assist you in attracting clients. But if you’re not using them correctly, it’s like using a steak knife to chop wood. No matter how hard you work at it, you’re just not going to get much more than shavings.

I’m not saying you should make your materials ugly. Or that presentation doesn’t matter. Not true. But I am saying that it’s not primary. It is absolutely not the most important thing.

MYTH #5: “There must be something wrong with ME if I don’t have a full practice. Maybe I’ll get a full practice once I’m more healed or more enlightened.”

Some practitioners and coaches believe there is something wrong with THEM and that is why the Universe isn’t sending them clients.

While its important to keep doing personal development work (for the good of your quality of life and the human race...we all want to be more “Conscious”), focusing on this solely and believing that this will build your practice is a dangerous cycle you can fall into...you do personal work, but the clients don’t come...so you think there’s something wrong with you, so you do more personal work and then the clients still don’t come and you have more evidence that there is something wrong with you...you see the problem with this.

Reality: Your level of personal growth is a factor in growing your practice, yes. But it’s not the only one. And it’s something to work on simultaneous to your business skills. Personal growth alone may work in the long term. Business and marketing skills will work in the short term. But, put them together? Unbeatable.

And, to be honest – you’re level of personal growth is, almost certainly, just fine as it is. It’s good enough. You know yourself. You’re not going to stop growing anytime soon. You’re passionate about that. You’re committed to it. So, I invite you to sort of let it go. Stop focusing on it as the solution to growing your business.

Let me be real here . . . the world is full of incredibly gifted and talented people who are broke. Think of the struggling and starving artist. They might be brilliant at creating art – and live (and often die) in obscurity. The skill in creating the art is different from the skill of marketing and promoting that art.

What helps you build a practice is learning and using the specific and reliable steps that allow you and your services to become more safe and attractive to your potential clients... and you’ve got to learn how to have an effective (and ethical) conversation to support your potential clients to say ‘yes’ (if it’s a good match).

The surprising truth: Having a thriving practice has very little to do with how good you are at coaching or your healing modality.

MYTH #6: “I’ll just copy what other practitioners and coaches are doing to market their services and I’ll get clients.”

Those who believe this myth watch what their coach or practitioner friends (who don’t have successful practices either) are doing and try to copy what they see. After trying some different marketing ideas that flop, they might think that there is just something wrong with THEM...rather than the marketing ideas that were never going to work so well in the first place.

Reality: Did you know that 80% of coaches earn less than \$20,000 per year coaching clients? And that this is the same for massage therapists (and works out to about \$10 per hour for their work). And of the many practitioners we’ve met over the years, few are earning more than \$50,000/year doing their work (that is, before they start working with us).

It’s not the best idea to copy what most of them are doing to get clients. Actually, let me be more direct about that: it’s a terrible idea.

If you look at what most practitioners do to grow their business it’s 100% predictable. And so are the results (or lack of them). If you do what everyone else does – you’ll get what they are getting.

Again (to let it sink in a bit deeper) most practitioners:

- Spend thousands of fancy **logos, websites, business cards** and **brochures**
- Rely on ‘**word of mouth**’ (meaning they *hope* people will talk about them)
- Describe what they do by talking about their **modality** and how they do it
- Rarely, if ever, directly engage in a ‘**selling conversation**’ with a prospective client
- Give away a lot of **free or discounted sessions** (and see little or no return from it)
- Spend a lot of money on **ads** in local new age magazines (that are usually just their business card) and get little to no response from them (despite the magazine reassuring them that it’s important for them to ‘get their name out there).
- Do not have an **email list** of their clients (or even the emails of most of their clients)
- Never **stay in touch** with their clients between sessions via a newsletter

This does not work. This will *never* work.

Stated still another way:

Were your parents the perfect role models you want to follow for parenting? Was your schooling the kind of experience you want your child to have? Are your families

communication patterns the best embodiment of honest, direct and clear communication you can imagine? Do most of the practitioners you know have the kind of income and clientele you would like?

It's easy to just go with the status quo. It's hard to unlearn what we've learned and create new ways forward.

Most practitioners I meet are in this position: they know what they're doing isn't working - but they don't know what else to do. And so they keep doing the best they know and hope that, magically, they will get better results the next time. It's a false hope. And, to quote author Derrick Jensen, "*false hopes blind us to real possibility and bind us to unliveable situations.*"

But it's hard to let go of the old ways, until you've found a new and better way.

MYTH #7: “If I could just retain the clients I have and get them to refer people to me, I would have a full practice.”

Reality: If you have hundreds of clients you see regularly who adore you – maybe. But having clients come back to you again and again does not happen by chance. And neither do referrals. There is an art and science to asking for repeat clients and referrals and most practitioners and coaches are too afraid they will sound pushy, so they don’t ask or they put up a sign that says, “*The greatest compliment you can give us is a referral.*”

Your clients don’t refer to you just because...sure, you might have a client who tells a lot of people about you (we’ve certainly had our share of ‘connectors’)...and you might even get a referral or two from them. And there are certain tools you can give them to encourage them to refer without feeling pushy or sales-y. In fact, you’ll likely have your clients thank you for making it easier for them to spread the word. You likely have no idea how hard you’re making it for your own clients to tell others about you. No joke.

Some practitioners and coaches think it is unethical to have clients come back for more when they can “*have them get the results with one session*” or “*in just a few sessions.*” While it might feel noble to think this way, your clients come to you for way more than to have their problems “fixed.” They are craving to have a relationship with someone they trust for the long-haul.

If your car breaks down – you take it to a mechanic to get the problem fixed. But don’t you appreciate if the mechanic also shares with you, “Look, I was under your hood and here’s what I noticed. Your break pads are wearing down and your spark plugs are needing to be replaced. But you don’t need to do it for another year or so.” What if you really felt in your heart that they were there to serve you, not just sell you. That they were giving you the straight dope. They were going to be honest with you and never try to sell you more or less than you needed. That they laid out their best argument for what they thought you needed to do, took you under the hood and showed you, told you why they were suggesting a certain course of action . . . but never, ever pressured you.

An honest mechanic. Wouldn’t you want to go back to them? Wouldn’t you want to refer all of your friends?

What if the mechanic was too timid to be honest with you and it meant your car broke down?

When you become not only someone who ‘sells a service’ but a trusted advisor, everything changes. No one wants to be sold a product, but people love being held in a process.

So, how do you create this relationship? There are specific ways you can build trust and rapport with your clients (We'll tell you about a system called Heartselling that will help you do this).

Myth #8: “Most people will be uncomfortable if I directly ask them to work with me. And if I ask them to rebook I’ll come across like I’m begging and needy or pushy. Marketing turns people off.”

This one seems so solid. Hell, we've got so much evidence on it. The fear is that we're speaking with someone and everything is going well and then we have to bridge it from a social conversation into a professional one. And we don't know how. So, the leap can feel contrived, sudden, 'out of nowhere' and like all this 'connecting' was an insincere tactic to get them to become a client.

We fear them seeing us as a pushy, business minded sales person vs. a real, authentic healer. They'll think we're 'fake' and a 'fraud'. They'll avoid us and whisper to their friends, 'yeah, don't check out him. He's all about the money. He's really low vibration.' And so we feel trapped.

If we *avoid* the conversations, we get to feel morally pure (but likely we'll struggle financially and begin to resent our business). Or we can *engage* the conversations (and be ostracized by the healing community). Ugh. Damned if we do and damned if we don't.

Reality: Some people *will* be uncomfortable. This a tricky one. After all, you might ask them in the wrong way - or come from the wrong place and people will genuinely be uneasy. But they're not uneasy because you invited them to work with you. It's absolutely 100% about *how* and *when* you do that. This is the key distinction: there are ways to engage in our conversations with people we meet about their issues (issues we can help them with) that feel wonderful to them and that will often result in them becoming a client.

