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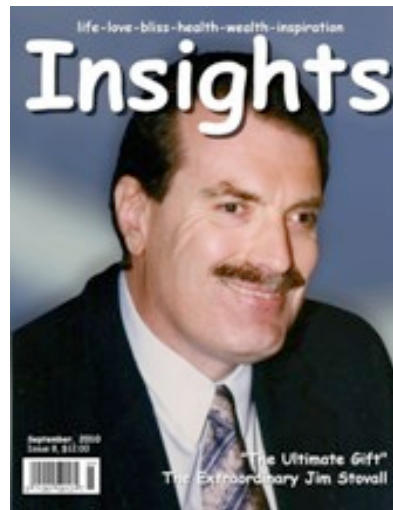
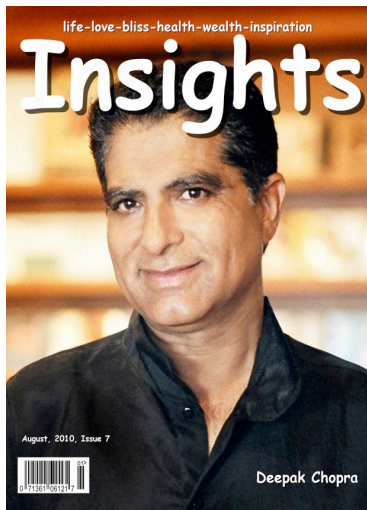
Insights

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Bill Baren
Art & Science of Conscious Success

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Insights Magazine brings you leading experts in coaching and empowerment, sharing their wisdom, vision, secrets of success and personal defining moments of inspiration. We hope you will enjoy your new Insights each month.



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***A special thank you to Coaches and Media Personalities,
Stacey Chadwell, Toni Reece and Donna Amos***

Bill Baren

is a top business coach. He has dedicated himself to helping business owners who want to really make a difference in getting new clients and truly growing your business. He's founder of Bill Baren Coaching, www.billbaren.com, and has produced many sold out live and online programs including The Client Mastery Blueprint, the Big Shift Experience, The Ultimate Entrepreneur Toolkit, and Master of Enrollment.

Bill is also past President of the San Francisco Coaches, and in 2008's Excellence in Coaching award winner in San Francisco. He has been featured on Fine Living Network and What's Your Time Worth TV show.

I: Bill, why do you think it is that so many small business owners struggle to get clients?

BB: I know the answer to that question from my own experience. One of the ways that I really look at this from what I call the Trinity of Success. The Trinity of Success obviously has the three points.

One is the pure and utter commitment to the art of what we do; really, to the art of coaching, and being relentless in being able to figure out all the tools. How we can be a better coach. A lot of coaches got this one down.

The second part of that Trinity is the 'you' piece, because our businesses, us being a coach, that's our spiritual teacher. So much stuff comes up when we're trying to build our businesses, when we're trying to coach others. It's really being committed to the spiritual practice of really, really taking care of our stuff that gets in our way. Most coaches have this down.

Then there's the third piece, which is the business of coaching, and a lot of coaches are not yet committed to making that an integral piece of what they do. By the way, one thing that's really helped me do that, and I want to share it, is that I don't think of my marketing, I don't think of my initial consultations as anything different than coaching. I want to transform lives as much with my marketing, as much with the free things that I give away, as much as my enrollment conversations with people as I do with one-on-one coaching, as I do in my group programs. To me, everything is coaching. When I change my mind about what "marketing and sales" really are, it made it really easy for me to succeed in those areas, because now I'm just doing what I love to do anyway.

The second piece of that is really why I created my [Client Mastery Blueprint](#), because I know that when there is a system of how to do this and it's step-by-step, it's easy to follow, and it's actually in very, very logical order, it really frees us up to do what we really love. This is the combination of why some coaches yet struggle.

I: That is so true. What's the biggest game changer when it comes to getting clients?

BB: Yes, yes. This is an interesting one, because the first step, really the most important step for any coach, and it's vital not skip over this step, is really to **discover a tribe of loyal, high-paying clients who are literally waiting for someone like you to come along to help them get to a particular result.**

BB: I know when I say this to some people, and especially to coaches, it almost sounds too good to be true, but it's not. When you're totally clear on who you're serving and what's the ultimate result they get from working with you – by the way, I just want to make sure that you got what I just said – the ultimate result – singular – one result, when you're clear on that, your business will take off.

I've seen this over and over and over again. When you're not clear on who you're serving and you're not clear on what result your clients get from working with you, your business is going to be much harder to market and it will be that much more difficult to get clients.

Think about it – doesn't it make sense that when you know your tribe, what they want, and you commit yourself to them, think about relationship – you commit to them – then your website, your packages, your marketing, your public speaking, your teleclasses, your networking – literally, everything you do will actually connect and speak to your tribe and what they really want.

I know that sometimes people call this picking a niche, but I like to call it discovering your tribe. It's much easier to go about this process by honing in your ability, which you already have as a coach, to tap into an already existing community of people who already want what you have to offer, who already want the very gifts that you're here on this planet to provide.

I know for a fact that not having this tribe, not having this niche, is the biggest problem the majority of people reading this message have right now.

(Continued next page.)



Bill Baren continued...

BB: I know you might have heard this niche conversation before, and maybe you're saying to yourself, I know some of this; but knowing is not enough. I want you to be able to clearly shout to everyone from the rooftop who your tribe is and what ultimate result they get from working with you. When you keep consistent with this message – I mean, everywhere you go, because I know what winds up happening with coaches – every time you go somewhere, you have a different pitch. You have a different message. You're trying things on, never really committing to one. If you can get on the road to actually getting this right for yourself, that is the biggest way I can be of service to you.

I know that for me, right now it's absolutely effortless for me to attract clients, because when I say I help coaches who are committed to making a difference but are struggling with getting clients, getting all the clients they want anytime, anywhere, it connects. That's what happens when you commit to the niche. People who are part of your tribe, people are part of my tribe, naturally gravitate towards me.

I want to give you one more tool, because this tool is going to be really important to help you along this way. I call this tool My Seven-Point Tribal Niche Checklist. This will help you to determine whether you have a good niche or not. Whether you can actually be successful with your niche or not. Do you think this will be helpful to people?

I: Absolutely. I'm waiting to hear it.

BB: Good. Let's over this Tribal Niche Checklist. The way this works, because I want to explain to you how it works – there's seven questions, and you don't get to the next question until you have a yes to the previous question.

The first three questions, if you don't get 'yeses' for all of them, you're not going to be successful. After that, it's a bonus. If you can a 'yes' to question four, that makes your ability to succeed more; five, more; six, you're probably going to succeed; seven, if you have a yes to that question and you're really committed to the business and to the coaching, you're going to rock it completely. That's why this really works for people.

Question #1: Are there particular places where your tribe hangs out or congregates?

This could be online, offline, networking events, associations, social networks. Any group of people. It can even be other people's newsletters. If you cannot find a place where they hang out, you won't find a place for you to market your business, either. By the way, it's also much easier if your tribe self-identifies itself easily. For me, when I say 'coaches who want to make a difference', easy to self-identify.

One thing I want to say, if you're looking for a tribe and you think your tribe is women age 25 to 50, that's not a tribe. Now, if you're talking about new mothers who are having trouble adjusting to life after the first baby is born, that's a community. You can find where they hang out online. You can already tap into an already prime existing community of new mothers. Now, only if you have answer of yes to that first question, do you get to move on to question #2.

BB: Question #2: Can you honestly say that you care, respect, and perhaps even love your tribe?

If you don't have a genuine – by that I mean not forced where you have to try to love them – caring for your tribe, you'll lose your mojo for your business soon. It's important to pick a tribe that you actually care about. Sometimes we pick our niche, our tribe with our head rather than with our heart, so the heart has to be part of this equation. If you've got the answer to #1 and #2, you get to move onto question #3.

Question #3: Do you know what is the result your tribe is willing to invest into getting?

Result invest into getting – the big one. Just because you pick the tribe doesn't mean you have a niche. Now you also need to be able to identify what result your tribe actually wants. Your tribe needs to want it enough to want to pay for getting that result. By the way, I'm very precise with my wording. I said your tribe "wants" not what you think it needs, but what you know it wants. Until you get a yes to this question, you can't move on to #4. By the way, if you've got the first three as 'yeses', you're doing well.

Question #4: Are you passionate about delivering the result that we talked about?

You need to be passionate about your tribe, but you also need to be passionate about the result that you get. For me, any time any one of my coaches get a client, I am jumping up and down, because I'm excited, because that result juices me, because I know that's the way that I can make a difference in the world. If every single one of you gets all the clients that you want as a result of working with me, guess what happens? I get to make a big difference, because there's a domino effect of how many people I can touch with the work that I'm doing. I'm passionate about my results. That's question #4.

Question #5: Do you want to be known for delivering that result?

Can you see yourself being at a gathering of your tribe members where everyone is looking at you as the expert of delivering that result? You're walking by and somebody says, "Oh yes, there's so-an-so who does so-and-so." Wow. By the way, that also means that you need to let go of being known for any other result. If you can say, "Yes, I want to be known for this", then you get to move on to question #6.

Question #6: Do you currently have the expertise or the desire to commit to being the best at delivering this result?

Question #7: Can you identify other players who are creating successful businesses marketing to that same tribe?

This is the last one. Think of this as a bonus, because this can really take you from a good business to a huge business. If you can, then your chances of success are even higher because your niche has already proven itself. It has a proven record of success. By the way, most people have an instinct to go in the opposite direction. The more competition I have in an area or niche, the less likely I am to succeed – it's the opposite. The more people that pave the way for you, the easier it will be for you to be successful.

At this point, I'm pretty certain that we're on the same page about identifying your tribe, and with this Tribal Niche Checklist, you now have a way to see whether you can actually have a niche that will allow you to have a successful business in the long run.

(Continued next page.)

Bill Baren continued...

VW: If we know who our tribe is, how do we make offers to them? What's going to really attract them to us, make us irresistible?

BB: Yes. I'm giddy after this question. I'm going to hold you to your highest self, and I'm going to say that you either have a tribe or you're on your way to picking a tribe. Once you have that, and you know what the ultimate result is that you help people with, the next step really is to be able to create and present an irresistible offer.

In my [Client Mastery Blueprint](#) we have this extensive module on making your offers irresistible, but today really I want to give you at least one significant piece of that puzzle, which is how to create high value package for your services. I'm going to give you an abbreviated formula, because really this is something that I spent a whole module on it, but I want to get you something that you can use right away.

This is going to be a four-step formula. This is a formula to have your packages be twice more attractive while doubling your regular fees.

1. Title the package to match the ultimate results your clients want.
2. Benefits of the package that are also result-driven and are exactly what your clients want most. Again, I'm using the word "want" not "need."
3. A price that matches the value of the result, rather than the time you are spending on delivering that result. This is a big one for coaches. If you can stop calculating how much you make per hour, this will be one of things you can do to get in your way to pricing yourself better.
4. A bonus item you can include that also helps you deliver the result your clients want that really takes the desirability factor over the top for your clients.

Here is an example. I have a speaker trainer coach, and she was packaging "Speaking Training." That was great, but when she titled her sessions and her packages "Get a Standing Ovation at Your Next Gig" package – man, she got a lot more takers for it, because it really connected to the primal need, and the primal want.

I: This is such great information and obviously it's really working, but you know, a lot of business owners really hate to do selling. They feel it's kind of pushy. They do everything great, except offering their services. How do you help people overcome that fear or that reluctance to get out there and sell or market? I really am looking forward to hearing how approach you this Bill.

BB: Perfect. I want to put it all altogether. We talked about your tribe and your niche. When you have that and when you create the offers, then you know exactly what to offer them. The piece in between is the marketing piece. How to attract people into conversations with you, and then when you're able to attract people into conversations with you, here's the piece, then you need to be able to have an enrolling conversation so they become clients. This is really what I want to talk to you about. I just wanted to tie all of this in because that's part of what I think I'm here to do, is to tie all the pieces together so you know exactly how it all works.

Let's talk about these enrolling conversations. By the way, I really mean it to be an enrolling conversation, because it's no different than coaching. The formula that I really use is called Closing the Gap.

BB: I want to tell you exactly what this means. Think of yourself as a coach, as someone who is able to elicit through your powerful questions and paint the world where your client really wants to go. When you get to take them deep – I’m talking about deep, deep into understanding what their world looks like, what their world feels like, what that world smells like, and you can take them to the highest possibility for themselves in that area, you just created a new world for them. You’re already a service.

Then, you take them on the second piece of the process, which is where are they now? Now with them, you get to be completely empathic, compassionate about understanding and painting the world of where they are now. When you do that, when they can tangibly name and feel both of these worlds, they will literally be able to in the left hand hold the highest possibility, in the right hand, hold where they are now, and they can see the distance between these two places. They really want to go between those two places, but they’re stuff is standing in their way.

That’s the third piece. When they get to talk about all the things that may be a perceived roadblock or something’s in their way emotionally, tangibly, knowledge-wise, whatever it is that will prevent them, or they feel that might prevent them from getting there, now they’re ready to experience how you can be the solution – what I call the Closer. The one who can uniquely help them close the gap between those two places. It becomes really magical, because all you have to do is give them some point along the way, this is what we will do along the way for you to get there, and they can imagine you right where they are, taking your hand and walking on this path to this new future that they really want. Oh my God, it becomes so effortless to get clients to say yes.

I: Tell us a little about your thoughts on inspiration Bill.

BB: When we’re inspired – you know, that’s the interesting thing about inspiration – there is an energy that gets created and when we’re inspired we can take action much faster, we’re more likely produce results, we’re more likely to inspire others. If you are inspired right now, follow a practice that I use, which is the theory of catching inspiration. I can move buildings when I’m inspired, so whenever I am, I go right into action.

If I’m inspired right now, for example, and I act, the odds of me getting what I want are much higher. If you are inspired and you want to get the how-to piece on how to get clients handled and you want to do this in a loving and a supporting environment and you want to do this with accountability, then and only then I feel totally jazzed about you joining my programs.

**Learn more about Bill, and his
Client Mastery Blueprint Program:**

**The Step-By-Step System for Attracting Clients,
All the Clients That You Want.**

www.billbaren.com/wiki



Ali Brown

Ali Brown is fast becoming regarded as the voice of women in business and success. After launching her first business from her tiny New York City studio apartment in 1999, she has grown into what is today a multimillion-dollar enterprise that ranked in 2009 Inc's 500 list of fastest-growing private companies in the nation. Ali has been featured as an expert in numerous books and newspapers and also on morning shows on several major TV networks including ABC, CBS, CW, FOX, NBC, and E! She was recently named one of 2010's Enterprising Women of the Year.

Ali is dedicated to helping women around the world create freedom-based lives via entrepreneurship. Ali's company, Ali International, at www.AliBrown.com provides business success advice and resources to nearly 50,000 members around the world, and currently comprises four brands: her coaching and publishing company, the Millionaire Protégé Club; Ali Magazine; Ali Boutique; and Shine Event.

I: Ali please, tell us a little bit about your background and your role as a coach.

AB: It's interesting; I never set out to become a coach, and in fact I didn't even know what coaching was until about 10 years ago. You mentioned that I was starting my first business out of that tiny little New York City Apartment. It was about 600 square feet, which actually now is the size of my master bathroom; I was in there the other day and I said, "Oh my gosh, I think this is bigger than my apartment was!"

I was really stuck. I met this gal in a networking group and I asked, "What do you do?" She said, "I'm a coach... I help people create the lives of their dreams." I was in New York, and I was a little skeptical. I thought, okay, Tinkerbell, this is a big city, honey, dreams don't come true. While getting to know her, I decided to hire her. I thought what do I have to lose? I have no one to talk to about my business or my life, and I was hooked. I was in love with coaching. I was in love with coaches. I was in love with the industry.

However, for me, I didn't set out to be a coach. What happened is when I started growing my business and just figuring things out on my own – I didn't have much money at the time – I would read books and listen to tapes and whatever I could do to keep learning on a budget. I got into Internet marketing, which is really what I became known for. I got known as the "Ezine Queen" for email marketing and selling information products online. Then people started asking me, "Can you show me how to do what you're doing?" I kept saying, "I have a product that I'll show you." They said, "No, I want you to show me. I want you to coach me."

I would just scratch my head and think, well, I don't think I could be a coach. I'm not trained to be a coach. I don't know what I'm doing here. Then I realized that there's so much opportunity in coaching in many different industries and areas. I just really organically started to coach people, because I wasn't just telling them what to do. I was really helping them figure out what would be the best business move for them.

That's how I started. I'm not sure if that's how most coaches start, but for me in a particular niche, that's definitely how it happened. I remember stuttering when I would quote my fees at the time, which I think were \$60.00 an hour. It's been a real journey since then, and actually the top tier of my coaching program now is \$100,000 a year.

AB: I share that with people not to impress them, but to impress upon them that these quantum leaps are possible if you know how to set up your programs correctly, and especially if you know how to niche what you're offering. It's been a long journey for sure, but I'm really excited to now be sharing with people what those models are, and how this came to be.

I: That's amazing. I was having a conversation this morning with one of my clients, A lot of people really don't understand the difference between business and life coaches. I would love it if you would explain that, please.

AB: Everyone forgive me; I'm going to make some gross sweeping generalizations here.

Generally, business coaches, that big category, these are women and men who are typically trained in helping business owners or entrepreneurs excel. When they do really well, when they are successful leaders in a specific industry, they end up coaching others in their industry.

(Continued next page.)



Ali Brown continued...

AB: Some examples of industries with niche-specific coaching programs are direct sales professionals, dentists, wedding planners, hair salon owners, restaurant owners, dog groomers, image consultants, etc.

Life coaches – and again, I’m using this term very generally here – typically work with people on a wider variety of topics, helping clients make decisions about careers, relationships, marriage, divorce, motivation, creativity, health, fitness, and sometimes some business matters as well.

Generally, you will be seeing higher rates charged when you can directly help clients get a return on investment. So for me in business coaching, people ask, “How can you charge \$100,000 a year? Where do you get the nerve? Who do you think you are?”

I can do that because I have a track record in helping clients increase their incomes by six figures, even seven figures, within a year. So that makes sense. For someone coaching on health or relationships, etc., you’d have to check with your industry. I think the point I want to get across is that the biggest mistake I see a lot of coaches make is looking around to others in their industry to determine what to charge. That’s a good place to start, and it gives you a baseline to look at what’s common out there, but then you need to figure out what makes you extremely valuable and unique. That gives you the leverage to start charging more.

I: I see; use what you see around you as a baseline and then move up from there.

AB: Yes. I do see people making that same move, kind of looking around and just modeling everybody else.

I: Yes, actually I see that a lot. I see a lot of people, they either match or go down, and I don’t understand that logic, undercharging. You’re not valuing what you’re giving and bringing to the table, and that to me is the wrong move to make. You need to own and value what you bring to your clients, and it should be going up, not down.

AB: Yes. What I’d like to share next are what I see as the most popular types of coaching programs that are really working well right now.

I: I would love it if you did.

AB: Okay, great. I have some really good details for everyone. This is from my experience and also from working with hundreds of women who are coaches and consultants over the last several years. Here is what I see as the most popular types of programs that are in demand right now.

Of course we are going to be talking about a lot of group programs, because this where most coaches go when they want to leverage what they do. Most coaches start off working one-on-one; the three calls a month or whatever the template is these days, and then they realize, “Oh my gosh, I have no life. I wanted to become a coach to have a life and coach people on their lives, and now I have no life because I’m coaching all day.”

AB: The risk of that too is you get burnt out, and that's the heartbreaking part. Not making the kind of living you'd like to is a travesty, but I hate seeing people get burnt out in what they love.

The key here is **leverage**. We're looking at how to take your talents, your skills, your knowledge, this wealth of wisdom that you have to share with people. How do we leverage it and get it out there?

Group programs are definitely the way to go. You may think you cannot charge high for these, but I'm going to explain to you a few of my models that I use, and how you can use these yourselves. The big mistake I see a lot of people doing is they'll start off doing group programs and charge a lot less for them than they would for one-on-one. In some cases, that may make sense. Let's go over the models right here. The first one is a **mix of telecoaching and live meetings**. In my programs, I found that you can charge a lot more and you deliver a lot more value with a group program that has a mix of phone training and phone coaching, but also live meetings. You may be surprised that people are willing to travel to come and be in a room with like-minded people, learn information that is going to change their lives, and have an emotional connection with people.

I launched my Millionaire Protégé Club in the end of 2008, and launched a group program that is \$18,000 a year. Today we have 100 members. How that's made up is phone coaching, phone curriculum and training. We also have Internet online forum – but the glue that keeps people together is everyone getting together two or three times a year. We have people flying in from the Netherlands, New Zealand, the UK. It's really a phenomenal experience, the mix of the phone experience with the live meetings.



The second type of coaching program that is really in demand is **specialized information**. You want to get away from generic, vanilla advice these days. People are frustrated, they're stuck, they're still upset at the economy. This kind of long tail has happened – the recession is officially over, but people seem to be feeling it almost a little more now; it's really bizarre. People are not tolerant of generic information. They want specialized information.

The next is a **combination of coaching and mentoring and consulting**. This is naturally what I do. An example – the coaching, I'm helping people find out what they should be doing for themselves. The mentoring is that I've done what they want to do and what they want to model as a type of business. The consulting is I'm really giving them the information they need, and it's sometimes telling them what to do. People right now are desperate for leadership. That's what we're really seeing out there. If you have specific specialized knowledge to share and good coaching skills, you can dramatically increase your value and therefore increase your income.

Another model we see working really well is a **mix of the traditional coaching along with continuity**, which is like an ongoing membership program.

(Continued next page.)

Ali Brown continued...

AB: Those are some of the newer models that are working really well, and you can see they are very much hybrids of the traditional models.

I: I like it. Can you give us some examples of students of yours who have done well despite the recession?

AB: Yes. Again, you'll see that it flows nicely with what I was sharing about the models that are working because these women often have a niche, or they have created a hybrid of models that they have combined to create programs that are making them a lot of money.

I'll give you a quick example. One of them, her name is Ciara Daykin, is a wedding planner from Alberta, Canada. She first hired me as her coach in 2008, and her goal was to double her income and break six figures that year. She promptly did, and then under my guidance in 2009, she sold \$65,000 of a program in one day, and then experienced her first six-figure month. She doubled her income again, and now is regularly enjoying multiple six-figure years. What changed for her? She kept doing what she was doing, she's a wedding planner, but she decided to package it in a coaching program so she could teach others in her industry how to be successful too.



Another quick example is one of the gals in my current Diamond Tier, which is that high, high tier in which they get to coach with me personally, her name is Kendall SummerHawk – you probably know her.

I: I've interviewed her.

AB: Yes, she's from Arizona. She has been with me a long time and took her business to about one million in 2008. Last year I worked with her personally and she doubled her revenues to two million. The biggest reason for this jump was reengineering how she packaged, sold, and delivered her coaching programs.

Another quick example is a gal named Karen Knowler from Cambridge, England. Her niche is raw food. Now, if you can coach about raw food, you can coach about anything, right? When she signed up to coach with me, her income that year was really doing well. She was in the multiple six figures. She had really been kicking up the Internet marketing along with the one-on-one coaching. She had done some group models, but by the end of 2009 she had nearly doubled to over \$600,000; and these are all numbers I have been given permission to share with you.

AB: These women love sharing their numbers, because we all need to be more open to sharing this stuff to let each other know that it's possible.

I want to make it clear – these women I just shared with you, these are not typical results. These women had successful businesses already that were probably six figures or more when they got started, but the biggest shift in what they did is they learned what to do and they implemented it. They went out there and they were bold and they made changes, and it takes work. I'm going to say this is ... it's not hard to do, but it does take work, and it's important to know that.

If you're a beginner, though, what would even doubling your fee do for you? If those numbers are kind of intimidating, just think about you could do by adding one new profitable or really well-engineered program. Many people can add tens of thousands of dollars to their bottom line just with one new program.

This is about whatever level you want to take it to. Before last year I made a very conscious decision to grow my business into the multimillion-dollar level. I want to take this all the way. I want to have little Ali disciples all over the world, you know? I want to be going out there and speaking everywhere. I had this big, big vision. Not everyone wants that, and that's totally okay. There are moms who are home-based and just want to generate a few thousand dollars a month. Maybe they only want to work two days a week – that's great! This is about using models that will leverage your skills and wisdom and talents, and allow you to charge more by working less. That's what this is really about. I hope those stories are inspirational for people.

I: They are! It's also about pushing a little bit beyond your boundaries too, because that's basically what was happening with these women that you were talking about. They had to push past those boundaries.

AB: I tell my students, I know no better personal development tool than growing a business, because this will bring up all your issues.

I: It does. Childhood issues, relationship issues, all of them come up when you're trying to grow a business. You're absolutely right.

AB: When you're stepping out, all this stuff bubbles up to the surface because you need to move through it in order to get to the next level. It can be like a spiritual battle. I've known some clients I've worked with ... it's interesting, they come to me for the business advice, but **we end up really moving them into this place of courage.** You say that you want to play a big game, but are you really ready to do this, because this is going to bring you through a journey that you may not have expected. It will also be the best thing you've ever done, because when you come out on the other side, you are just so clear. You are connected to spirit, you're making a great living. It really all comes together. It's amazing. I'm glad you feel that way, too.

I: Oh, yes. You definitely feel better, bigger, stronger. What are the biggest mistakes that you see coaches making right now?

(Continued next page.)

Ali Brown continued...

AB: I'd say probably two of them, or maybe more. Number one is generic types of coaching are not going to sell well now. People are credit crunched, they're very careful about the decisions they make with their money, and coaching right now can be perceived as a luxury more than a necessity. That is honestly why I had a lot of people moving into business coaching versus the traditional life coaching model. When clients can justify return on their investment, they're much more likely to work with you. Solutions to that problem, if you don't want to move into the business area, is to get really clear with specific knowledge and information that you can help people with. If that requires you doing some more research or study or getting some more coaching of your own, then you really need to move into that.

Another mistake that I see coaches make is just charging an hourly rate. The problem with telling people X per hour is you then become a commodity, and you are easily compared with other coaches who charge X per hour. What I'd like to see you do instead is to move into packages that you have a six-month package that is X thousand dollars, or you only work with clients on an annual basis, which is similar to what I do. If someone is going to work with me, I'm going to work with them by their side for the entire year. That's how I work. Or, if you don't want to do that, perhaps even a day rate, and clients can come spend a day with you for a certain amount. When you get into that hourly, then people start comparing apples to apples, and you lose your power. You really do.

Also, there are group programs and coaches not getting creative enough in delivering more value so that you have the right to charge a lot more for what you're offering. I'm sure that you've seen this but there's just a big shift going on in the industry that the previous traditional models are not working as well in the new economy, and that's why I'm so excited to share this information with everybody.

I: I'm glad you are. What are your Three No-Fail Formulas?

AB: I have three No-Fail Formulas for various levels of group coaching delivery, and it's no accident that these are ones that I use myself. I'm going to walk through the programs that I have right now.

By the way, I just wanted to drop a note that if you're reading this and if you're liking this information, we put together a special free audio for everyone. So if you like this, I go into this information in much more detail. It's www.coachbizsecrets.com and that is where you can get more information on this, and also my special two-day workshop. I'm going through all of this in detail, over two days, and teaching this to people. It's just going to be great.



Here are my personal Three No-Fail Formulas for various levels of group coaching delivery.

AB: My top, top tier, which I call Diamond in my Millionaire Protégé Club, is an intimate small mastermind format. This is a mix of phone, online, and live, in-person meetings. You may have heard this also called **Platinum Style Programs**. What makes up our *Diamond Tier* is we have live two-day retreats three times a year – kind of boardroom style. For example, this year I have eight members in my Diamond program. They are allowed to bring a business partner or spouse or assistant. We get a small conference room. I love having them in places that are upscale and places that I like to go on vacation, so we've been to Maui. We're having one in Palm Springs which is where my mom lives, so it's fun, because you want to make these fun for you too. That's half the point here. We have monthly group phone meetings, and they have monthly one-on-one calls with me, plus more that they can schedule as needed.