If a man approaches a woman at a bar he might be shot down or received with delight. The same man. The same woman. The same bar. It's 100% based on *how* he approaches her.

Most practitioners and coaches sort of . . . collapse around the issue of 'asking for the business'. I call it 'premature evacuation'. They're talking with a potential client about what they offer and then . . . they get nervous, they don't want to seem pushy and so they immediately offer a huge discount or say, "well . . . why don't you just think about it and call me back if you want to move ahead."

And, here's the thing - that might be the perfect thing to say sometimes. Sometimes. But not *every* time. And for a lot of practitioners and coaches - it's the unconscious default. It's about avoiding a conversation instead of engaging with it fully and honestly.

A disturbing question: what if their hesitation is caused by your own reservations? What if your *own* hang ups about money and selling, your discomforts in your own skin around

those conversations, are exactly what is turning them off? What if your issues are actually stopping them from getting the help that they need?

Yikes.

Here's an even more disturbing thought: What if half of the people who have ever said to you that they couldn't afford your services had said YES? (calculate how much money you would have made)...

How about the ones who didn't have the time or needed to think about it?

And what about those who sign-up and then decide to cancel...

If you could gracefully (and genuinely without being pushy) take a stand for these people (and show how much you care) so their desire to get the results of working with you becomes more important than their circumstances ... how many more people would you help?

And how much more income would you generate in a year?

If you're not able to dance with concerns (what some sales trainers call "deal with objections") than you're losing a LOT of clients (and money).

If you want to stay in business, you've got to learn the key questions to ask to help your potential clients get what they really want . . . rather than staying stuck with what they've got now.

When YOU dance with their concerns, you help them say YES to themselves and YOU get to make the difference you're here to make (while making a handsome living doing what you love). By being willing to engage with in a real way about tough issue - you actually create the space for them talk about issues they may have been avoiding for years.

And, whether or not they work with you, they will be better for having had that conversation. Does that make sense? Every 'selling' conversation you ever have can be healing.

Isn't that a twist?

To be clear: dancing with their concerns is not about trying to subtly push them towards the sale. It's about an open hearted exploration of the truth of the situation. You're okay with a 'yes' or a 'no'. Those both hold equal weight for you.

And when you are that clean, that unattached to the outcome . . . you are more present. People will feel safer around you. You're more attractive. And people will want to work with you. They will actually be amazed. They'll think, "*who is this person that can talk so openly and honestly and unreactively about money and working together?*"

They'll be amazed at how you can hear their concerns, really listen to them and still stay present and unfazed. They'll never feel like you are leaning on them or taking advantage of their weaknesses. They'll just feel you sitting their with them, centered in yourself. They'll feel your curiosity - but no hint of neediness or pushing. And people love being around that energy.

You start to embody what Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. talked about as the spirit of "*unconditional love and uncompromising truth.*"

You become magnetic, not because you're so 'attractive' . . . but because you're truly safe. And . . . is there anything more attractive than safety?

Myth #9: "I'm held back by low self esteem and self worth."

Reality: This is a tricky one. I've talked to a lot of coaches and practitioners who off-handedly mention that they know they're being held back by low self worth issues.

Maybe. But here's an interesting thought. Maybe it's *not* your lack of confidence. Maybe it's your lack of *competence* (lack of competence in business and marketing not in your modality). Maybe you're confusing the nature of the problem - and thus the nature of the solution.

Let me explain: In most cases I find that the heart of the issue is a lack of competence. They don't have an effective strategy to market and grow their business. If they did - they would feel more confident. This likely isn't an issue that requires you engage in years of therapy and healing. It goes back to the maps idea. If you've got a map for growing your practice that only gives you the routes to the various colleges where you can improve your skill but not to any resources to build your business skills . . . I predict you will struggle.

If you're a man at a bar and the only models you've seen for approaching women involve cat calls and cheesy pick up lines - you'll get shot down a lot.

If you're a parent, and the only way you know to express your frustration with your child is via domination and control, your child will collapse or rebel.

In so many situations, if we knew better we would do better.

If I asked you to do brain surgery right now - you would feel scared. Why? You have no competence in that area. You don't know how. But you wouldn't say, '*gahh! My low self esteem is getting in my way!*' But when people try to build a thriving practice, they try (and most often fail) and then say, '*gahh! My low self esteem is getting in my way!*'

How are they different? They are not. Brain surgery is a skillset. And so is building your practice.

The twist: The biggest thing holding you back may actually be your own *belief* that it's a self esteem issue. If you let go of trying to feel confident about something you're incompetent in you may feel immense relief. If you begin to focus on building skill and competence in marketing, sales and business building, you will likely experience immense progress.

No therapy needed.

In summary: Your self esteem may be fine. Focus on building business skills instead. Make sure you learn proven skills from people who've used them to produce the results you want.

Myth #10: “No one understands what I do! I need to get better at explaining what reiki (or whatever) is.”

Let's be real. You've spent thousands of dollars and hundreds of hours learning how to do what you do. You've learned amazing things. You've seen the scientific proof for the effectiveness of what you do. You've read the case studies. You have experienced firsthand the power of the technique you use. This is obviously something worth selling. But, people don't get it. When you explain what you do, their eyes glaze over.

Reality: 90% of people do not care how you do what you do. They really don't. They are coming to you for relief from their pain, for a solution to their problems. Do they really care how you do it? Not really. They just want the result.

They have extreme lower back pain. They don't care if you use EFT, Theta Healing, Quantum Touch, Swedish massage, osteopathy, chiropractic, rebirthing, or yoga. All they care about is that it works to get them the result they want. Period.

Exceptions: Some modalities have become very popular as ways of handling particular problems. Think of Non Violent Communication (NVC), Byron Katie's "The Work" or the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT). These are popular enough that people will ask for them by name and search them out by name on google. They would be attracted to workshops on these things.

But here's the important question: what if a looooooot of people are offering that technique or modality in your area or to your niche? Why should they hire you?

For example, Right now I'm only person in Edmonton offering workshops on NVC. No one else is running workshops on it. So, it's relatively easy to promote it and be 'known' for it. But what if there were 200 certified NVC practitioners in Edmonton? Suddenly, even though it's well known, it's not so special. On the upside, I may not have to explain what it is anymore because it's so well known. But . . . on the downside, I now have to explain why they should come to me vs. another NVC practitioner for help.

But, what if I were the only one specializing in using NVC in divorce situations? Do you see how the technique really ceases to be the most relevant thing? What's most relevant to them is that I'm helping them go through their divorce in a conscious and empowering way.

Myth #11: “So, you’re saying that business success is all about business skills. Personal growth has nothing to do with it?”

After reading this all, it might be tempting to believe this last myth. It could be tempting to thinking, “*well, no more investing in my own growth! I’m only going to focus on business skills.*”

Reality: It might actually be healthy for you to take a break from seminars and personal growth work and focus exclusively on business skills for a time. But, in the long term, you absolutely need the balance of your own internal healing AND external business skills.

The twist: the external world of business can actually be the most powerful way to engage your deepest internal issues. Think of it this way: it’s easy to meditate about fear in an abstract, heady and intellectual way - but it’s very hard to do the new and scary thing (e.g. have a selling conversation).

Use business as an arena for your growth. Let it push you outside of your comfort zone. Take all your understandings about healing into *this* realm. Notice what comes up for you as you begin to take the real world, tangible steps to grow your business. I predict that a lot of stuff will come up.

Stated another way: marketing can be one of the most ass-kicking, real world spiritual teachers you will ever encounter.

Sometimes personal growth work can be used to avoid real personal growth. You know what the easiest way to avoid meditation is? Reading books about meditation.