Then they get to spend time with me one-on-one twice a year, and I actually have those meetings here in my home. I want them to feel like we're working closely together, I'm really following their progress over the full year. This is that tip-top level where they are making a \$100,000 investment. They're not just paying that to work with me; they're paying that to be in a group of people who are serious. You will find that people really are looking for that right now, because they can go to seminars and join programs, but the biggest complaint I hear is, "I really want to be surrounded by people who are really serious about growing their business." Creating an exclusive group like that is just as valuable actually as the coaching they receive. People tell me later, "Ali, you know, I loved your coaching, but I have to tell you just being in the room with these types of people has changed my business. It's raised my money thermometer. I just feel different. I work different now."

So consider putting together a small group that's high priced, that works together for an entire year.

An example of the second model that I like to do is my *Platinum tier*. It's a combination of a curriculum and then coaching. We do this via phone, online, and live. We do live two-day retreats twice a year and we do monthly training calls, monthly Q&A calls. There are mailed materials, CD's and transcripts. We have small masterminds within the big group of 100 who meet on the phone every two weeks. There is an online forum. It's a much more robust program, but there are more members. For that group, we charge \$18,000 a year, and there are membership requirements. I need to mention that for Diamond, too. There's a strict application process. I'm giving out samples of these applications and all that in my [Coaching Business Intensive](#), too. I'm actually giving people all this stuff to model.

The next level down is your simple **telecoaching model**. It's delivered by phone and online. You do some training information, some Q&A, and keep it simple with this digital delivery. Our *Gold* level is an example of that, and that's \$247 a month. Now, I want to emphasize that my price points are higher than many people will be charging. There are some tips and tricks to that, and we can't get into those right now, but those are some models you should start considering. Consider how can you repack-age what you're delivering in a way that is perceived as a higher value and they're really getting a lot more out of the program.

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Ali Brown continued...

I: When they go to your program that you're going to have soon, your [Coaching Business Intensive](#), you'll be going into those tips and tricks?

AB: We are going into so much. I was sharing it with my team the other day. They were here at the house. We all just meet at the house. It's fun. Sometimes they sleep over; we had a slumber party. My team is like 15 women. It's hysterical. We really should have a reality show or something! I'm going through all the stuff, and they said, "Are you seriously going to be sharing all of this?" I said, "Yes, I'm really peeling back the curtain." We're sharing the checklist we use, the forms, the applications, how we package the programs, and even more importantly, how we sell them. How you present this type of program and invite people to participate is just as important, if not more important, than how you structure the program. It's really a delicate invitation and it needs to feel good to both parties, and so I'm sharing how to do that exactly step-by-step.

I: Very interesting, wow. What price points make the most sense for coaches who are starting out right now? There's so many people out of work right now that are moving into coaching or people who've always been interested in coaching and they might want to take that leap.

AB: A big mistake I see with price points for group programs is charging too much for generic information. I'll give you an example of what I did. **My Silver tier**, which I haven't mentioned, is like an ongoing continuity program, which we'll talk about in a minute. I started off with that, promising way too much. I charged \$100 a month and they got two calls – big group calls – there was no Q&A, just group calls, and they got CD's in the mail, and there was an online forum. The program just blew up. The reason is, the information was not specialized enough to be able to charge that much. **Now my Silver tier is only \$10 a month.** There's a reason I did this, and I want to explain why, because I'm always asked, "How can you charge 100 grand a month, and then charge 10 bucks a month at the same time?"

I: I'm shocked.

AB: There is a strategic reason for it. Because I personally am out now doing a lot of television and media appearances, I wanted a program that is an easy entry level for women, maybe a mom who's at home thinking about starting a business, a woman who's still in a job, a stay at home dad ... anyone. We really simplified the program. We blew up the forum – that was so much fun. Let's blow up the forum! My team said, "Yay! We hate the forum!" It was just a mess. You know, these are mistakes that I've learned from.

That program now is running smoother than ever. We're not mailing anything. It's 10 bucks a month, but that's the reason – it's because it's part of my grand plan to bring more people in so they can have their little dose of Ali every month. For most people, this would be a big, big waste of time. I know we were going to talk about continuity programs as well membership, and that leads to the biggest mistake I see people making is promising way too much.

AB: When you're looking at price points that I'm seeing work very well, if you're going to have an ongoing monthly program, you definitely want to place it at \$100 or less if it's something that's simple, like a telecoaching program, unless you have detailed, extremely specialized information. For example, let's say you are a coach for hair salon owners, and you specifically show hair salon owners how to grow their business. That is a niche topic, and you could charge a few hundred dollars for that a month if the information is specialized enough, and there's a lot of 'how-to.' It can't just be discussion and just talking about the industry. Every call should have some how-to, maybe some Q&A, maybe they get some mailed materials or kind of little blueprints they can follow. People like visuals. We've learned that. That adds a lot of value in our programs. Maybe for every module you teach, you give a visual little map or chart, or flow chart. People love that stuff. The more you add to the program, the more you can charge.

As far as ongoing programs and group programs, \$247 is a price point that's still working well. Right now, if you're going to go with lower level information, as I mentioned, under \$100 does work pretty well.

I: Can you talk about the pluses and minuses of continuity programs?

AB: When people first learned about membership programs, everyone went nuts. They're saying, "This is great, because I only have to sell once, and then people are in the program." You get continual income; that's why it's called continuity.

Actually, you'll see now when you watch infomercials on TV, that for almost all the products sold now, they try to link them to a continuity program. You've seen infomercials for like Proactive, the acne program, or a few years ago I bought Youthful Essence with Susan Lucci. It was a face scrub, and actually I love the stuff. You order the product, it gets sent to you every month, and that's continuity. The reason it works so well is that it's one order, one sale, but then ongoing income.

The same trend happened to coaching a few years ago. Some people started these continuity programs, or we can call them membership as well. The drawback is, I want to emphasize, that most people start off offering way too much. One of the biggest reasons that my original program kind of imploded is that I promised the sun, the moon, and the stars. Two calls a month, and you get this and you get that, and there's going to be a forum, and all this stuff. You can get people to sign up for that, but we couldn't sustain the model. I was drained. I couldn't do two calls a month, and it looks really bad when you start pulling things back and then charging the same amount of money. You cannot do that. You can't sell something for one price, and then take away value. My biggest piece of advice is under-promise, over-deliver. If you want to start off at a lower price, you can always raise it later, but it's hard to drop it down and take things away, and people just get all ruffled. That is one thing you want to be really careful of.



Ali Brown continued...

AB: It really does not make sense for someone to have a continuity program if their list is on the small side. Reason being is, people hear about these programs, they say, "Awesome, I'm going to try to get 1,000 people who are charged \$100 a month." I'll ask, "How big is your list?" They will say, "Oh, it's 500 people." Well, how are you going to get a thousand people to sign up for this?

Let's look at some reality here, a little reality check. If you have let's say even a list of 5,000 and you do a promotion, a promotion for anything – this is good information for anyone to hear right now. Generally, when you send out an email, if you can get 10% of the people to click to learn more, that is amazing. Let's say you have a list of 5,000 and 500 people click to learn more, and then let's say 5% of those people sign up, which is also a great conversion rate. That gives you 25 members. If you're charging \$47 a month, that's \$1,175. Let's subtract the 20 hours a month you have to pay a VA to run the program and you can see why this isn't working, right? You're netting a few hundred dollars, and that's if you retain those members. Which, if they can opt out any time, you're going to lose people. You'll end up losing money. I hope you guys get it.

The only time this really works is if you can charge a higher fee for it and it can be specialized. That way, if you have a smaller list, and you'll still be happy. Or, if your objective is to use that lower level to give people a taste of what you have and then quickly invite them up the ladder to your higher offerings. That's what we call an **as-cension model**. In that case, your lower level tier will be what we call a **loss leader**.

A great example is my Silver Tier. I was mentioning it was \$9.97 a month. We don't make money on that. We don't make money on that all. In fact, we lose money on that program, because we're also mailing out my magazine, which costs a lot of money. However, it's the open door. It's the open door for them to come into Ali World and see, "Oh my gosh, this stuff is great! I want to find out about her other programs." Then you invite them to move up the ladder. I hope that makes sense.

I: Yes, it does. I like the way you use the loss leader.

AB: Yes. If you want to build a list and your goal is to generate more passive income long-term, you want to look at doing things like that. If you get good quality leads and you want people to subscribe to your e-zine, your free report, whatever you're offering, or maybe it's a low level membership like I just mentioned, that is your long-term income. This is what I teach. I have a separate program called The Online Success Blueprint – you may have heard of it. I really help people look at this whole flow of building your list, bringing people in, and then monetizing the list with offerings, new products, programs and your coaching. Actually there's a formula to learn how much a lead is worth to you. Once you learn that formula, you may be willing to pay for leads. You know then what to spend on advertising or how much money is okay to lose on someone coming into a program because you know how many of them will end up buying from you at some point.

I: The other point is that with the continuity program, you're constantly marketing. Marketing is full time, all the time; that will never change.

AB: Not only the marketing, but the administration. As I mentioned, you're going to need someone to manage this for you, because it seems simple at first, like everything. Someone will sign up and then you just have the monthly call. Then people are calling – they lost their password, they have to change their credit card, they have questions, they're like, "I didn't hear the bullet point that was covered on call number three that promised the four ways that I could ..." All this stuff happens. Just like with anything, it's always a little more complicated than you estimate. You do need an administrative person to help. I hope anybody who is running a business at least has a VA to help them right now, or some type of administrative person.

I: Exactly, or you're going to end up doing all the marketing and all the work yourself, and then you're doing that work that you don't like.

AB: Yes. Then you're just going to walk away and say, "These programs don't work." They can work, if you know how to get serious traffic, if you have a larger list, and if you have superb marketing. If you have 1,000 members at \$47.00 a month, now we're talking; that's \$47,000 a month. That's continuity – that's what we want. But again, you know it's not for everyone.

Your solution here is to learn how to package your coaching differently so you can deliver more value and charge high fees, and that's what we've been talking about.



I: You mentioned Kendall SummerHawk earlier, and I know she's a fabulous coach, as you are. That's a good example, and here's a question for you – do coaches need coaches, because you did mention that Kendall is one of your clients.

AB: Yes. I'm always very skeptical of people who sell coaching but do not continue to get coached themselves. I'm always very honest. I'm always working with a mentor or coach. The woman I'm working with now actually runs a billion dollars worth of companies. She works out of Sydney, Australia. It's a funny story, actually, but she found me. Her team bought my Blueprint product for some online marketing tips, and then she got in touch with me to take me to dinner. We had kind of crazy people writing all the time wanting to meet me or take me to dinner, or someone offered to give me a massage ... but this woman, I thought she was just very nice but eccentric. My team didn't tell me who she was, and I said, "Well, I won't be able to have dinner."

She kept persisting, and I Googled her, and this woman has been Entrepreneur of the Year of the World, she's on the Clinton Global Initiative, and her name is Anne. I pay her hundreds of thousands of dollars a year, the reason being is, not only for my own success, but so I can pass on what I'm learning from her to my students.

Ali Brown continued...

AB: I think it's extremely important that coaches always have a mentor or coach that they are working with on a continual basis. I think it's really hypocritical when coaches don't do that on a regular basis.

I: Exactly. We don't know it all, and you learn from people who are doing it better than you are. Like you said, your coach is in the billions.

AB: Yes. You want to work with someone who's not where you want to be next year, but someone who is where you want to be in the next several years, who you can learn from. It's interesting too; I find that I'm very inspired by the coaches who coach with me and are very open about it. They have no problem saying, "I work with Ali Brown." or "She's my mentor." or "I coach with Ali Brown." They talk about it in their e-zine and all of that. I think we need to do more of that.

I don't believe in competition. I think there is more than enough for all of us. I think once you start stepping into who you really are, you don't mess with competition anymore. You are so solid in your unique gifts to bring the world and your life purpose, that you don't compete, you don't compare. You're just yourself, and you're happy to learn from those who have done something that you want to do.

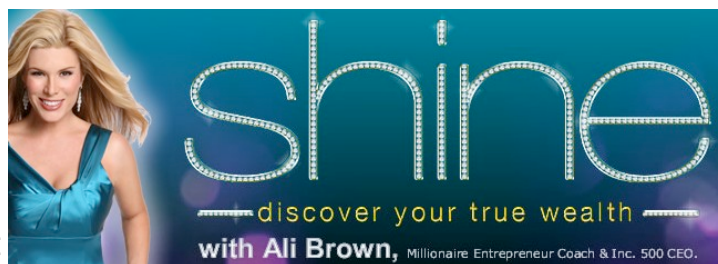
I think we all need to get detached from thinking, "Well, if I coach with someone, that means I'm saying that I don't know it all." I think those days are over. This whole shift is going on with 2012 and increased interest in humanity and spirituality and connecting to everyone. I think the coaching industry should be a leader in this. They really should be stepping up, coming together and learning from each other more than ever. Being open to expanding their business models into ones that can not only generate a lot more income, but make a much bigger impact than they're making currently is so important.

I: You're absolutely right. There isn't a competition. The people who resonate with you will come to you. You're not standing over each other fighting for that one morsel of bread out there. There's a lot of bread out there, and it's okay. Some people like pumpernickel; some people like wheat; they're going to come to who they feel understands them.

AB: I'd like to comment a little bit on the economy and that shift, may I?

I: Please do.

AB: The people who had the hardest time with this whole shift are the ones who had their noses down and were working with clients or doing the same old, same old. Then suddenly the world changed, and they looked up and they were like, "Uh-oh, I have to figure out how to do this better." It was easy to rely on good times, but now to make money, you have to be good. That doesn't just mean just being good at what you do – it means being very good at getting others to understand your value.



AB: If you were marketing, doing a few networking meetings a month and you had a simple website up last year or the year before and that worked for you, it's not going to work anymore. This is really a good thing, because now you get the chance to get really clear on the value that you bring to your clients, so use this opportunity to do some better marketing, maybe work with a coach if you need to, get clear on your niche, get clear on your offer. Your website probably needs to be updated. Yes, you, whoever's listening right now, you know who you are. If you have website shame – you don't want to send people to your site – it's time to redo it.

It's really shaking the tree, and it's a great time to reevaluate not only what you want to truly be doing, what is your passion, but how can you bring the most value to people in a way that is well received and they are just delighted to pay for. You really need to do some homework now, because it's not going to be as easy as it was before. This is one of the reasons why it's the perfect program at the perfect time. I'm teaching people how to really completely reengineer their programs and their packages and look at ways that they can still do what they're doing. You're not changing your business, but your shifting you're business model and how you package your offerings. That can make all the difference in the world.



I: Think of how much a better coach you're going to be on the other side.

AB: Completely, because your students are going to be coming to you asking, "How did you do this?" and "I'm learning from you; can you teach me how to do what you're doing too?" This will naturally happen. If you show people too that you're a good businessperson and that you're generating a great income, you can start naturally coaching people on that.

That's what I do hope will happen at [CBI, the Coaching Business Intensive](#), in July. I really do hope this is going to happen for people, because I don't want to teach this forever. I want to pass this on. I have big things cooking up. I'm very good at making room for big things to arrive, making that room. CBI for me is kind of like a passing of the torch. My programs will continue the run, but I don't want to be spending as much time teaching in this much detail. That's why I'm giving it all out and putting it into people's hands.

I: You mentioned it a minute ago – please, go into bigger detail about your Coaching Intensive coming up.

AB: I would love to, thank you. This is something I've wanted to do for so long. This is great, and actually I'm glad it didn't happen earlier. I have learned so much over the last two years of really skyrocketing my programs. My coaching programs were generating low six figures, and then practically overnight they skyrocketed. Just the coaching element of my business is doing over two million dollars a year. Again, this is about whatever you want for your business. If you just want to create one program that helps pay the mortgage, awesome. If you're a conquer the world type of person like I am and you want to do this big, then this will work for you too.

(Continued next page.)

Ali Brown continued...

AB: It's about leverage. I lived for a while where I kept my strategies kind of close to the vest because I needed the time and energy to really nail down my programs. Something that you will hear from my students is that I do not teach something until I have mastered it. I'm not out there trying the latest whiz-bang bright shiny object marketing strategy, either. Everything I teach has been proven. I've nailed it down, I've turned it into a system, and then I offer it and share it with others.

That's what the Coaching Business Intensive is, and it's happening on July 21 and 22. It's here in Los Angeles, easy to get to, great direct flights, great weather. I know a lot of people are bringing their spouses, their family; they can enjoy the area while they're here. Over the course of two full days at CBI I'm going to be walking you through every packaging model, every marketing strategy, every mindset principle, and every detail on how to create, sell, and run wildly profitable coaching programs that deliver immense value to your members at the same time. The seats at this event are priced at a premium, you can guess, because I'm the queen of charging well, but I will assure you that for what one seat costs at this event – and it is \$9,997 – you will have the information and the knowledge to recreate that very quickly in your business.

Just think about what a few new clients would bring you? What would one new program bring you? Don't take my word for it. Please go and learn more. I have a full audio for you guys – it's at www.coachbizsecrets.com, and you can hear the details going into all this information in a lot more depth. Then you can also see all the information on this workshop happening July 21 and 22.

This is not like my other big events. At my big event in the fall, Shine, we have celebrity speakers. We have acrobats, like last year. It's really a big conference. This is not that – this is a closed door, roll up your sleeves, I am on stage 90% of the time workshop; that's what this is. The last time I checked, we do have a special offer that if you want to pay in full, not only will we give you a big discount, but we're going to let you bring a partner, a spouse, or assistant for free. That is a big deal. If you have a coach that you partner with and you want to come together, if you have an assistant you want to bring, and then you can learn this stuff together and be on the same page, or a spouse who's in business with you, we're making that available to everyone. Actually we're giving away so much information at this event – checklist forms, worksheets, applications – that I'm giving everyone a wheelie bag to take home with them for these two big binders of all the resources and reference materials that they will receive. We're actually giving them a wheelie bag.

I: Fabulous, wow! All the tips and coaching secrets are going to be revealed too?

AB: Yes. I'm really excited. It's great. My team helped me create this because they've been running the programs behind the scenes, and so actually they're going to be sharing a little bit too. I'm going to be having some of my team on stage talking about how we work with clients, what types of forms we use, legal aspects of running these types of programs, really A to Z. I'll give that website one more time. It's www.coachbizsecrets.com. We'd love to have you, and if you have any questions, you can go to the page and also contact my team, they're great.

I: Let me ask you a couple questions about you. Why did you decide to go into this arena for your great work?

AB: My background was actually a copywriter. I started that business 10 years ago, when I hired my first coach. It was interesting because I would do something and turn around and teach it. First I taught e-zine marketing, then online marketing, and then branched out into business success, being an entrepreneur and teaching people how to be a successful entrepreneur. It was a natural transition, because what I found when I was working with clients, as I mentioned earlier, they'd come to me for the how-to, but we would work on not so much what they were doing, but who they were being. It's who you're being that is the attracter factor. It's who you're being that opens up that golden door to everything that is waiting for you on the other side.

When I started seeing this happen, I thought, "Okay, this isn't just me." Everyone needs to be aware of this. This is really exciting. That's when I started really opening up. I talk very openly about spirituality, about my relationship with God. No matter what your religion or faith, everyone has that higher power to tap into any time you need it. That's a big part of my life, and now I'm very open about it. It's actually getting more response than ever before, because people are excited that I am talking about it, and they're excited that they're not alone in feeling the same way.

I. Ali, what inspires you?

AB: What inspires me? That's a loaded question. For me, it's helping people realize their potential. I think it's really heartbreaking when we're born with the potential we have. We are born as children of God, these amazing, limitless beings. Then, over the years, whether it's an environment we grew up in or schooling or religion or whatever surrounded you— that actually may have made you feel small. I am so inspired by helping people feel their power again. Whether that's helping them step into a business or write their first book or whatever it means to you, it's about stepping into your highest power and just really opening up to what your possibilities are.



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Tiamo

Tiamo De Vettori has been named LA Music Awards singer/songwriter of the year, and San Diego's Best Songwriter. His style of music is motivational acoustic, and he has been compared to Jason Mraz and John Meyer. Tiamo has shared the stage with the likes of Les Brown, Lisa Nichols, Brian Tracy, Dan Millman, and he has also been onstage with the Jimmy Kimmel Show. Tiamo creates customized love songs for anniversaries, weddings, and does concerts for workshops, seminars, and speakers who want to use his music to enhance their messages.

I: This journey that you've been on to achieve all of this success—what does that journey look like for you? What obstacles did you have to overcome in order to achieve this greatness, this body of work that you have?

Tiamo: I would definitely say, first of all, that the journey has been a windy road, not a straight one.

I certainly have a juicy, comprehensive answer for that, so given that we have the time, I want to express most the challenges that I've faced, because there have been many. I think it's important to talk about each one, because one is not more or less important than the other. When I talk about the challenges, I also want to talk about what I did to overcome those challenges, and how I counteracted that. There were a lot of challenges, in no particular order.

Tiamo: I would say the first, and often the case for most people who are entrepreneurs, is the money issue. That could be start-up money, that could be money for stability, that could be where is the money going to come from, investments and things like that.

It's always about trusting. Trusting myself, trusting the Universe. Initially I was always the one that was booking my own shows, promoting my own shows, doing all that work, so by the time the show came, I was exhausted. About two years ago I decided to stop booking my own shows and just focus on networking, and that the shows will come. So for me, instead of doing my own shows, now that I've partnered with seminar leaders, they come every month, and I don't know what's going to happen next month, but because of how I've established myself in this niche, I know that it's going to come. Ever since then it's just been the constant revolving door of opportunities for me.

Another thing that I'm sure a lot of people probably can relate to is doing it yourself. It's too much. I think if somebody has a vision of being very successful and prosperous, we need to have people surrounding us so they can help us. So for me, with my fan club, I'd ask for volunteers. I've made it creative and I made it fun and innovative, where I could delegate and also capitalize on other people's strengths. So while my strengths might be a natural singer/songwriter, that doesn't mean that I'm a great web designer. In that case, other people who have those strengths and want to be part of my vision can participate with me and feel the joy of being able to be a part of something bigger.

Another thing that I certainly experience that is a huge challenge is sometimes just not being focused or motivated. What I've found is because I also have other passions, that sometimes I would try to explore those, and just figure out which one is going to take off first. I think that's sometimes where there's a speed bump for people because they figure that it may not be the thing that I love, but I'm just going to keep doing these four or five different pursuits and the one that takes off for me first will be the one I go after.

I've found that that doesn't necessarily work for me. When I was working on my other business pursuits, the deeper I got involved in them, the more I found I was feeling some unfulfillment. I wasn't doing my true and my first love, which is music.

So I feel as a matter of pulling away from distractions, number one is deciding what I'm going to compromise on, because I love to do a lot of things. I had to figure out what am I willing to give up, not only on the entrepreneurial end but also on the social end, because I happen to love sports. I'm an athlete, and I was involved in all these different sports leagues. I love the social element of it, but at a certain point had to decide this is something that maybe I need to step aside from so that I can totally immerse myself into my passion.

One of the bigger things as far as creating some challenges is something that is really sneaky, which is self-sabotage.

Tiamo continued...

Tiamo: Next to my dream board I also have another board, and on that board in huge letters it says "Self-sabotage ends here." I realized that because it takes 28 days to develop a new neural pathway, I wrote a list of everything I had to do to develop a new neural pathway to where I felt like I was completely entrenched in my schedule and my new routine. So along with that, I created a statement of purpose, and I posted it on my website. I ask friends to hold me accountable, and certainly this is where it would be great to have a life coach – to have someone who is objective and holds you accountable.

I also focus on the process and the journey as opposed to being attached to results. Sometimes we get really discouraged when we're so attached to results that we have to remember why we're doing it, and it's the joy in the process that matters the most. Then, getting out of my own way and really trusting that the Universe is going to guide me along my process, because I'm doing what I was going in to do, and **always show up**. Anytime there's any question about any opportunities, now I just say, "Yes." I love to say yes to as many things as I can, because I know when I show up, even though I don't know what's going to happen when I get there, more times than not great opportunities come from that.

Another one is understanding my value. I have experienced this with coaching as well as being a speaker and a performer with my original music and understanding my value as an artist and as a speaker, and as someone who produces a product in my present songs is so important.

The first thing is I used to confuse my passion and my natural ability with my value. Because something is natural, because something unfolds organically for you, because you're gifted in certain areas doesn't mean that it shouldn't have a high price tag. I just think it's so easy for me to write songs or it comes so naturally for me to perform, I would confuse that with a dollar value. Now I have realized, wait a second, that's something that people really, truly value, and just because I can do it easily doesn't mean everybody else can.

One way that helped me come to self-realization about this was that whenever I would speak or perform, or especially when I did custom songs and I produce that service and product for a client, I would ask them afterwards, "How much would you have been willing to pay for that? How much did you expect that that was going to cost?" What I found was in many instances they were willing to pay seven times more than what I charged. That really woke me up and I started doing that with a lot of my clients and finding out what they're willing to pay, which helped me to be more in alignment with what my values were.

Lastly in that regard, I really had to take risks and not fear not getting the deal. So sometimes I feel that we do compromise our value because we're afraid that the client is not going to want to hire us, is not going to want to pay for our service so we bring our value down. I have to be okay with some people saying, "You know what, that's too much for me. I can't afford that right now." Certainly I can be flexible, but you also have to hold ground sometimes and be okay with that.

Tiamo: One of the most important and abundant challenges I would say that's come up for me, in regards to my music, is not giving my music a life of its own, or my music having it's legs, as I like to call it. Before what it looked like is that I would have my album, I'd have my songs, and I had my little performances in cafes and coffee houses. What would happen is people who have my album listen to it, and then the music kind of stops there. Maybe they share it with a few friends and family, but it doesn't really stretch beyond that. If I perform, people are there, they enjoyed the performance, but then they leave that night and they go about their lives, and my music doesn't echo.

What I've done is I've linked my music with efforts that are far greater than what I am. I'll use a few examples of that. The first example is an organization called Hug It Forward; that's a humanitarian group. They are now international. They initially started as an effort to where people would give 10 hugs, and the people they gave 10 hugs to would give 10 hugs, and then eventually those 10 hugs would compound and become 10 million hugs. What they have done now is through that initial vehicle, they've been able to raise money and include volunteers to where they're going to several countries and building schools. With that effort, they came out with a video. I wrote a song for them, and then it became a global movement and my music was associated with that movement. So instead of it just being me, now it became something much bigger and then it could be widespread and other people could take it and expand it for me.



Another thing I've done is a recent music video called "Furlough Friday." I wrote a song and did a music video about pay cuts, layoffs, and things like that in the state of California. This is something that became a widespread movement within days. Within the first two or three days, there was about 25,000 views on my You Tube video. I acknowledged humbly that it's not because my song or because I was so great, but it's because of something that was relatable to so many people that they wanted to share with everybody.

The reason why this story and this music video got on MSNBC and NBC and FOX is not so much because of Tiamo, because I've been doing my own music for 10 years, but because it's something that impacts so many people around the state of California and also around the nation.

I've also partnered with groups like San Diego Rescue Mission that works with homeless people in helping them get back on track and get back into society, The American Heart Association, a lot of women's and men's empowerment seminar groups and conferences, and most recently an organization called Always Positive. Those are a few examples of where I've taken my music and I've linked it to things that are much bigger than I am.

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Tiamo continued...

Tiamo: The last challenge I'd say – and this sounds a little funny because it's not as practical as some of my other points – but too much doing and not enough being. Sometimes we get caught up in doing and then we have to do more. We have to constantly do more, do more, do more. We get lost in that, and we forget that we have to be a certain way so that we can be in serenity, we have to be peaceful, we have to be happy, and by just being that way we're going to attract so many more opportunities than getting lost in the doing.

I: Amazing and inspiring thoughts about following your dream! Could you say something more about what you meant when you say that you always show up?

Tiamo: I think sometimes before I would get caught up in, "I just don't feel like doing that", or, "It interferes with my social calendar", or, "It's the weekend and I'm supposed to go on this trip." I felt like I really had to put things aside to create room for my passions, because I have so many interests. I love being social and connecting with people and my sports and my playtime, which is great and I think it's healthy, but I had to find more of a balance. I felt like a lot of times I would have the nearsightedness to see a workshop or an event and say, "Well, I could go to that, but I don't know what I'm going to get from it." I don't know until I show up. There's so many events that I've gone to that maybe didn't really relate to me, but I met that one person that knew somebody that knew somebody, and suddenly I find myself performing at a seminar in front of 1,000 people.