Myth #12: “But, marketing, sales and self promotion comes from the ego.”

Does it? This one seems hard to refute. After all, marketing seems to be about tooting your own horn, telling everyone why you’re the best, engaging in interactions to build your business, schmoozing, self promoting, hyping yourself etc. But, we gotta pay the bills so . . . It’s a necessary evil we do so we can do our real ‘spiritual’ work.

Reality: Marketing can be (and often is) profoundly ego based. But, again, marketing can also be a spiritual teacher of many things. If you really honestly engage your marketing you will learn a lot.

The physical universe does not lie.

If you write an ad that you think is great and you get no response from it – it wasn’t a good ad or the right placement. Period. If you explain what you do and no one ever really gets it – it’s your fault, not theirs. If you talk with 100 people and none of them decide to work with you – it’s something about who you’re approaching or how. If you talk with someone about working with you and they get really uncomfortable and start to avoid you and never return your calls – it’s about something you did.

Yes, invest into your growth. But, for most practitioners and coaches, the next level of growth is not your basic level of looking inwards - it’s about gathering up the courage to step *out* into the world more fully, powerfully, and clearly.

It’s about stepping more powerfully into your role as a trusted advisor.

Marketing allows you absolutely no slack.

It demands you take 100% absolute responsibility for the business results you’re producing instead of blaming people for ‘*not being ready*’ or ‘*not being evolved enough*’ to hear the brilliance you’re offering. I once met a woman who’s new age book wasn’t selling. “*People are buying it, but they don’t read it,*” she told me. I had bought it and not read it. I asked her if she was curious to know why. “*No, I know why . . . I had to channel a lot of light to write that book. I think most people aren’t ready for it.*” I was shocked. “*So . . . Conversations with God is a best seller because it’s less full of light? . . .*” I asked her. “*Hmm . . .*” she responded. “*Well, they lack the academic background. My book is very integrated.*” Translation: it’s not her fault. She’s so spiritual that people can’t handle her brilliance.

Marketing asks you to be accountable for making it work instead of throwing yourself a pity party because it isn’t. Marketing is not sentimental. Your results do not lie.

"You don't get to vote on what is. Have you noticed? The only time we suffer is when we believe a thought that argues with what is. When I argue with What Is, I lose, but only 100% of the time. If you want reality to be different than what it is, you might as well try to teach a cat to bark. I realized that it's insane to oppose it. When we stop opposing reality, action becomes simple, fluid, kind, and fearless. Placing the blame or judgment on someone else leaves you powerless to change your experience." ~ **Byron Katie** ~

If you can face them honestly from a place of centered composure vs. a place of collapsing or posturing – your business will be transformed.

Why do so many coaches and practitioners avoid really handling their marketing? Because it scares the shit out of them. Because there's a lot of work to do. Because it's easier to be lazy and not be accountable. It's easy to pretend that whatever is happening is exactly what you wanted (rather than get real about how shitty it feels not to have it the way you want it). We get to play victim. We get pity from others. We get to enjoy our distractions and waste our time. We get to feel very noble, pure and spiritual because we're 'not in it for the money'. We get to feel better than others. We get to hang onto our bitterness and cynicism.

And . . . if that isn't working for you anymore and you're open to questioning it then here are just some of the things that marketing can teach you:

- **Clarity vs. Fuzziness:** Most marketing materials I see from practitioners and coaches are incredibly vague, abstract and fuzzy. This can be a sign of laziness and ignorance. Marketing will not tolerate fuzziness.
- **Empathy vs. Self Importance:** If your marketing materials are all about you, they will have little impact. If they are all about your prospect they will have huge impact. If they can read your materials and find themselves saying, '*wow. That is so me . . .*' multiple times, if you can articulate their own feelings and experiences better than they can, then your work will feel relevant to them. If your materials are all about you they won't.
- **Contribution vs. "Hire Me Just Because":** It's easy to get lazy and assume that what we're offering is the best thing ever. Psssst. It probably isn't. People will buy from you when they see a really value for they money they spend – period. They won't buy a second before. If you're marketing is basically saying, 'hire me just because', it will fail. But if your marketing really helps them understand how you can get something they genuinely want and need, if you become and expert at putting together irresistible offers, if you are constantly asking yourself, 'how could I give them \$100 in value but only ask for \$10' – then you will have more business than you know what to do with.

- **Reality vs. Self Delusion:** It's very easy to become deluded in personal growth work. Marketing will deliver you a steady ass kicking. If you engage in it honestly, you will begin to learn how are you coming across, the real impact you are having, whether or not you deliver on your promises, whether or not your offers are irresistible or not. The numbers and responses don't lie. Feedback. Marketing offers feedback. If it gets you more of the kinds of clients you want, it's working. If it doesn't, then it isn't. End of discussion.
- **Courage vs. Timidity:** Business asks you to take risks. To be bold and creative. It asks you to engage with people directly and honestly about whether or not you can help them with their problems. And if you push too hard they will recoil. If you never open the conversation - you'll get very little business. Marketing challenges you to find the razor's edge balance between courage and consideration in every interaction.
- **Intuition vs. Desperation:** Marketing asks you to trust your gut about what marketing approaches will work and which won't. To trust your own sense of the best timing to ask for the business and the best timing to walk away. It asks you to stay incredibly centered in yourself and in touch with your heart.
- **Integrity vs. Collapse or Posturing:** For your business to be sustainably irresistible to others it must first be irresistible to you. But this means you need to get really honest with yourself about what works for you, what are your needs and boundaries are, what you like and don't like about your business etc. If you lie to yourself, you will suffer.

MYTH #13: “Offer a good session and you'll have clients. You just need to give people a sample of what you do and, if it's good, they'll rebook and be clients for life. You only need marketing if what you're offering is substandard.”

This myth sounds so noble. It sounds so full of integrity. The idea here is ‘don't worry about marketing – just do an excellent job and your work will speak for itself.’ If that's working for you – wonderful! But for many people it doesn't.

Reality:

For some people, this is the case.

But for most people, this myth is a desperate unwillingness to face the reality of their experience.

Let me ask you a very honest question: Is the service you provide (be it life coaching or a massage) really that much better than the other people offering it? Really? Is it so mind blowingly unique and better that people who experience it can't stop raving about it?

. . . really?

If it is . . . congratulations. That's likely a sign of either natural talent or, more likely, years of self work and your own healing and commitment to excellence in your field.

If it's not . . . then you may want to consider looking at other factors in growing your business.

But, even if what you do is extraordinary – remember this. The person coming to see you is overwhelmed with the fullness of their life. Their hearts and minds are so full of the demands on them that there is not much space for you. The hard truth? They almost never think of you when they're not with you. Owch. Once they leave the session – they get busy and swept back up in their life.

But, if they had such an incredible session why wouldn't they rebook? There are so many reasons . . .

- It genuinely never crossed their mind and you never invited them to (this is the biggest)
- They got busy and just forgot
- They feel guilty about it (they see it as pampering themselves)

- They don't see the value. They don't really feel how what you're offering them can help them get from where they are to where they want to go. It may be because they're really disconnected from what's most important to them in general in their life.
- They get caught up in their life and, even though they adore you, and perhaps even think of calling you - you never stay in touch, and they can't remember your email or website and . . . it never happens.

There are two important points:

- 1) all of the above could stop them from coming back regardless of how incredible your session was.
- 2) All of these can, very often, be overcome (but not by just making your sessions better). Yes, you must offer a good session. But the skill of offering a good session and the skill of marketing are different skills. Being good at what you do does not necessarily mean you will have a booming business. Cut that bond. It's incredibly important that you broaden your understanding of how to grow your business beyond, 'just do a good job'.