It's really understanding that we don't know where the next step or opportunities are going to be, so before I used to make my decisions on number one, "Well do I feel like going? Oh, I'd rather go to the movies with my friends." Or, number two, it would look like, "Well, I don't know that I want to drive an hour to that networking event because it seems like a lot of people that are not in my industry, and I don't know who I'm going to meet, and I don't know that I want to get up and get dressed and put my suit on." I really just put the effort into the whole night or the whole day or the whole weekend feeling like, "Well, I don't know what I'm going to get from it."

What I started to learn is that I don't have to know. It's not my job to know how it's going to happen, but I do know that when I show up, opportunities almost always happen and usually in the most unexpected places. With that, I will say that there's a caveat in that certainly you have to be intelligent about everything, so I won't say that I show up to absolutely everything that comes up for me. I try to show up as much as I can without expectation, because sometimes I feel that expectation becomes very limiting, and then we stop ourselves from being able to seize certain opportunities that we never knew were there.

I: It's not something you can just put into words, but it's an intuitive sense that comes out of the experience of showing up?

Tiamo: I definitely do think there's a lot of intuition involved, and there's a lot of judgment as far as deciding what's going to be best for me and not best for me. I would say it's a matter of being as open-minded as possible. Sometimes I think we feel we're a lot more intelligent than perhaps we really are and that we know how things are going to look all the time.

Tiamo: We don't know how things are going to look all the time, so for me, certainly I make sure I don't double book myself. If I have one thing that I need to do that's a commitment. I'm not going to show up to another thing that interferes with that or compromises that, so there is a lot of picking what I show up for. There's a lot of times where maybe I don't feel like going, honestly. I don't feel like going, but I know once I'm there, I'm going to be really happy I was there and that it could lead to so many other opportunities.

It really is a matter of just being as open-minded as possible and realizing that there are things out there much bigger than us. We don't necessarily have control of how it's all going to happen, but we have to show up and really be in the process as much as we can.

I: You made a comment, and maybe it was in your personal statement that was on your website that I saw, that part of your learning was getting better at making decisions in the absence of fear. Could you just expand on that a little bit.

Tiamo: Yes. Thank you for shedding light on that topic and reading that on my website. I feel that so many decisions that we make are fear-based, and they come from scarcity. I feel that in order for me to make the best decisions that fulfill my purpose and to become more prosperous and successful in my business I really had to make all decisions from love. That statement on the website says that I'm getting better at making decisions, choices, and actions in the absence of fear and in the light of love. I think it's a matter of recognizing I am doing this, am I making this choice, am I making this decision, or not making this choice and not making this decision because of fear.

I think when we come from love, certainly this adds a spiritual and a personal development side to the business, which for me is the foundation of it. When I can make all my choices and actions from love, then I know it's right, and it's right for me. It allows me to always be congruent with what my message is and what I think my purpose is. So I feel that my purpose is to be an instrument of love, and the vehicle I use to do that is music and speaking.

I feel there's a light inside of me, and that light is in the form of music. The umbrella of it is that I want to connect with people, I want to inspire people, I want to raise consciousness. I've always wanted to do that, but I never was sure what the vehicle would be to do that. I realized that music is something that touches everybody.

Visit Tiamo's sites and hear his music:

www.TiamoMusic.com
www.TiamoKeynoteConcerts.com
www.CustomLoveSongs.net



Suzanne Falter-Barns

is the web's leading expert in platform building, branding, and niching. She helps small business professionals, authors, consultants, coaches, and solo professionals create a powerful, perky online presence that conveys greater credibility and more impact. Suzanne is a fun, engaging guest and figure who can offer plenty of hands-on, practical tips to audiences on how to tailor websites, E-zines, blogs, and podcasts, and use online promotion techniques to attract national media. Her clients have been called cold from CNN, *USA Today*, *60 Minutes*, *PBS*, *Wall Street Journal*, and more, as well as attracted major publishing deals.

She a bestselling author herself. Her self-help books published by Ballantine sold more than 90,000 copies. She worked for 18 years as a marketing consultant, branding expert, and freelance journalist in New York City. She has been a guest on more than 100 radio and television shows, including *David Essel Alive*, the *Joanie Greggains Show*, and *Paula and Sara Edwards At Home*. She has also been featured in *Women's Day*, *Fitness*, *More, Self*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *First For Women*, *Women's World*, *New Age Journal*, *MSN.com*, *iVillage*, and *Writer's Digest*.

I: So what's platform all about, and why should it matter?

SFB: Platform is you reaching the world. It's how many people know about you and what you're known for specifically. On the internet, it's extraordinarily important because as everyone knows, there are millions and millions and millions of blogs and websites out there now. In fact, the internet is a like a big bundle of splinters, all sorts of distinct, discreet little businesses all bundled together, and some of them stand apart and some of them look like everything else.

My job is to help people really pick the business that's going to help them stand apart, and at the same time be irresistible to people so they just can't stay away. They have to come hang out at your blog, they have to buy your products, they have to talk about you, they have to follow you on Twitter and Facebook, they have to watch your videos. All of that comes not from the strength of your personality necessarily – although a fun and engaging personality always helps – it comes from the premise and the brand and the niche and the sort of power of what it is that you are here to represent on the internet. That's what platform is. It's really what you're known for, and what people know they can come to you for.

I: Where do you begin building platform?

SFB: The process of building platform is really a process of defining who your people are, figuring out what they're craving, and then going into some contemplation over what it is that you offer people that's really distinct to you and your life purpose that matches up to what they're craving. When I work with people, I do this all chemical stirring of a big soup pot of ingredients from which a very particular broth is extracted, and that's the platform. I work with a lot of life coaches, healers, intuitives and body workers – people who do good work in the world and need to sell their services online. What people come to me with is a somewhat vague description of what they're really here to do for people. They'll say, "Well, I'm here to help people get back home to themselves" would be a typical one, or "I'm here to help people with authentic livelihood."

SFB: Now, the problem is people don't go out looking to buy "right livelihood" or "coming home to themselves." For them, the problem is, "I'm stressed out." "I hate my job." "I wish I made more money." "I don't seem to love my husband as much as I used to." Those are the kinds of problems people are looking for help with. What we have to do is help these healers and coaches repackage themselves so they communicate a benefit that really speaks to what people are craving *and* sets them apart at the same time. That's what the power of building a powerful platform is.

For instance, I have a client who came to me with a program called Ganas Consulting. She was kind of a generic corporate consultant, and she would go into corporations and help them build their teamwork and the motivation of their employees and such. She started noticing right before she began to work with me that she was getting a real attitude about these CEOs and the way they ran their companies, because so many of them ran their companies dysfunctionally. Then, in the course of working together, she realized the people she really wanted to work with were not big corporate executives, but the employees; she really felt for them in her heart.

We developed a platform called "Escape From Cubicle Nation" which is a very powerful blog now. She is in the top 4,000 of bloggers out there. She has been called cold by many, many major media outlets – CNN, *Wall Street Journal*, *Psychology Today*, *New York Times*, *Boston Globe*, *USA Today*. They've all called her. They've all interviewed her. They found her because they found her blog, and they understood that there are a lot of people out there in Corporate America that are screaming for release.

(Photo www.sidray.com)

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Suzanne Falter-Barns continued...

SFB: This set of words, "Escape From Cubicle Nation", has a very emotional sort of hooky, immediate benefit that these people want. In fact, it became a title of a book. She was approached by a New York agent who then got her a major book deal. I believe she even had multiple offers on that, and she published her book with, I think it was Simon and Schuster, and did really well with the book. It's gone into multiple printings, got really well reviewed in *Publisher's Weekly*, etc. That was just within the last year. What I see is that the power of picking the place to stand that is authentic to you and your purpose but is also talking to a craving that really is defined clearly to a distinct market, that's what really builds platform. That's really kind of a thumbnail description of how it all falls together.

I: CNN and these other companies were calling her and she had not reached out to them in any way?

SFB: No, and that is because blogging is where these traditional media outlets get a lot of their ideas. If you go through blogs every day and you have your favorite blogs and you keep checking on them, it's amazing how much stimulation and interest and cool stuff you can learn. The media found that out early on, and something like 80% of all their leads come from blogs. By leads, I mean the people they interview, the idea for stories, the premises, even some research studies, etc. They are just combing blogs all the time, because the people who keep active blogs, meaning they blog three to five times a week, those people are really speaking directly to the media, because the media knows they're engaged and they're current. How easy is it to throw up a website and then not even go look at it for the next three years? Bloggers don't do that. Bloggers are putting up blog posts all the time. The same with podcasters; some people have video blogs. You want that level of engagement if you want to attract the media.

I: It's getting to the point where even CNN uses IReport, where people are making their own videos and putting them up on their site immediately. CNN uses theirs. You can instantly be a newscaster of sorts.

SFB: That's right. For me, platform building is much bigger than just let's create interest in the major media, because very quickly the major media has begun to disappear in importance just in the last year. Here's the *New York Times*, the paper of record in the United States, whom I used to work for thank you very much, casting about like, "Hey, who's going to keep us in business?" That's a dramatic shift from where things were in the media even two or three years ago, because the media is really being taken over by the people. It's a huge populist movement in the media, and those who win are those who are most unique and most kind of hooky or attractive in the sense of attracting people in with that special magic, that "it" factor that is really their special calling.

That's really what I like to do, is go in and take someone's soul purpose, the thing they're here to do for other people, and really package that as opposed to taking a very dry look at the market, looking for the gaps and trying to figure out something that's really opportunistic. I'd rather see people do something that's heart based, authentic, and really born in their purpose and their own personal evolution.

I: You're talking about people getting into their own realm – how small should you go within a niche?

SFB: That's a great question. The thing about niching is that it's really about the quality of the niche as opposed to the size. For instance, I had a client who had a great niche, which was city managers and city council members. She played out the entire city manager database basically by becoming the key spokesperson for city managers all over the country, and not every city has a city manager. Within about five years she had kind of gone through that database and worked for everyone she was going to work for. Then we expanded it to city council members, and then we had a whole other several hundred thousand to deal with.

It has to do with the depth of the niche. Now city managers, she built a good business on, but city managers seems like a teeny-weeny obscure niche. That's the power of the internet, because people are looking for things with specific key phrases, and they're always looking to find them in whatever place they can find them in.

If you choose a niche that is really based on something that is authentic for you, it's a population you know, it may be a population you were once in, it's a population that you understand most critically, that you can define deeply. It's can't be women over 50, but it could be women over 50 who are boomer cultural creatives who shop at Whole Foods, drive hybrid cars, read hardcover books, belong to book clubs, and are probably Unitarian universalists. That's a good market definition.

If your niche is consulting with women on how to get more from their nannies and you're talking to women in that category who are in New York and LA and Dallas or Houston, some of these cities where people have nannies, that would be a potential niche, because those women could look for you by saying "How do I hire a nanny?" This is what they would type into Google – "how do I hire a nanny?" "how do I talk to my nanny?" "nanny hiring principles" "nanny hiring ideas" "nanny management". If you can come up with key phrases that could be typed into the search engines that will help you locate that specific group and what their concern is, then you're niching at an appropriate level. It's not really too small/too big, it's more specificity and depth, you see?



I: Yes, I do. Why is branding so important, and can you talk about USP?

SFB: Yes. Here's the fact of the matter: When people come to your blog or your website or even your Facebook fan page, they make a general impression of you in a twentieth of a second. That's very short. Very short – I can't even describe how short that is. The brain function is such that in a twentieth of a second they have already decided, looking at what you're presenting if they're going to stick around or not. You need a set of words that communicates big and powerfully right on the header of your blog or your site that is your brand and it says exactly what your unique purpose is. My brand is "Get Known Now" – I help people get known, now! That's a powerful benefit. The brand wants to have a benefit that is rich and most of all, hooky.

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Suzanne Falter-Barns continued...

SFB: I have a wonderful client, Greg Cox, who has a great site called Mid Life with A Vengeance. When you go to her site – if anybody wants to look it up, it's www.midlifewithvengeance.com – and when you go to her site you see a limo window with a pair of feet sticking out of it with little flowery flip-flops on. That's what I call the signature graphic, and then you see this wonderful header that says, Mid Life With a Vengeance.

She helps midlife women get information to live healthier lives. In fact, Greg is kind of a health expert/nutritionist. Her passion is around helping women prevent heart disease. But you can't do a sexy hooky site that will rope in all these women that's about heart disease. You have to do it about something that they are interested in, which is living mid life with a vengeance. She has a really successful site and E-zine, and she teaches women things like how to lose your mid life muffin top. I just love that. It's the roll of fat that spills over the top of your jeans, right, like a little muffin top. Her ability to be present and describe and really capture the feel of what that market wants is perfect.

That's her brand. Her brand is Mid Live With a Vengeance. She explains it's 'what a woman needs to stay healthy, sassy, and sane in mid life.' That little phrase that goes under the brand is called the USP – that would be unique selling proposition – it's a phrase designed to really set her apart. So we know this is not some dry site about heart health. This is actually a fun site where you are going to learn how to be healthy but sassy. It's just a set of words that kind of flushes out the meaning of the brand, and is often used to explain extra pieces that couldn't be communicated in the brand, because the brand has to be short and punchy, you know?

I: Right, exactly. What are the dangers around building a brand and a USP? Where do people tend to run into trouble when they try to do this themselves?

SFB: Back in the bad old advertising days, I used to see this all the time. I fortunately had been blessed with a lot of clients who really trusted me, so I haven't seen it with them, but people can get into trouble trying to squeeze too many benefits into a brand. You really need to be single-minded and you need to really pick the benefit that separates you out that is your distinct benefit that is also something that's really going to be hooky and attractive to people.

I think people get into trouble also trying to be clever with brands. You can have a brand that is catchy, something that's a play on words related to your last name or the industry you're in. For instance, I live in the country in northern New York, and there's always little hair salons called things like 'Shear Delight' and 'Headquarters' and things like that. That's the kind of brand people put on businesses when they don't understand that the brand needs to communicate a unique benefit, and that people buy benefits. They don't buy cleverness.

It was really hard for me to learn that as a copywriter, because I was a real wordsmith, and I enjoyed playing with words. I thought everything should be creative and fun all the time. I just didn't understand that really the motivator is benefit. That's what people care about. That's what people buy. That's what people want. Especially in a tight economy, I don't think you can sell cleverness as easily as you can sell brands that are benefit oriented.

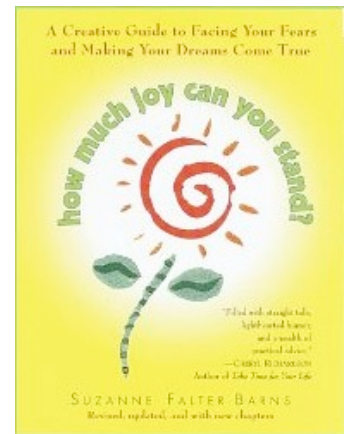
SFB: I really urge people to keep their brand very simple, but make that simple statement about something that is completely hooky and dynamic, and the premise is very, very, very hooky. I have a friend who teaches people how to sell from the stage. She works with people who speak, and she teaches them all kinds of information about closing more sales when you're presenting in front of an audience. These days, speakers don't really make much for speaking fees. They make their money selling programs in the back of the room. Her brand is called 'The Invisible Close' because it's a close like your closing sales, but her whole thing is you sell without being "selly." You sell by being of service to people, and that's how you can sell from the stage in a non-obnoxious manner.

There's several things that are great about that brand. The first one is, she taps into a craving everybody has, which is that I want to sell and I want to make money, but I don't want to be some cheesy salesperson. There's the first piece.

The second piece is The Invisible Close just sounds so seductive. It's like you don't even know you're being closed, and suddenly, you're buying something. That is pretty much how her system works. It is very seductive and hooky in that particular way. It's very powerful. That's a set of words that really talks about the magic that is in that particular product or program. That's the power of a brand, you see?

I: I do. What does the media want from your website?

SFB: When the media comes to call, what they're looking for is they need to know that you're a credible expert, first of all. First of all, they need to see that you have a blog and that you keep your blog current. They also need to know what the blog is about. I've interviewed a lot of media people when I began to do this work, and I asked, "What are you looking for?" They all said, "Authority, credibility, and we need to know quickly what it is you're here to do, what are you about, what's your platform?"



They're the ones who use the term platform because to them, if they can go to a blog and immediately see what's unique about someone, what sets them apart and why they should care about them, then they're interested in doing business. But when you go out and you look at tons and tons of blogs and websites, it's not really clear what they're about. They're rather vague, and it's because people want to be all things to all people. You ask me what mistakes people make – that's a big one. People are afraid to be too distinct with the brand or the niche, and so they say I'm a life coach and I work with retirees, ADD kids, all kinds of children at risk, empty nesters, and those looking to career transition. So where's the credibility, right? There is no credibility. All there is is a mishmash of stuff because somebody couldn't commit.

What I do when I work with my clients is I bring them through a process where we gradually strip things away and they begin to get clearer and clearer and clearer on what that one special thing is that they're here to do for people. I call it being in the soup, because sometimes you have to not know for a while. You just have to surrender. Sometimes it takes a month or two. You simmer away on what the best possibilities are for you, and then when you choose it, you really choose it. Then, because it's born in a powerful place of possibility, you really have something strong to work with.

I: What are some of the major mistakes people make when they reach out to the media?
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Suzanne Falter-Barns continued...

SFB: I'm not really a media consultant, but I know from my own experience just selling articles and such, not being familiar with the actual media is a mistake. People have no idea half the time what different publications or TV shows or radio shows actually broadcast. They just wallpaper the world with a thousand faxes or e-mails trying to reach somebody in hopes that it will connect somewhere, and almost never does it have any results. It's much better to be super-focused and again, look for the people who would respond to your carefully chosen specific niche. When you find those people who are really looking to communicate something directly about the work you do, then they'll sit up and pay attention, and then they'll be really interested. Again, it's niching and it's presenting yourself as credible because you're the go-to person for that particular subject matter.

Think of my client who worked with city managers. She was the only person. I had another client who was a spokesperson for the mining industry. Interestingly, she was a woman, and she got terrific traction just going out and really owning that position of the only spokesperson for the mining industry, and yes, I happen to be a woman. She really took advantage of that and got a ton of major media, actually. She did really well with that.

I: How can our listeners avoid marketing overwhelm?

SFB: Marketing overwhelm is a result of trying to do all things and be all people to all media outlets. What people need to understand is once they choose these real simple, specific niches and they want to reach a particular market, everything gets a lot simpler. If you know you want to reach baby boomer women who are cultural creatives who are interested in green living and green technology, etc., the first place you go is you look at green blogs and you try to reach them through other blogs. Then you try to get to them by getting promotional stuff in other people's E-zines that go to the list. You just do everything you can to get in front of markets that are specific to that group.

It's a very systematic step-by-step approach. It's not spray the world with all kinds of content and hope something sticks somewhere. It's making a conscious choice about speaking to a very discreet, distinct audience. The discipline of figuring out which audience that is, that's the kind of work that goes into setting up your marketing programs so then it doesn't become overwhelming. Then it just becomes a simple set of steps and it's inevitably successful, because you're really putting yourself exactly where you should be.

One of the mistakes people make is that they don't take the time to do this infrastructure work first. What they do first is they go out and get a catchy name and just start investing in Google Adwords and put a blog up and get a bunch of ads and E-zines and they just start throwing money at it, when in fact it's much more of a strategic kind of a stealth approach that needs to happen.

I: Suzanne, I'd like to ask you more about you. How do you touch others and change their lives?

SFB: Well, the purpose of my life is to move people to express themselves.

SFB: The greatest way for me to do that is by helping people build platform in my Platform Leader's Group. It's a very small, powerful group coaching experience in which I personally assist each person in it to find their most powerful hooky platform. Those who would like to know more – and I am enrolling a group right now at a specially reduced rate – can contact me at sfb@getknownnow.com.

One of the ways I really enjoy working with people is in a program called The Spiritual Marketing Quest I lead along with a business partner of mine, Jeffrey Van Dyk, We move people to create a powerful platform born of their purpose – it's a transformational workshop in which they not only build a more powerful business, but they move through the blocks that have always kept them small around their marketing. It's a powerful two-part process that on Sunday includes a blues band, and we have a good old fashioned revival meeting for their business. People really declare and claim their business that they're going to be in, what their purpose is, and how they are here to move people and make a difference. Our next one is coming up in San Francisco in October.

That's a very powerful experience. It's really like a transformational business experience, because it goes way beyond just kind of left brain marketing, and it goes way beyond traditional motivational work. It's a coming together of the two pieces, and I think that is what this new sort of paradigm that we're living in is asking us to do.

I: What inspires you, Suzanne?

SFB: I'm really a spiritually oriented person, so I do a lot of my work with spirit. Spirit is putting me in touch with the people I'm meant to work with all the time. Spirit is connecting me to exactly the type of entrepreneur and soloprenuer and healing professional that I'm meant to reach. When people listen to these interviews with me and they're like, "Hmm, that actually sounds like something for me." To me that's somebody getting that old spiritual tap on the shoulder. That's when I am inclined to really believe that I can be of service to someone, because I think we're all kind of destined to work with certain consultants and join certain programs and get certain help, and not everybody should do everything. People should do the work

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Sharon Sayler,

author, *What Your Body Says*, is an MBA and communications success strategist who trains, counsels, and coaches professionals on how to become a stronger, more influential communicator and leader. She teaches people how to communicate with confidence and clarity by matching their body language to what they are saying.

I: What led you to consult, write, and speak on understanding nonverbal communication and what we are all really saying when we communicate?

SS: I want to go back maybe just a little bit, a step further it was with a drive to understand communication in general. A long time ago, a relationship broke up, and it was all around miscommunications and misunderstandings. That just had me baffled. How could I have such good intentions yet it turn out so badly?

I started on this quest about 15 years ago to understand about that mismatch. During that time I met one of the great masters of nonverbal communication, Michael Grinder. He had me mesmerized in how he was able to match his body language with his verbal message, and I completely understood what he was saying. It was fascinating to watch the whole audience. What was interesting to me was how everyone understood what he was saying.

That began a long mentorship with Michael. Down the road, as I began to tell other people of things I was learning, it just inspired me more and more. I thought, "This is so cool! It's so simple!" Just simple little things we do with our body can change how people either understand us or don't understand us.

I: Your new book, called *What Your Body Says and How to Master the Message*, is being published by John Wiley and Sons for release this August, 2010. Who would best benefit from the many tips you provide in this book?

SS: That's a great question. Sometimes I call them 'the liaison', the people that deal with a lot of people. Whether you're a middle manager and you have to deal with the bosses and all their expectations, and perhaps your staff or your team, any time you can keep your message clear and have your body match what your mouth is saying, it's so important.

I work with individuals and corporations, and in today's world with all the pressures of the economy and everything, so much is changing rapidly, technology, etc. – it's really important to make sure that our message is clear, and clear the first time, because people are on edge now. There's just so much change that I find it's better just to make sure that expectations are dealt with and what we're saying is understood the first time instead of having to say, "Gosh, that's not what I said" down the road.

I: Whenever I hear the word nonverbal, I think body language, but this isn't a book about reading body language. What was the motivation for you to write this book?

SS: I get asked that a lot, because I am trained in how to read body language, but I found that reading someone else's body language is an educated guess. It really is. So often we hear that thing about the arms crossed over the chest. Well, yes, maybe it means they're closed off to me, but it also could mean they're cold or they're just uncomfortable. Oftentimes, people just listen that way, too. It's a comfortable place to put their arms sometimes.

I like to approach it from the other side, making sure I know what my body is saying, what my nonverbals are saying to the other people, and then typically people will begin to get in rapport with you. If you are doing things that are open and friendly and all of the gestures are seeking information, or letting them know when you're saying something is serious, there's specific hand gestures you use, such as a downward facing palm if it's not open to negotiation. Watch TV news sometime and you'll see people, politicians or people in authority – they'll be making a statement, and you'll notice they have the downward turned palm. That's saying, "this is serious" and sometimes it's even saying "not open to negotiation."

It's important to know what other people are saying, but I find if I can control what I'm saying and how I'm saying it, both verbally and with my body, it's just so much clearer. Let the other people take care of themselves.

I: That's interesting that you mentioned the crossed arms, because I notice that I used to think a lot like that. I'm open and friendly, and here I am, I had my arms crossed – I'm just listening, like you were saying. But I had to change that, because it was perceived as being closed off, but it was a natural pose for me.

SS: It's a natural pose for me as well, especially when I'm listening. It's just a comfortable place to put my arms. Yet, I like to say when we're doing nonverbal communication, it's all about the context. Context really rules.

Sharon Saylor continued...

SS: If I'm meeting someone new, I might be just a little more careful about making sure that my arms are at my side, or parallel to the ground in what I call the weather-person pose. That's different than the arms crossed at the chest, which is more of a closed posture.

Once I get to know the people and they get to know me and what we call our "baseline behavior" it's more natural because we all do certain things that are just comfortable. It's almost impossible to be constantly on guard of what your nonverbals are doing. I like to recommend when we're in situations where it's new, we're trying to have our message being taken seriously or expectations are unsure, to know what your non-verbals are saying. Other times when you're just with friends, they know that crossing your arms is just the way you are, so that's when it's okay to just be you.

I: I appreciate you clearing that up. I enjoyed the ideas of the "Owner's Manual." Tell me more about how we all give away cues on how to treat us.

SS: In the book I talked about an Owner's Manual. We all have one. I like to think of it as just plastered on our forehead, wide open for everybody else to read, yet we can't see it because the wording is out there.

I'll tell you a little story about one time I went into a store and I was really interested in something, but it was one of those stores where there's a little negotiation going on. Even knowing what I know, you're trying to be really cool, don't give away your position too soon and all of that. It was interesting to me because I could tell that he knew that I was really, seriously interested in his product. The more I played it backwards, what had happened, I realized that my very subtle nonverbals of my raised eyebrow and that little subtle smile when he started talking about the product, even those little subtle cues were part of that Owner's Manual that he was reading and going, "I think I'll probably have a sale here. Look at that. She's got that subtle little smile. She's leaning in ..." (which means interest when you lean in.) Things that like. So there I was, just flipping through the pages of my Owner's Manual for the salesman to read all the fine print.

I: Excellent. There are a lot of strategies covered in the book. Do you have to do all of them, or can you just pick one or two?

SS: Absolutely. You don't have to do them all. I love to throw out plenty of ideas, because there again we go back to context. You just never know which one is really going to work, so I like to provide plenty of strategies, and you use the one that you think will work. If it's not working, there are plenty of other strategies to switch to.

If you're in a conversation with someone and you're seeking information from them, a common strategy to use is a palm-up gesture. Some people like to call that "the beggar's palm" but I don't go with that too much. I like to just say we're seeking information that way. Sometimes that's not working and they're not sharing with us or understanding that we're wanting them to share with us some more, so I talk about a refinement. It is to move your arm gently back and forth to them with your palm up. You're showing them that it goes out to them and back to you, and a lot of times that will help start the conversation up; "That yes, I'm open here. I'm willing to share."

SS: Another refinement to that is you have your palm up and gently curl your fingers back to you. Just gently, not a tight grasp, but just gently, and that nonverbally and unconsciously says, "Come on, I'm here. Come on, I'm listening." Simple little refinements like that can change the whole way a conversation is going.

I: How about that. You have a section here called Good Versus Bad Nonverbals. How do we know one from the other?

SS: I put that title in the book just as a little tease, because in my belief there really are no bad nonverbals. I know a lot of people can say a series of nonverbals that we might label as angry; tone of voice, the loud voice, the shortness of breath a lot of people get when they get angry, the hunched shoulders; all of that. Those are just a set of behaviors that we label as angry, but I like to look at it on a scale of an asset/liability and just knowing when to use those behaviors. Those are all fine behaviors and in a set of behaviors perceived as anger, there are times in the world when anger really can save us. The question to ask yourself is; "Is it a liability at this time, or is it an asset at this time?"