MYTH #14: “Marketing just doesn't work. I mean, maybe these marketing strategies work for others, but they don't work for me and my kind of business. These marketing strategies won't work in my country.”

Reality:

This is the perhaps the most crippling of all the myths. And the most patently untrue.

My friend James once told me that all of this North American marketing with big headlines would never work in England. I looked at him, stunned. “Dude . . . Britain is the tabloid capital of the *world*.”

Marketing works. Period. End of discussion.

However . . .

This myth does lift up some very important issues to explore.

Comfort and marketing: This is a tricky one. One on hand, it's incredibly important that your marketing is authentic, that it feels like a genuine expression of you, that you feel comfortable with it. One the other hand, it's important to be open to trying new things in marketing that are outside of your comfort zone as well.

Clarity vs. fuzziness: If you are unclear on the basic questions of ‘who’ you're trying to reach, what problems you solve and what results you feel confident in promising . . . marketing will become extremely difficult. It may seem like it doesn't work. But the problem is not at the level of marketing. It's at the level of your own internal clarity. Marketing will challenge any piece of fuzziness you have about what you're really about.

Understanding why you're doing it: Listening to marketing gurus can be your downfall. Sometimes people will tell you to do something to market your business that makes no sense to you. Marketing should make sense. It should feel ‘right’. It won't always work. But you should always understand the rationale behind anything you're doing

MYTH #15: “People in my community just don't spend money on massage (or whatever service you offer).”

Reality:

Maybe it's true. Maybe it's not. It's certainly good to see how many other people there are successfully doing what you want to be doing. But, just because it isn't being done doesn't mean it can't be. More often than not this is simply an excuse. A lack of creativity. A knee jerk reaction. Maybe it's true. But are you really sure?

MYTH #16: “If I had more money I could market my business better.”

This myth seems to make so much sense. It sounds so reasonable. Of course you’re struggling. You’re broke and you need money to market.

Reality:

A few thoughts.

First of all, to thrive in business, you don’t necessarily need resources. But you do need resourcefulness.

Secondly, this myth assumes that marketing is expensive. And some of it can be. But the most effective things don’t need to be. I specialize in low cost and no cost strategies for entrepreneurs. Are ads, logos, business cards and brochures expensive? Sure. But . . . do you need them? Are they the best investment of the small amount of marketing money you have? No.

Thirdly, if you marketed your business better – you’d have more money.

If you find yourself not doing any marketing because you ‘can’t afford it’ what that tells me is that you need to get yourself a strong education on different ways to market. You likely need to get better at talking about your business and converting conversations you have into paying clients.

The lack of money is genuinely not your problem. I know some people who I could drop into a new community with nothing in their pockets, no access to money and they would have a good practice within a month and a thriving one in 90 days. No joke. It’s not about resources. It’s about resourcefulness.

MYTH #17: “The recession is killing my business.”

Reality:

Is it? No one is denying for a second that financial hard times have an impact and change people’s buying patterns. That’s not debateable.

But does it mean your practice dies? No.

Some people actually find ways to use the hard times to grow their practice even more solidly than before. They offer special deals. They package services together in a ‘recession package’ for people. They work to support their clients around financial issues either directly or by referring them to someone.

A recession could be your biggest opportunity or your greatest threat.

MYTH #18: “I don’t have time.”

This is a powerful one. When people believe this myth they go into a deep, deep trance. They feel stressed constantly. And their business stays stagnant and they feel like a victim.

Reality:

There are a few thoughts here.

- 1) **You always have time for what’s most important to you.** And, right now, your business may not be the most important thing to you. Be honest with yourself about that. Be real that you just aren’t that committed to growing it at this time. Stop pretending you’re a victim of some outside forces and stand strong in your own choice. Be clear what is most important to you and accept that it just means your business won’t grow as quickly. Or, decide to make your business a priority.
- 2) **You always have some time.** By telling yourself you have ‘no time’ you can put yourself in a trance. Maybe all you have is 30 minutes a week to spend on your marketing. That may be real. So use that time well. It’s easy to see the world through the lense of scarcity and always complain about what you don’t have enough of. Stop that. Focus on what you do have – however little it is. And consider how incredibly important it is for you to use that time well – to learn the very best, most proven marketing approaches you can so that this time isn’t flushed down the toilet.
- 3) **Drop commitments:** Instead of focusing on trying to do more, try starting by doing less. My guess is that your life is full of things it may be time to let go of. Committees you’re on. Groups you’re a part of. Responsibilities you’ve taken on. Start getting out of as many of these as you can that aren’t serving you anymore. This can free up incredible amounts of time (and energy).
- 4) **Drop distractions:** How much time are you wasting on TV, DVD’s, facebook etc? If you cut down time here – time will be freed up.
- 5) **Is it that you don’t have time or that you feel overwhelmed and don’t know where to start?** Sometimes when people are feeling stressed it can feel like they have no time. And then, to deal with the stress they distract themselves and fritter their time away. But, if they really sit with their feelings, what comes up is this confusion of ‘I don’t know where to start!’ I invite you to stop resisting that feeling and really honour it. Maybe you really don’t know where to start. But that’s a start. And then break it down a bit. You may not know how to do the whole thing – but what *can* you do? Focus on what you can do, not what you can’t. Focus on what you know vs. what you don’t. If you don’t, you might get trapped in the deadly spiral of , *“I’ll start once I’ve figured it all out. Once I know every step from here to there – I will start.”*

- 6) Use **'No Extra Time' (N.E.T.) Strategies:** If you're going to listen to audio books about how to build your business or just for fun - do it while you're tidying or doing the dishes or going for a walk.

MYTH #19: “I’m not qualified enough or educated enough to market myself.”

A surprising number of practitioners I speak with silently feel like frauds. Like they aren’t really the experts they make themselves out to be (or think they should make themselves out to be). They feel stressed about putting themselves out there.

Reality:

This is actually a beautiful concern. It speaks to the integrity of the practitioner. I’m actually more concerned if people aren’t mindful of this. We live in a culture where someone can go to a weekend course and be considered a Reiki Master. In Celtic traditional culture, if you wanted to be a Druid it was 12-20 years. If you told any traditional shaman that you were a healer because you went to a weekend course they would nod, smile and know you weren’t really a healer.

This culture is strong in many things – humility is not one of them.

But where does this leave us. Most of us are still growing into our own medicine. We are young on our path. Most of us have many years to go until we reach any level of mastery. But we still need to pay the bills.

Here are some thoughts:

- 1) **It’s not only about the healing it’s about the experience.** People want to get better. But that’s not all they’re looking for. They’re looking for empathy, caring, feeling safe. Feeling like someone’s on their side and accepting them just as they are.
- 2) **Building community.** Most people are starved for real, authentic connection in their lives. Make your orientation about building a stronger ‘scene’ that you’re part of. Don’t just focus on getting more Reiki clients, focus on seeing that more people get the holistic support they need.
- 3) **Remember: you know more than them.** This is important. Maybe you can’t take them the whole way – but you can likely take them the next few steps.
- 4) **Get a mentor.** Make a stronger commitment to your own personal growth. Find a mentor who you can work with who can hold your feet to the fire and love you into your growth. Find a practitioner who you admire and learn from them.
- 5) **Build your referral network.** You can’t help everyone. And, with most clients, it will hit a point where someone else can help them better than you can. Build up a strong directory of other practitioners you trust.