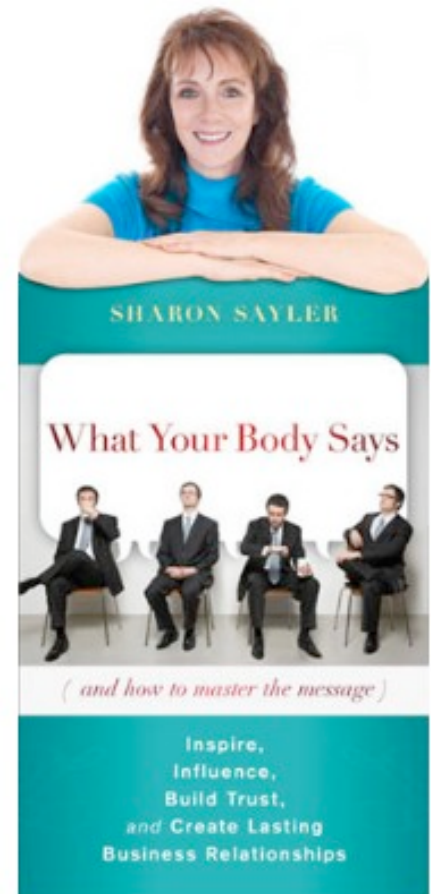
I like to look at all of our behaviors on that scale. Just knowing when is it an asset to use that behavior and consciously knowing, maybe that's not the best behavior here, so that would be a liability. What other behavior could I substitute that would get me my outcome?

I: In your experience, working with people to become better communicators, what do you feel is the biggest hurdle they have to overcome? What's the number one way to change how others perceive you?

SS: This one is so amazing to me. Another nonverbal that nobody thinks about but is the most important is our breathing.

I: Really?

SS: Absolutely. Our breathing can change the way we are perceived instantaneously. I know a lot of times people come up to me, and I notice that they're breathing high. It's a characteristic, at least here in the States, of our society, that a lot of people don't breathe completely, fully, and relaxed. They tend to breathe in the upper portion of their chest, yet that very basic primitive part of our brain reacts to people when they're breathing high and short. I call it "shallow breathing." It changes your tone of voice so your voice sounds very high and strange, and it just sets off the emotions in the other person of fight or flight. It just aggravates that primitive part of our brain. But some people can train themselves to breathe low. One of the key benefits of breathing low, it can bring more oxygen to your brain and you can think clearer and quicker than someone that's breathing shallow.



Sharon Saylor continued...

I: Fascinating! These days, it seems that respectful communication has flown out the window, so it makes sense that if we thought about the whole message, we could do a lot better, if we really focused on what good communication could mean. How do you help others to get that?

SS: I think what's important is talking to them and finding out their story and the places they feel they get stuck. A lot of times, people have a huge amount of skills; they just don't know how to use them in the proper order or the right context. They might tell me a story about at work, "I throw out an idea and then no one listens to it, and then five minutes down the road, someone across the table throws out the same idea, and everybody applauds and accepts that idea." That's a common one I hear a lot. That's all just about using our nonverbals in a way that captures the attention, and what I like to say "holds the microphone."

A lot of times when we can just change certain behaviors, most of the time, people do pretty well. They'll say, "During my personal life I'm fine or during my business life I'm fine, but I find when I'm dating it doesn't work, or I find in a team meeting it's not working." We just adapt the skills they already have, and so it's all about just easy adaptation. I like to say, "Be flexible and you'll be able to persuade people to your ideas by just using your hand gestures and getting them on board as team player."

Part of influence is being able to make the other people feel important as well, and this is a fun little tip I like, whether it's in your personal life or your business life. It works just wonderfully. Here in America we like to always – I won't say always, but usually – open with the weather; something about the weather. If we can comment on how nice the weather is today or how wonderful the weather is today, use, the palm-up hand gesture and as you said the word "wonderful", like, "The weather is wonderful today" gesture towards the other person or your audience. Nonverbally, you've just assigned the word "wonderful" to them and called them all wonderful. It's a really cool way to assign "wonderful" "nice" "pleasant", all those sorts of good-feeling words to other people, and then they say, "Gosh, I feel good every time I talk to you– why is that?" In your mind, you're kind of chuckling – it's so simple.

I: What is the single most important message you want to get across about how our readers can increase the credibility of their communications?

SS: Just understand the message that you want to deliver before you deliver it. So often misunderstandings happen, miscommunications, expectations are built up and broken down, just by not taking a moment to think about what is the best way to say this at this time to this person and have my message understood?

A lot of times, if our message isn't understood, we build dependency on us, especially if we're in a management position. A lot of times managers say, "Why can't they just do their work?" I talked to them about reflecting back on their communication style and seeing if they have built it on a dependency model. One of those is not using the proper nonverbals. Our nonverbals can also teach people. We can show things in a sequence with nonverbals, gestures; we can do all sorts of teaching with our nonverbals, and so they get a visual reminder in their brain.

SS: It's interesting; a lot of times you could count on your hand in an office meeting. We'll say first, we want to talk about budgets. Second, we want to talk about the scheduling. Third, we want to talk about company picnic. You'll find that when someone leaves the team meeting and they're talking to someone not at the team meeting, they'll touch their index finger to talk about scheduling, because that is the anchor and the reminder, visual reminder for them, to know what just happened. That helps break that dependency model on just what we have to say, so they're not always having to come back to us and ask us, "What did you say again?"

I: What made you go into this arena for your work? How did you get involved in non-verbal communication?

SS: It came about because I just got tired of being misunderstood. I know that sounds funny because it seems like such an obvious thing, yet it wasn't for me. I don't know why it wasn't. I just knew that I was being misunderstood and I knew that people were understanding me in a way that wasn't the way I wanted. I wasn't building the deep relationships I was wanting. I wasn't inspiring and influencing people. I love to inspire other people to take action and go for their dreams and their passions. Yet, I was just not getting my message clear.

Then I realized that I was sending mixed messages, that my body wasn't matching what my mouth was saying. That primitive part of our brain, when we see other people and their body is not matching what their mouth is saying, that primitive part will believe the body and the nonverbals before it will believe the verbals, so it's really hard to build trust in a relationship and safety in a relationship if the nonverbals aren't matching the verbals. It seems like such a simple thing that oftentimes we do it without even consciously thinking about it, or perhaps family members – behaviors that you see from family members, and it's a generational thing – you'll notice that mom and daughter and granddaughter all have the same set of gestures. Oftentimes we're not even aware of what we're doing. It inspired me because I just got tired of being misunderstood.

I: I know you talked a little bit about what inspires you. Just to get to know you a little bit better, how do you touch others and change their lives?

SS: I get the most joy out of sharing what I learn. I like to think of myself as a lifelong learner, and when I share what I've learned, and most of it has been in communications in these past years, that's when I can be of service and share my knowledge with people and my compassion, that's what inspires me the most. Then, I just get tickled pink when I see others going out and telling other people what they've learned; "Wow, I learned this, and if you just do that, you'll see amazing results." That's where I get the most joy, is when I see that message being played forward, being passed on'

Learn more about Sharon and what your body says:



"Drop me a quick email, write on my blog, let me know what's happening. I love to hear stories of how people are using their non-verbals, or even communication success stories. I just love to interact and share with people about how their life will change and how great it is to be able to inspire and encourage other people when we consciously communicate with each other." Sharon

www.sharonsayler.com



Melinda Cohan

is a woman of spirit and vision who believes that spirit and business go hand-in-hand, or as she would say, heart-to-heart, to create a great opportunity for people and the world we inhabit. She began her career as a creative interior design professional and manager. Her ability to create systems and organize businesses and personal spaces to reflect the heart and soul of the owner served her customers well. Melinda discovered bringing subtle amounts of organization to the environment could have positive impact. She then realized the same effect could be achieved by organizing one's efforts around a central purpose, identifying goals and objectives to drive a person's daily activities. Melinda has been a successful coach and consultant ever since her discovery.

I: Melinda, let's just dive right in. What are the Five Secrets?

MC: We have identified the Five Secrets that successful business owners use to explode their practice, and really they boil down to:

1. Successful business owners know what they do know, and leverage it for massive success.
2. They also know what they don't know. They don't try to shy away from it or resist it. They know what they don't know, and they acknowledge it.
3. They also know that they need to invest their time and money in the right places. It gets them the returns they're looking for.
4. They have discovered how to generate an endless stream of clients.
5. The fifth secret is they build the key relationships and collaborate with strategic partners in order to explode their practice and do more of what they're created to do.

I: You've created the Business Success Formula. What exactly is that formula, and how can business owners integrate it into their businesses?

MC: We were compiling, really articulating the Five Secrets, one of the things that we saw in common throughout all of the successful coaches, consultants, and business owners that we've been working with is there were key components to what turned into a formula, and it begins with the end in mind with confidence. We saw that when there was confidence that existed in the business owner, marketing became easy, professionalism happened, and it had a direct impact on professionalism, made the conversations easier as we go out to network and build those relationships.

Confidence and **professionalism** were two things, two key components that we saw existing in every thriving business owner out there. When we got to working into these secrets and into what's the pattern of this, we discovered at the root of it, the heart really of the formula is **systems** and **consistency**.

Systems plus consistency equals professionalism, which has a direct impact on our confidence, and that is the Business Success Formula.

I: You just mentioned confidence and having a direct impact on the level of success one experiences in business. What is the role of confidence, and how do you recommend business owners integrate this into their businesses?

MC: Our clients tell us that the more confidence that they have, the easier it is to market. So often, we encounter people that they feel like they're not good marketing or salespeople, or they don't know how to market or they don't have the right tools or techniques or strategies to market. What we've discovered is that while yes, it's important to look at marketing, when we can integrate confidence, marketing becomes a lot easier and more of a natural conversation, because really that's what marketing is. It's about a natural conversation from one to another, and the confidence that you see in a lot of successful people is a byproduct of their commitment to learning and practicing better and better approaches to their professions and their passions.

Melinda Cohen continued...

MC: The confidence comes from professionalism. When we can present ourselves in a professional way, when we know we can deliver on what we have said, we have confidence, and it makes it a lot easier to go out and to connect with others. That level of professionalism comes as a result of the systems that are in place within the infrastructure of one's business.

I: In your Business Success Formula, you talk about the importance of the ordinary day-to-day activities of running a business as being critical to the success of a business. How can a business owner make sure they are not overlooking these important aspects of running a business?

MC: That's really what it comes down to; just the ordinary, day-to-day regular activities that you do on an ongoing basis. When we look at these, and we identified the five basic business systems within any business and we narrowed them down to five basic business systems, these begin to map out how you guide your clients and prospects through these ordinary activities.

Once you've identified the five basic business systems within your business and you've begun to identify, "How do I want to guide my clients through these systems, through the optimal experience of them receiving my services", then you can simply apply the three rules of systems, being ***simplicity, consistency, and automation***. Those are key to managing the ordinary day-to-day activities of business.

This is actually one place where we see so many business owners struggling and landing in that place of overwhelm, because they try to do it all themselves, they try to be the experts in all the areas of their business. They look at the ordinary day-to-day activities of their business and they can begin to ask themselves, "How can I make these tasks – these hundreds of administrative tasks – simple? How can I bring consistency to them? How can I automate them?"

When we can apply those three rules of systems to the ordinary day-to-day activities, now we're reclaiming our energy, we have more time to work with more people, to network, to market, to do more of marketing and do more of what we are meant to be doing.

I: I see. So, Melinda, you often talk about one component that most business owners overlook when it comes to setting up and building their businesses. What is that component?

MC: We often talk about, in our training and in our coaching, the Pyramid of Success. When someone decides, for example, that they want to be a great coach, they get trained in the skills of coaching; that's the first element of the pyramid. When that coach then decides they want to create a successful business, then they must pay attention to the marketing and the business management. Most everyone focuses on the marketing first, and the marketing then becomes this daunting task that's filled with pressure. It's kind of like pushing a boulder up the hill, because they lack the confidence that they can deliver the results that they're conveying through their marketing.

I: Can you tell us about the Five Basic Business Systems? What are they and why are they important? How can a business owner integrate them into their own business?

MC: Looking at the hundreds of necessary tasks that it takes to run a business, we have narrowed it down to really five key business systems. Really, what we're looking at is what it takes to run the internal workings of the business. So while one of the key components, one of the key systems, that you definitely want to have into place is the system of marketing, really the five basic business systems that we're looking at focuses more on the internal working systems of the business. There's Five Basic Business Systems.

It's the **System of Client Setup**. What are you doing? What are the activities that you do? How do you simplify the system of client setup? That's one of the key components. How do you organize everything? How do you keep everything in a systematized manner so that you can easily access whatever you need to put your fingers on it at any given time?



The second system that we've identified is the **System of Communication**; not only in the marketing, but internally with your clients, with your current clients as well as with your past clients and your referral sources. What's the system of communication in your business? How do you handle all the tasks? How do you manage and organize, simply and automate the system of communication within your business?

The third basic business system is the **System of Delivering Your Service**. For coaches, for example, the system of the coaching session. How do you support your clients before, during, after, and in between the times that you are meeting with them?

The fourth basic business system is the **System of Money**. It's one of my favorite components, and this is one so many people are really afraid to pursue, the system of money. When you can articulate the system of money and identify the optimal experience that you want your clients to engage in, you can outline how money is handled, and how the conversation of money is handled from the very beginning, so all expectations are on the table, and it's a smooth process that both you and your clients go through. The system of money is the fourth basic business system.

The fifth basic business system is the **System of Time Management**. Not only how do you organize your own time, but also how do you support your clients in organizing their time, their meetings with you, scheduling and rescheduling appointments, engaging prospects when they're ready to say yes with your services? The system of time management.

That's the Five Basic Business Systems that we've identified.

I: How does someone just starting out convey that high-level professionalism that so many potential clients, especially in this economy, are demanding without having to spend a fortune?
(Continued next page.)

Melinda Cohen continued...

MC: So often we try to describe what we're doing by selling the intangible of our service. A lot of people that we've encountered, they try to sell the individual. With coaches, for example, they'll try to sell the individual coaching session or selling coaching, and when you engage in this, you'll get a certain response. Really, what begins to convey that level of professionalism is to describe that we're selling the coaching experience; the entire experience from the moment somebody says yes to the moment they engage in your services, all the way through to completion and follow up afterwards.

Therefore, we must identify those Five Basic Business Systems, going back to what is that optimal experience that we want to guide our clients through, and then implement them. Implement them using various tools and technologies and resources that help you to apply those three rules – the **simplicity**, the **consistency**, and the **automation** – so that we can guide our clients consistently through the optimal experience. That is what conveys the high level of professionalism quickly, right out of the gate.

I: What exactly is the Coaches Console?