- 6) **Keep educating yourself.** If you keep learning, you will feel more grounded about what you're offering and more deeply in your own integrity. People will pick up on that. You'll feel more comfortable in your own skin and more confident in your diagnoses.
- 7) **Drop pretense.** Be clear on what you feel strong promising and what you don't. If you consistently under-promise and over deliver, people will be thrilled and you'll experience a surge in your own sense of inner strength and integrity. It can be easy to try to position ourselves as bigger experts than we are. Stop that. Pretense costs you your authenticity and kills your vibe.
- 8) **Your mess is your message.** Here's another twist. What if all of your screwed up and dysfunctional places, all your quirks, all your disempowering patterns weren't what's preventing you from doing your work? What if they were the doorways into your work? What if the very places you struggle most were the same places where you had the most street cred to help others? Who better to help an alcoholic than someone else who has struggled with it themselves? If you struggled with and have healed yourself from depression (or made major progress) you have the medicine to help others. If you went through cancer - you have the gift now to understand what it's like for others who are going through cancer or other terminal illnesses. There's the old saying that 'we teach what we most need to learn'. There's a lot of truth there. I'm not encouraging you to go out and start teaching something you aren't qualified to teach. Not at all. But I am encouraging you to see all of your 'problem areas' as the breadcrumbs leading you back to your own unique and original medicine.

Here's an article on this topic you may find really affirming and empowering.

The Top 10 Ways To Endorse Your Worst Weakness

This piece was written by the late Thomas Leonard, author, coach, and founder of two schools for coaches: Coach U and Coachville. For more information about Leonard, visit <http://coachville.com/tl/thomasleonard/>.

The human tendency is to either ignore, hide, deny, compensate for or strengthen our weaknesses. After all they ARE weaknesses, right? And weaknesses aren't GOOD. Well, until now. The following Top 10 List makes the case for getting to love and honor your worst weaknesses instead of trying to improve them.

- 1) **Your worst weakness may be the fastest way to accessing the best parts of yourself.** What IS your worst weakness? Are you a wimp? A liar? Insensitive? Impatient? Selfish? A dilettante? Or worse? Just for now, pick one. If you get to the 'bottom' of your worst weakness you WILL find something of incredible value. For example, if you are a wimp, it may just be that you are a supersensitive person (which is a REAL gift). If you are a liar, you may be someone who is built for a much better life (one that is true to the lie) than you have now - hey reason enough to set higher goals! If you are insensitive, perhaps you are hanging out with the wrong people and it's time to freshen up the Rolodex. And so forth. Look for the opportunity in your worst weakness - not to strengthen it, but rather what it points to or tells you about what the next level of your life should probably include. Weaknesses then can really be great traffic cops - telling you where to go/focus on next.
- 2) **What IF you began feeling proud of/accepting your worst weakness?** What IF you began feeling proud of/accepting your worst weakness? Hopefully, the comments in #1 above will make weaknesses sound and feel, well, less 'weak.' It's pretty common advice today to 'accept' your weaknesses instead of self-criticizing yourself for them, or blaming others. However, I am suggesting that you go a lot further than just acceptance. Because acceptance implies 'giving up' or 'giving in.' Endorsing implies more of a sense of being grateful and proud of your weaknesses. Wouldn't that be an amazing evolutionary step for you to feel incredibly great about your worst weakness? And for folks to hear and feel this excitement on your part. Remember, the TRUTH will set you free; acceptance only heals. Big difference.
- 3) **Focus on your strengths, but include your weaknesses and THEN delegate them.** I've met a lot of clients who get some sort of satisfaction from improving their weaknesses. For example, if they are really bad paper filers, they'll take pride in setting up the world's best filing system, only to have it dismantle itself within a month. All that effort for a short-term sense of 'success.' Oh please. Better to focus on your strengths to the point that you can afford to pay others to handle your weaknesses. I'm really bad with paperwork, follow up phone calls, dealing with the public or paying bills, so my Virtual Assistant does ALL of that for me. Sure, I could MAKE myself do all this stuff (after all I AM a CPA), but at what personal, time, emotional, spiritual or financial or, most importantly, opportunity COST? Part of being irresistibly attractive is to become super conductive. How can you become super conductive if you're forcing yourself to overcome a weakness? I'm PROUD of the fact that I'm lousy with paperwork and dealing with

the public. I used to be embarrassed/shamed by this. But to me, it's now an asset/strength. Make that leap.

- 4) **Educate people on what you don't do well, until they fully understand.** Part of the process of 'converting' your weaknesses into strengths is to educate others on the fact of what your weaknesses are. In other words, be human. A great quote is: "I'd rather be hated for who I am than be adored for who I'm pretending to be." Of course, I'd prefer to be adored for my weaknesses, but that's another top ten list! Seriously, here are the types of things to say to yourself or others about specific weaknesses: "I'm really bad about responding to this type of email from someone I don't know. I need to pass on this." "I'm terrible with secrets; I gossip. Don't tell me anything you don't want broadcast." "Paperwork is the bane of my existence, which is why I invoice you (a client) by telephone." "I don't have the attention span to take notes of our coaching sessions, so you'll need to keep track of your goals and progress." Get the point? I'm not saying to be arrogant with your weaknesses, but they really ARE strengths if you let them help you tell the truth.
- 5) **By knowing what you cannot do and cannot change, you are freed up to enjoy what you have that does work well.** By knowing what you cannot do and cannot change, you are freed up to enjoy what you have that does work well. Taking the path of least resistance is an important strategy in the Attraction OS. So is surrendering to what is so. "What resists, persists" and all that. The point here is to spend your energy where it flows and pulls you forward instead of getting your self-esteem and success by overcoming limitations or natural preferences.
- 6) **When you can endorse your worst weakness, you can accept the humanness of others.** This is key. When YOU get to the place where you see/recognize/accept/endorse your worst weakness as a strength, you'll be able to respond to others in a similar way. You'll take things less personally, and be less affected by the 'humanness' of others. And THAT will really make you attractive ~ to others as well as to yourself.
- 7) **Your worst weakness can become a community-network builder for you.** This may sound a little unusual, but it's really neat. What's your worst weakness? How are you dealing with it? What have you learned? What other characteristics do you have as a result of having this weakness? Who else is in the same boat? The point here is that your weakness may be the admission ticket to a 'club' of others dealing with the same thing. And by getting to know others with a similar weakness, you can get some of the support you need to turn your weakness into a strength.
- 8) **Accept/endorse your worst weakness by realizing how well it's gotten you to THIS place in your life - and being grateful for that.** Give credit to your greatest weakness for how it's helped you get to where you are today. Write down a list of 10 very specific ways it has helped you whether these were (positive or negative at the time) events, situations, conditions or relationships that were triggered, exacerbated or protected (you) by your weakness. I think you'll find a pretty cool list!

- 9) **Link your worst weakness to your biggest strength - see the relationship between them.** My biggest weakness is/was that I am WAYYYYYY too sensitive to other people's energy, criticism, even their praise. It either disturbs, devastates or seduces me. I feel that I have no control over it. Yet, it's also become my biggest strength: To honor the weakness, I've had to change my life, my priorities and how I work. I've become even MORE sensitive in the process, but now I use this skill/gift to create cool stuff instead of trying to 'overcome' it. So, I think it's fair to say that what you might call your biggest weakness is really your body's or spirit's way of saying, "Hey, there's something really great down here, but you'd better make some changes before I'll let you see what it is!"
- 10) **Endorsing your worst weakness is just the beginning of the Attraction Principle; not the end.** You probably understand that this principle is not about feeling good about saying to someone, "Hey, this is my weakness; get over it!" This principle is not a license to be a jerk, nor is it an excuse not to evolve through your weakness. Because to truly endorse your weakness, you WILL need to become 100% responsible for how affects you, your life and others. You will naturally want to evolve through your weakness instead of wearing it like a badge of honor. That's why the process of endorsing your worst weakness is just the beginning of this principle, not the only step.

MYTH #20: “I’m no good at writing and I’m terrified of public speaking - so how could I ever market myself?”