MC: The Coaches Console is one of the tools that we created. My business partner and I, both being coaches, and realizing the importance of this formula, several years ago we took those Five Basic Business Systems and we converted them and created them into a web-based business management system.

The Coaches Console does exactly that. It takes the five systems, it has plugged it into a web-based system that you and your clients can access so that you have the infrastructure of a thriving business to convey to your clients, to work within yourself, and that provides simplicity, automation, and consistency to all of the tasks that it takes to run a thriving business. This is how a coach would begin to organize all of these normal everyday ordinary activities in a very professional manner so that they're organized, saving them time, as well as organizing it and conveying a professional presence to their clients as well.

I: I see. I'm seeing amazing testimonies on the Coaches Console website. Can you expand on why your clients are such raving fans of the Coaches Console, and what do they know that we don't?

MC: The successful coaches that are using our Coaches Console system, they are the raving fans because this tool gives them hope. That's one of the words that we hear from so many of our members. The coaches that we work with, they have this calling, this passion, this purpose of coaching, impacting the world through their gifts and their talents and their strengths, and so often the overwhelming activities of running a business get in the way.

Hope – that's the word that it comes down to is that through a tool such as the Coaches Console, it gives them all the information they need without having to figure out how to reinvent the wheel or start from scratch.

MC: It gives them hope, knowing that it's possible, that they can take their passion, turn it into a business, make the difference they're meant to make in this world, and have a profitable, thriving coaching business so they can experience both simultaneously. They're turning their passions into profits, they're impacting their clients, they're living their purpose, and the Coaches Console technology is the tool that catapults them into that level of success

I: I see. Melinda, let's get a little bit more personal. What inspires you?

MC: What inspires me is impacting this world and really getting out of the business mindset for a second, raising the level of spiritual consciousness in the world. That's what inspires me, and the way that we do that is by eliminating the burdens and distractions that keep ourselves, our coaches, our clients distracted, overwhelmed, bogged down. When we eliminate those, then we're all operating in our strengths, in our gifts, in our God-given potential and our talents, and we are elevating the spiritual consciousness of this world, that is what inspires me. When we can do that for ourselves and we can support coaches around the world, doing it for themselves and in turn doing it for their clients, the ripple effect is just magnified.

I: How do you inspire others and change their lives?

MC: It's really through our modeling. Through modeling our own beliefs, running our businesses, and modeling to our clients and to the members and the people that we serve. One of my favorite quotes from Gandhi "Being the change you wish to see in this world." Living that on a regular basis as we interact in business, as we interact with our clients, that's the biggest way that we inspire others and impact those that are around us.

I: What made you decide to choose this arena for your great work?

MC: If you had asked me 10 years ago that this was the arena I would be in, I would have looked at you like you had maybe 10 eyes in your head, because I would say that I think that this arena somehow chose me, because this is where our strengths can have the biggest impact. When we think about when coaches work with clients and the impact that a coach makes on that client, and then the impact that that client has in their community, in their family, in their world, when we can help coaches do more of that, the world becomes a different place immediately.

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Katherine Poehnert,

principal of Insight Services coaching and training, has always tended to go against conventional wisdom and her coaching career is no exception. Rather than specializing in one area, Katherine has achieved success by diversifying her services. She does what she loves, is never bored, and is well respected by her peers and clients. Visioning beyond the box can be the spice of your business.

I: What attracted you to the coaching field in the first place?

KP: Well, actually my background is as a school psychologist. I have a Masters in Educational Psychology and I realized after having done that for several years that I really didn't like the whole medical model, the approach that basically you look at people as though there's something wrong with them that needs to be fixed. When I first was introduced to coaching and the whole underlying philosophy that we all have the answers within and that it's not about seeing people as problems to be fixed, that was just so empowering and so attractive to me that I was immediately drawn to it. I think it was what I had been looking for in terms of a philosophy and an approach to looking at people and helping people. It was something I'd been looking for a while. That was what really attracted me.

I: Oh, I see. Well, why did you choose not to follow the conventional wisdom that specialization is the way to go?

KP: Let me say first that I think certainly there is a definite advantage to specializing and branding yourself. I have certainly done that in some sense in terms of different parts and times in my business where I'd been working within a particular niche.

KP: What I found for myself, and there may be many people who resonate with this, that personality-wise I'm someone who likes a lot of variety. I can get bored very quickly with what I'm doing in my business so I found that for me, it offered me a lot of new challenges, the ability to try out different things and the ability to meet different people. Not that you can't do that if you are specializing, but for me a lot of new ideas would come about a new market that I discover and it would just really grab my attention or my energy and I wanted to feel free to be able to go there.

I found that really doing a lot of different things has allowed me to really enjoy myself and feel that sense of challenge all along. I think it's just something that fits me. It fits who I am and how I am in business. So for me it's been great.

I: That's exactly what you need to do. You need to make sure that when you're working in any field that it's a good fit for you. I think that's very wise.

KP: Sure.

I: I'm the same way. I like to have a lot of variety, a lot of change. I think that makes sense. What types of diversified services do you offer, and how have they been successful for you?

KP: Well I do a lot of different things. Obviously coaching is what I am, and I always say that – it's not just what I do, it really is who I am, how I see life. So coaching, I do a variety of types of coaching. I do corporate coaching, I do executive coaching. I'm executive coach for Deloitte. I also do life coaching and actually there really isn't any difference between the two in terms of the process. I think there's a real misconception around that.

I: I agree.

KP: Yes, obviously the folks with whom you work, they might present with different issues, but honestly all coaching is the same. I do that, and I love training. Training is something that I have found to be something I'm just made to do. I think I might be a frustrated actress, but I love getting in front of a group. I love teaching. I love sharing. It's certainly a different model than coaching, but I love seeing people having ah-ha moments.

I do a lot of training and I've been really diverse in the markets within which I'm training. I have trained within the educational system, training in schools. I have worked in the corporate arena going into a variety of types of corporations and doing workshops and in quite a diverse variety of topics; everything from emotional intelligence to stress management to parenting. Parenting had initially been a big part of what I did right before I became a coach. I did a lot of training in the area of parenting skills and wrote my own parenting program.

I've also done a lot in the area of nonprofit most recently and I love that. It's something I had not done. I had done some strategic planning in nonprofit but very little. Then I recently had the chance to do quite a bit of training in the nonprofit arena in New York City and found that it's an area that I love training in.

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Katherine Poehnert continued...

KP: I've also done community workshops, also for smaller private companies. As I mentioned, I do a variety of types of workshops. I also am a trainer of other coaches. I work for IPEC coaching, which is a large coach training organization, accredited coach training program. I love mentor coaching. I've been a mentor coach for IPEC and then I also have my own mentor coaching program. I've done a lot of different things and those are the really the services that I offer – and anything new that might come along that interests me. Right now, those are the lists of the things that I have been doing, but I'm sure there are other things on the horizon.

I: It is quite a list. It's amazing. Maybe you can share with us the benefits of diversifying and maybe what are some of the pitfalls or the downside of it?

KP: Yes, and really there are two sides, obviously to every coin. I think certainly the benefits are that I don't get bored as I mentioned. It also allows for many different types of revenue streams. I've noticed with the downturn in the economy that other coaches that I know that were sort of focusing their attention in one area if that area dried up, they were really stuck. With myself, I notice that because I have so many different areas where I'm putting my attention that if one area wasn't doing so great then I would have other revenue streams that I could really start to look it.

For instance, more money is going to be starting to be put into preschool education certainly from the stimulus package and so that's an area that ... all the parenting projects that I was doing that I haven't really focused on a lot recently, that is going to be an area that I'm starting to focus on a little bit more.

Having those multiple streams of income from a variety of areas is really a positive when there is a change in the economy such as we're experiencing now. Certainly it allows me to indulge my interests, my varied interests, and gives me that freedom to be able to do what I want in the areas in which I'm interested.

I would say in terms of the downside, I think anytime that you're not associated with a particular brand that can be a downside because people don't associate you with being the guru of such-and-such or whatever. Certainly when you're able to do that, and coaches who are able to really brand themselves well, that can be a fabulous association for your market. That is a downside. I think it's harder to market at times because to market yourself, when you have a really clear understanding of who your niche market is, obviously it's easier to figure out well where are they, where do they live, what do they do, what do they read? This is exactly who they are and you can spend more time and focus on marketing to them.

When you really have diverse attention it's harder to do that. I would say that those are probably the two major areas that are sort of the negative in terms of diversifying. I feel that the ability to have that variety for me outweighs some of the downsides, so that's why I've chosen to go that way.

I: I was thinking about generalists and specialists in business when you were talking about that. When they make cutbacks they usually let go of the specialists. The generalists, they seem to be okay because they can put them anywhere.

KP: You're right, and that's a really good point. You're right. Also, when you're doing a bunch of different things, as you're talking I'm thinking too that you get to have experience in such a wide variety of things that things will all of a sudden pop up. You're making more connections because you're having a variety of fields that you're involved with and so forth, and so you're learning a lot more and then that can be applied to other things that come along.

I: Exactly.

KP: What you're saying is true.

I: When you were talking about how the market is tough, you're right. Where do I put my energy because it can be spread out? That was a very good point. You consider training a vital component of your business. Why is that?

KP: Well, certainly as I mentioned, I enjoy it and I think nowadays a good trainer is worth a lot to a company or to an organization. There are a lot of organizations, companies and individuals that are out there looking for people to really come in that have that skill of training which is really an acquired, a learned skill. It's important because you can always go in as a trainer and do even a one shot kind of a workshop, but it gives you an entrée into a business so that you might follow that up with coaching and other services. So I think training is a really important component. There are a lot of people out there who are trainers but they may not have the skills that a company is looking for, so when you can go in and really give a wow presentation, that's worth a lot to that company and they then might consider you for other aspects of working within that company.

The other thing I think that's really important about training is that when you think of coaching and somebody hiring you on an individual basis to coach them, it's really about finding someone with whom they can really connect where they have... sometimes it's something you can't even really measure. It's just a feeling you have about who that person is and whether they're going to be a good fit for you.

If you're able through training and presenting to get in front of people and really make that connection even if it's a 20-minute presentation or a six-hour presentation, you really get yourself known. They get to find out who you are because when they hire you as a coach they're hiring you as a person. They're hiring who you are, really, and I think being able to train and get up in front of a group and really letting people know who you are as a person as a trainer, as a coach is going to help with that connection and help in terms of furthering your business in other areas. It's a really important component of my business, anyway.

I: That's a very good way to tell us how it relates to coaching.

KP: Right. Yes, it relates to it in that sense.

Even though training seems like it's kind of a separate field from coaching, I come from the same place as a trainer philosophically pretty much as I do as a coach

(Continued next page.)



Katherine Poehnert continued...

KP: What I mean by that is that whenever I get up, no matter what I'm going to be talking about, training on, presenting on, I don't ever consider myself the expert. I consider that maybe I might have more knowledge in a particular area about something or maybe not. I see something from a different perspective than perhaps my audience, but I really don't see myself as an expert coming in.

That's the philosophical place from which I come and certainly that's what I do in coaching, other than seeing myself as a good coach and someone who's perfecting and becoming expert in the process of coaching.

I really come from the place that it's a partnership, that it's an alliance, and from training I come from the same perspective and that an audience, while they might not have looked at the topic as much as I have or researched it as much, they still have a certain amount of natural knowing within them. That's why in my training it's very interactive and I really rely on the group to pull from them, to pull their understanding and their experience and have them think rather than me just being up there being a talking head giving out information. I think that in that way they do really relate in terms of how I approach them.

I: What ties all the aspects of your coaching business together?

KP: I guess I would say that maybe going along with what I just said. That it's kind of the theme. Really, it's a theme from which I approach life in general. It really ties everything I do together. It's kind of the belief, the belief in the human spirit that everyone, whether it be someone I'm working with individually, whether it be a group that I'm offering a presentation, that we're all experts in our own lives. I would never take that away from any group or any individual.

Again, they may not have all the experience or the information but I really believe that people have all kinds of incredible strengths and incredible gifts. Really, that everything that I do, whether it be coaching, whether it be training, whether it be mentoring, whatever, that the underlying belief system is what ties everything together.

Again, this is sort of coming from a very positive, empowering, solution-focused, not problem-focused, but solution-focused approach is really the theme that ties everything I do together.

Whatever I choose, wherever I choose to venture in terms of my business, that's always the place from which I'm coming. It's always from those beliefs and I think that ties what I do together.

I: Katherine, I think that you've done an excellent job explaining why one should diversify and what they can expect, and perhaps the pitfalls as well as the advantages. You provided such excellent information and insights. Do you have any advice or tips we can take away?

KP: This is one of my favorite exercises:

**USING INTUITION IN DECISION MAKING:
a self discovery exercise**

Think of current decision or challenge you are facing

Brainstorm all possible solutions- write them down

Go to a quiet place, relax, get comfortable, close eyes. Imagine carrying out each of the solutions. Really feel what it would be like if you had already chosen that solution and it was happening now.

Write down the feelings or reactions that come up immediately. (do not spend a lot of time “thinking”...feel instead)

Look at what you have written, notice what “gut” feeling comes up for you in looking over everything. Trust that!

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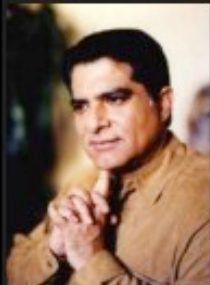
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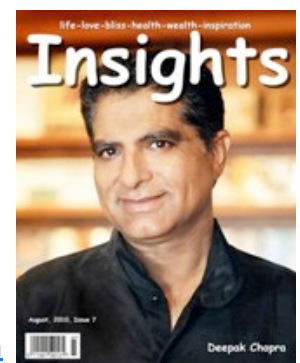
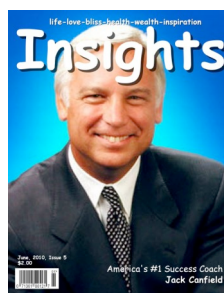
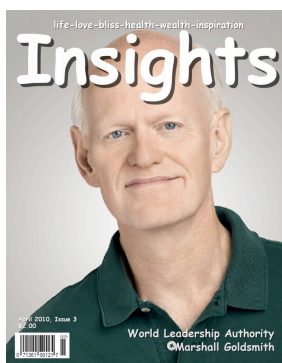
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