There are a lot of variations of this myth. But the heart of it is that the practitioner has gotten it into their mind that there are only one or two ways to grow their business and, since they aren’t naturally good at any of those . . . They feel doomed to a life of desperate obscurity. Having been there in my dating life for all of Jr.High and High School . . . I can relate.

Reality:

There’s no right or wrong way to market your business. Almost any approach can work for you – if you know how to do it.

Here are the seven main ways you can grow your practice. All of these can work for you. Each one has its own strategy. Each of these can work to grow your business if done well and each one can kill your business if done poorly. As you read over these, ask yourself which ones you feel strongest in and most excited by. Those are probably the ones for you to focus on.

- 1) **Networking:** this can mean attending parties, conferences, seminars, gatherings, lectures, workshops. Some people are natural schmoozers. They are social butterflies. They love being social and meeting new people. Other people recoil in fear and become wall flowers.
- 2) **Writing:** blogs, articles, ezines, newsletters, ebooks, real books. Some people love to write and just find themselves doing it naturally. There are some people who build their entire business just with this approach. They put out so much great content that people actively seek them out for advice. Other people just stare in horror at the blank page in front of them.
- 3) **Speaking:** this can include talks, intro sessions, lectures, and online video. For practitioners, this one can be very important. Before they hire you, people will want to get a sense of your vibe. Of who you are. And if they can see you speak and hear where you’re coming from in a low risk way and you have a permission-based process for following up with them it can be incredibly lucrative and effective in getting your clients and filling workshops. But for some people . . . they are terrified of public speaking.
- 4) **Workshops:** These can be anything from a 2 hour workshop to a full week long intensive. Workshops can be incredibly profitable and also generate a lot of one on one clients. Some people live for this. They love just ‘getting in there’ with their clients and getting their hands dirty.
- 5) **Sample one on one sessions:** this could be a sample 15 minute massage, or a 30 minute free coaching session. Free sessions can make you a fortune and result in a ton of well qualified clients. They can also cripple your business and waste your time.

- 6) **Website:** right now, people are online searching for people who do what you do. So, how can make it easier for people to find your website . . . and then to become a client?
- 7) **Advertising:** In some ways, advertising is shit. But that's mostly because people advertise in the wrong place, they're trying to appeal to everyone and their ads are crappy. Some people will tell you that advertising is dead – and they're mostly right. But not entirely.
- 8) **Throwing Parties & Events:** Throwing kick ass parties and events is a seriously underestimated way to grow your business. They position you as a host in your community, a hub. Some folks are natural hosts. Others feel far too shy to play this role.

All the other strategies above can either build your business or burn it out. It all depends on how you do them. You could build you entire business using only one of them done exceptionally well or some combination of them. There are no rules here. There's no right or wrong in this.

A few thoughts that might be important:

- **Focus on the tools that feel most natural to you.** If you are terrified of public speaking – know that you don't need to do it to grow your business. If writing bores the hell out of you – don't make it central as a strategy to grow your business.
- **Is it the tool or how you've done it that makes you not like it?** Sometimes people say, "I hate doing free sessions." But only because they've never gotten any clients from them and they feel like a huge waste of time. But, once you show them how to do them in a way that generates clients for them they love it. They hate public speaking – but maybe only because they think they need to stand at the front of the room in a suit and talk in this contrived 'effective & powerful' way. Ugh. But then they realize, 'oh! I can sit down in a chair, wear what I want and gather people together in a circle and serve them tea . . .' and it feels much better.

MYTH #21: “If I charge too much then I’ll lose business. Plus, only greedy people charge a lot of money.”

A lot of practitioners undercharge. And they’re not making it. A lot of them know that raising their fees is an option . . . but a scary one. After all, if they raise them too high they’ll scare people away and be called ‘*a greedy capitalist*’ (but I repeat myself). But if they offer it too cheaply – people may not value it and it may not be sustainable and fun to stay in business.

Everyone in this culture has issues around money. But when you’re politically and spiritually progressive and have a critique around modern, consumerist society you really have a lot of *issues* around money.

Reality:

This one is another tricky situation so let’s devote a little more attention to it. Certainly, there are times and places where it’s true. After all, if you jump from charging \$30 for an hour long massage to \$500, you aren’t likely to get any business at all.

And this is an important issue. What we don’t need are more vaguely self serving aphorisms of ‘*charge more. You deserve it! You’re worth it.*’ We need to find a relationship to what we charge that honours our beliefs about the staggering divide between the rich and the poor in our world, our desire to serve our clients (vs. robbing them blind), our need to make a fair (vs. the maximum possible) profit, our spiritual beliefs and our deep need for integrity in what we do.

This issue requires much more than pumping yourself with platitudes of empowerment. It requires a really deep level of self honesty.

- 1) Identify how much money you really want.
- 2) Set your base rate high but then offer discounts for packages and programs you offer.
- 3) Set your base rate high but then offer discounts for your favorite clients.
- 4) Get your money from other sources outside your business: work a job, have your partner provide the income
- 5) Get your money from other sources inside your business: lead workshops, do talks, sell products. Create a funnel that serves clients.

- 6) Consider doing some events on a Pay What You Want basis.
- 7) Sell your work to wealthy people at full price so you can offer it affordably to broke people.
- 8) **Find the 'resonant' price.** It's amazing how many spiritual folks have never just taken the time to sit in silence and feel into what price feels 'right' or resonant to them.
- 9) Write better sales materials. Help them understand not only what you put into the products or services but also what they will get from them.
- 10) Raise your prices but 'grandfather in' your existing clients. Make sure you explain why you're raising your prices. They want you to make a fair profit.
- 11) Tell them your margins.
- 12) Give homework.
- 13) Raise your expectations of your clients. Like Paddi Lund.
- 14) Read *The Soul of Money*. And decide on your own personal philosophy.
- 15) Set a maximum amount you will make each year as a salary and give the rest to a charity you believe in (or reinvest it into the business).

MYTH #22: “Secretly, I’m hoping to be discovered by someone important (like Oprah!) so I can get my Big Break.”

Hmm. I really could have put this one first. If only you could get onto Oprah all of your problems would be solved. Right?

This myth results in a lot of waiting and hoping. It’s a very passive strategy. It tends to show up as people running their practice as a hobby vs. a business. They don’t do much marketing. They are happy with any business that comes to them. But they’re not very active in building it. They avoid asking themselves the hard questions. They just tell themselves that ‘whatever happens is perfect’ and are often really dishonest with themselves about what it is that they want.

The “Big Break” is a fantasy held by a lot of people. The dream of ‘being discovered’. It usually sounds something like this . . .

You’re at a party. You meet someone. They are enchanted with you. They tell you that their dream in life is to find someone just like you and to promote you and fill up your practice for you. They’ll do all the leg work. They’ll get you the clients – all you have to do is to do the healing work you’re so good at. They’ll handle the marketing, finances and paper work of the business. And, they’d love to pay you a fat advance to get you started.

Reality:

This actually does happen sometimes. I have a friend who moved to L.A. and, 48 hours later landed the lead role in a Fox sitcom called Free Ride. So, it does happen. About as often as people win the lottery. If it does, enjoy every second of it. But don’t build your business strategy around it. Lady Luck is a harsh mistress.

And ask yourself if you really, really think that suddenly ‘making it big’ is a good strategy. Consider how many people who win the lottery are broke mere years later. Boom and then bust. Real, stable success (just like genuine inner growth) is built slowly, over years. You can fill your practice quickly – but you can’t develop a powerful and solid reputation that draws clients to you effortlessly quickly.

Consider the words of Seth Godin here . . .

“Envision the events that might happen to a brand (shelf space at Walmart, an appearance on Oprah, a bestseller, worldwide recognition, a new edition, worldwide rights, chosen by the Queen, whatever) as a series of dominos.

It turns out that if you start with all of them at once, you’ll fail.

And if you start with the big one, you'll fail.

But if you line up all the dominos one by one, in the right order, you may just have enough energy to push over the first one. That one, of course, adds momentum so that when you crash into the second one, that one goes too. All the way to the Queen.

Wait!

Isn't this obvious? Sure it is. So why is it so often ignored?

Brands get stuck constantly. And they always get stuck circling the big domino. They try to launch worldwide and beat Google. They try to get an endorsement from the Prince of Denmark. They try to break out with a feature on a major blog. They try to act like Coca Cola from the first day. And they try and they try and they try until they get so frustrated, they quit.

A few brands pick out tiny dominos instead. And topple them. And they do it again. They do it so often they create noise, momentum and most important, a sense of inevitability. That's how you win."

Business tends to work like this.

In the beginning it's a 10:1 ratio. You put in 10 units of effort and get only 1 unit of reward. That seems terribly unfair. But it's how it is. You put in soooo much effort and get a fraction of it back. But, if you stick with it, it moves to a 1:1 ratio. Effort in = results out. And, if you keep working on your business (rather than just 'in' it) then you get to a point where it's a 1:10 ratio. You put in a tiny bit of effort and get a huge response. But that takes time, care and consistent strategic thinking.

The anti-dote to this myth is to just totally drop it. Let it go. Give up any hopes of being discovered. Focus instead on building your business. And get really, really honest with yourself about what it is you are wanting.

AfterThoughts: What do you do when you're lost?

When you are lost in a big city you've never been to - what do you do? What's the best solution to get you where you want to go? Consider the absurdity of the first three and the obviousness of the fourth.

- 1) **Beating Ourselves Up:** great. Now we're lost *and* riddled with shame and inadequacy.
- 2) **Positive Attitude** - Sure, this is better than the first option. It's great to be positive. But, without a strategy to get where you want to go - you're still lost. You just don't care.
- 3) **Trying Harder** - this only succeeds in getting you lost faster. Working harder at the wrong strategy is madness. Trying to be better at a losing game is a recipe for failure.
- 4) **Getting the Right Map & Asking for Directions.** Problem solved.

Common sense? Maybe. But in business? Not common practice.

And it's vital. After all - what if someone gave you the wrong map? What if you were lost in New York and someone gave you a mislabeled map of Boston. You would feel incredibly lost and confused. Or if you were traveling the world and someone gave you this very old and outdated map . . .

If you really thought that the map was right . . . your self esteem might take a huge dive. After all, with the right map, why aren't you succeeding yet? You must be stupid, lazy or just incompetent.

But, what if it's nothing to do with that at all? What if you just had the wrong map?

Can you imagine the relief of meeting someone who gave you the right map, pointed out '*Here's where you are. Here's where you say you want to be. And here's the fastest, easiest and most beautiful route to get you there.*' Wouldn't that feel wonderful? Wouldn't that be an incredible relief to you? Wouldn't you be immensely grateful to that person? Getting the right map for your practice is vital.

"All through school and university I had been given maps of life and knowledge on which there was hardly a trace of many of the things that I most cared about and that seemed to me to be of the greatest possible importance to the conduct of my life. I remember that for many years my perplexity had been complete; and no interpreter had come along to help me. It remained complete until I ceased to suspect the sanity of my perceptions and began, instead, to suspect the soundness of the maps."

~ E.F. Schumacher

What is 'the map' in business?

When we talk about the 'map' for your business, we're not just talking about the strategies and step by step tactics you can take. That's a part of it. But, even more fundamentally (and far more importantly) we're talking about the assumptions you make about your own industry and business. We're talking about the beliefs you have about what is possible and what isn't. Your beliefs about what's important to do or not to do in order to grow your practice – what works and what doesn't work.

We're trying to find a map that matches the territory as best as possible.

If you assume that putting flyers in new age bookstores will fill your practice – you are likely going to be disappointed. But it's the strategy that's off – not you. If it's not working, it's not because you're doing something wrong. It's just that this whole strategy doesn't work. Don't beat yourself up about it. But . . . don't keep doing it either.

If you assume there's no way to market that isn't 'ego based', then you'll probably avoid doing it. Or tone it soooo far down that you throw out the baby with the bathwater. In trying to get rid of the hype you also get rid of any personality and quirk – and your marketing becomes humdrum.

If you assume that a beautifully designed website will get you clients. You will be disappointed.

When we believe lies - we suffer. We make poor decisions. When we have the wrong map – we get lost. When we base our business on false assumptions we struggle. We end up trying to change the wrong things. We invest our efforts in the wrong places. Or, worse, we don't try anything at all. We assume that we're on track because we're getting normal results. Sure, we're struggling – but everyone else is too – so we must be doing everything right and we just have to be patient.

When we use the wrong strategies, we get bad results.

This may seem abstract right now – but hang in there. Let's dive right into . . .

Summary: The key to having a successful practice

Let's revisit the idea of maps again and bring a tighter focus to it. I'd like to present two 'maps' of business to you.

Map #1: The Only Three Reasons Your Practice Can Fail.

- 1) Your **product** sucks.
- 2) Your **customer service** sucks.
- 3) Your **marketing** sucks.

What do you notice?

My guess is that you are noticing that your major sticking point is **marketing**. Am I right? I want to make the bold assumption that your product (your coaching sessions, products and/or holistic treatments) are either great or 'good enough'. They're not the problem area.

Map #2: The Three Marketing Elements to Growing a Thriving Practice

- 1) **The Full Practice:** Getting more clients.
- 2) **The Remarkable Practice:** Being so good your clients are inspired to send their friends.
- 3) **The Sustainable Practice:** Building your relationships with your clients, prospects and 'the scene' you're a part of.

Of these three, I predict that you likely experience yourself as weakest in the first stage (getting more clients) and then the third (building deeper relationships).

The Meaning of the Maps

Consider this: You rated yourself low on **marketing and getting more clients**. Am I right? If that's true (and it often is) then this means is that your highest R.O.I. will be found in improving those areas.

Investing effort in better healing or coaching skills is important but not the highest leverage place.

Elastic Band Metaphor:

Imagine for a moment that I am holding one end of an elastic band to the table with one finger. With the other finger, I am pulling up on the other end. There's a point at which if I pull up any more, it may snap. Just like you can snap if you don't honour your very

beautiful, human limits. You have limited energy, time and money. The question is how to invest it most wisely.

The only way to get the elastic band higher is to raise my lower finger that has it pinned to the table. Pulling harder on the top end is a recipe for breaking the elastic band.

In your case, the lower finger represents marketing, sales and business skills. The top finger represents your business success, income and quality of clientele. You will not get more of the latter until you raise the bar for the former.

Your Three Bottom Lines:

Bottom Line #1: Most practitioners and coaches do not invest enough time in business building skills. Instead they focus on the constant learning of new modalities, techniques and practices. If you want to make minor improvements in your business – focus on the areas in which you're *already* strong. This area is already well past the point of diminishing returns. Ten units of effort here will bring you one unit of reward.

Disney Hotels made a big shift years ago from washing their bedsheets every night to once every three nights. They invited people to call the front desk if they wanted them cleaned more often. Almost nobody called. Nobody cared. Less can be more. Washing the bed sheets more often? They had long past the point of diminishing returns.

British Airways asked their first class passengers of their 12 hour trans-atlantic flights how they could improve their service. The survey answers came back with a unanimous, “let us sleep!”. Less can be more. More snacks and customer service? They had long past the point of diminishing returns. More effort here would not help them.

Bottom Line #2: - When they do invest time into marketing, they use the wrong strategies. They use the ‘tried and *untrue*’ methods used by other practitioners that do not work (e.g business cards, brochure, logos, ads in new age magazines and *hoping* that people talk about them).

Bottom Line #3: If you want to make major improvements in your business – focus on the areas in which you're weakest. Focus on the weakest link in the chain. One unit of effort here will bring you ten units of reward.

The difference between having a successful practice or not depends solely on your ability to attract and keep clients...hands down.

The fastest way to build your practice is to learn from others who have done what you want to do...attract high quality clients who can pay you the fees you really want, who keep coming back and refer their friends.

And the quickest way to get clients is to learn the one skill that changes everything...selling.

Selling?

Uhhhh . . .

Now, we know that the idea of learning how to sell might make you feel queasy.

But there's a revolution happening with selling, because conscious people like you and me just won't put up with being pushed into something that isn't right for us any longer. As consumers, we've become more sensitive to being respected and honored in a sales conversation. We've gotten to the point where we will only buy from someone we feel connected with...especially when it comes to personal services like coaching, healing and consulting.

You're not someone who will be fooled by those old-school selling techniques and you're certainly not someone who would use them to try to get clients! (and truthfully, they just don't work so well anymore anyway).

Non monetary reasons to handle marketing:

My guess is that you're not in this game to 'get rich'. You're in it to live a good life and meet your needs. You're in it to have fun and contribute.

Money probably isn't your prime motivator. Although the *lack* of money might be . . .
(laughter)

So . . . I think it's important to highlight some of the reasons to handle your marketing that don't have to do with money. The first reason is that most of what's sold today is shit. Pardon the language. But this world is so filled with chemically based, poisonous, toxic products and you represent a hopeful alternative to those things. Increasingly, products are sold through box stores that siphon money out of the very communities they're based in. The CEO gets richer while the community grows poorer. You represent a hopeful alternative to that.

But, it's not enough that these great alternatives exist - people need to know about them. Does that make sense? And how are people going to find out about them?

Marketing.

Also - in my experience for everyone of you on the call today there are dozens and dozens of people behind you. And they're considering getting into business. They're thinking about starting up that holistic practice. They're sitting with the idea of opening up an all organic restaurant. They're considering starting that non-toxic housecleaning company. And they're looking at you. You're further down the path than they are. And, if they look at you and they see you broke, struggling, miserable and angry at 'the man' - they think, 'maybe I'll wait a while.' But if they see you thriving. If they see you doing well financially and enjoying your life immensely, they think . . . "Well, maybe this is possible." You are being watched. And not just by the government! Isn't that comforting. I always invite people to sign up on my email list because "the CIA knows where I am and so should you."
(laughter)

The point is that if the titanic's sinking and all you do is yell "it's sinking." It's not that useful. They're going to hold on for dear life. But if we pull up in a big, green, beautiful, biodeisel powered boat with great live music and beautiful organic food - they'll jump over like crazy.

Remember: Misery is unsustainable and self sacrifice is unappealing.

So, we need a better party. (laughter)

And your business can play an important role in that. The point is - there's reasons beyond 'making money' to handle our marketing. And speaking of money - I bet that **you'd like to never invest another penny in the destructiveness of the current system.**

But it's not so easy, is it?

After all, there's are increasing ways to SPEND your money consciously but how many ways are there for you to MAKE your money consciously?

It breaks your heart to see how the big the gap is between where we are and where we *could* be. It's a deadly merry go round and it's not easy to get off - especially since it keeps speeding up.

You'd like to eat only organic food but it's expensive. You'd like to not have to drive a car but you feel forced to by circumstance. You want to buy from more conscious companies but you don't always know which ones are legit.

Why you making more money is a **GOOD** thing for the world

There are too many good people, like you, doing good things who are struggling in their businesses.

And, let me be blunt: you're struggle is hurting the world.

When people can't buy from YOU - a more conscious business - they'll likely buy from the convenient crappy corporation around the corner.

If YOU had more money in your pocket you know you'd invest it in life affirming projects. And your goal isn't to get rich anyway! I may think capitalism is the devil but I also think you having more money is a very important thing. I think if your basic needs were met (and then some) you'd have more space in your life to be active in your community, to share with those who need it and to enjoy your life.

In a world where many feel trapped in the suicide economy we need role models of possibility. If people see YOU succeeding in a conscious way, it will inspire them to know it's possible and to work towards it.

Like Marianne Williamson put it "your playing small does NOT serve the world."

5 Emotional Patterns Coaches and Practitioners Use to Avoid Facing These Myths & Deal with Their Marketing:

1. **Denial & Avoidance:** They try to pretend that there's no problem. They pretend that it *doesn't* hurt. It's like the old Aesop's fable about the Fox trying to get the grapes. He tries to trick the crow into dropping them but, when unsuccessful, walks away saying, "*I didn't want those grapes anyway.*" I have heard people describe denial by using it as an acronym for Don't Even Notice I Am Lying.

People will go to amazing lengths to pretend they don't have a problem. Whether it's as extreme as alcoholism, the state of their physical health or the state of their finances. People seem to believe that if they don't look at the problem it will simply go away. Denial is the ostrich sticking its head in the sand.

2. **Sedatives and Numbing Out:** They use sedatives of "food", alcohol, drugs etc. to lower their level of pain. The use of any of these once a while, isn't the issue. The issue is that people use these as a consistent pattern. But perhaps the worst drug of all is when people tell themselves "it's okay". When people have attempted to create a result again and again and failed - they tend to give up.

When people try to handle their marketing in countless ways and can't seem to get it together they will either step up and take another cut the ball or they will step *down* and deal with their pain by saying, "*it's okay. It's not really that bad.*"

They will reinforce this by hanging around with a peer group that has equally low expectations of life. This peer group will say things like, "*Hey, don't be so hard in yourself. Quit working so hard. Relax once a while.*" But the peer group is not really saying these things out of any sense of true caring for the person because they don't want to look at the fact that they are *also* struggling with these issues. And they're in avoidance too.

3. **Rationalize And Tell Themselves Stories:** you can hear a rationalization a million miles away. They almost always start with the words "Well it's not like I..." or "At least I don't..." (followed by the one strong standard they have).

They'll say things like, "*Sure I smoke once in awhile, but it's not like I'm one of those people who smokes three packs a day.*" Or when looking at their finances, they'll say, "*Sure my finances are a mess but it's not like I'm \$100,000 in debt on credit cards.*" Or they'll look at their romantic relationships and say, "*Sure, it's not the most fulfilling relationship in the world but it's not like we're fighting all the time and hate each other.*"

The easiest way to rationalize lowering our standards is to compare ourselves with people who have even *lower* standards. Are you doing this with the marketing side of your business? Do you make yourself feel better about yourself by comparing yourself with practitioners and coaches who are less competent and committed?

4. **Justifications:** They give their reasons: “*I mean I should do this but...*” in whatever comes after that “but” is their “excuse” for not taking action. So, at least they acknowledge that there is a problem, but the way they choose to deal with it is to prove to other people, and themselves, why they can't do anything about it. They play victims.
5. **They Use Softeners:** They say, “*I'm having a few problems with my marketing.*” As opposed to, “*My marketing plans is a disaster.*” People will use the language that softens the emotional impact ~ and so they will never ever connect with the pain that could actually drive them to create the change they want in their lives. Until people face, and ultimately embrace, the pain they are currently experiencing they will never have the energy or motivation to create the level of change they want.

5 Emotional Patterns Coaches and Practitioners Use to Avoid Dealing with Their Marketing:

The Pattern	How this pattern shows up in my practice . . .
Denial & Avoidance	
Sedatives and Numbing Out	
Rationalize And Tell Themselves Stories	
Justifications	
They Use Softeners	