

The Gentle Business

MANIFESTO



Do you want to Do Good & Get Paid?

Do you yearn to **prioritize the human connection** all while making profits?

Heart-centered business owners are eager to run their businesses and marketing from a place of smart generosity. From abundance, not scarcity.

From real, community-changing passion that gets back to the basics of trust, meaning, and purpose.





It is a revolution pushing up through the cracks of the conventional business world.

A Gentle Revolution.

Right now, there is something very wrong happening in the world of Online Business and Marketing.

- Never before have entrepreneurs had easier access to create a thriving business and make a positive impact in the world.
- And yet, instead of using this incredible platform that we call the internet to make the world a better place, it is being abused.

It's contributing to an ever growing feeling of isolation and anxiety - on a global level.

We struggle with:



False Promises

Noticed that the number of emails with a promise of a 6 or 7-Figure business have drastically increased over the past few years?



False Urgency

Wonder when it became a common marketing practice to use false urgency (*last call, you'll never have this opportunity again*), manipulation (*do this if you really want clients*) and wealth signaling (*how I made \$1'456'235 through one webinar*)?



False Confidence

Are you doubting your own value and confidence to show up in your own authentic way? Feel like 'just another' entrepreneur, coach, consultant, service provider' with nothing compelling or unique about you?

Isn't it interesting how with all the technology we have access to today (automated emails, mass webinars, chat bots etc), **we have lost touch with the Human Connection.**

And isn't it interesting that the World Wide Web was actually built to help foster this connection? It's true. That was the initial mission. To **bring people closer together and give power to the customers and no longer let companies dictate** what we should consume.

In 1999 Rick Levine and friends posted a manifesto with 95 points establishing the 'rules' of the internet. The work examines the impact of the Internet on marketing, claiming that **conventional marketing techniques are rendered obsolete** by the online "conversations" that consumers have and that companies need to join.

Here's an extract from the Cluetrain Manifesto and some of the relevant points that underline the importance of Human Connection:

- 1 Markets are conversations. [Markets refers to the 'Online Market']
- 2 Conversations among human beings sound human. They are conducted in a human voice.
- 3 The Internet is enabling conversations among human beings that were simply not possible in the era of mass media.
- 4 We are immune to advertising. Just forget it. ['We' refers to the modern day consumer]
- 5 You want us to pay? We want you to pay attention.
- 6 We want you to drop your trip, come out of your neurotic self-involvement, join the party.
- 7 Don't worry, you can still make money. That is, as long as it's not the only thing on your mind. ['You' refers to the companies or in our case the entrepreneur]

So what happened?

Well, it almost seems like entrepreneurs became the new companies, using similar mass media techniques the big names used in the 90's.

Without being fully aware of what we were doing, we started using guilt, fear, false urgency and manipulation in our marketing.

Maybe not in the same aggressive ways as the big internet marketing gurus, but subtle, almost unconscious ways to convince more clients to buy our products and services.



We started talking at our customers instead of with them.

So something got lost along the way.

It's true. It wasn't our fault. We didn't do it on purpose. We have been trained to believe that that's how it's done if we want a successful business.

And everywhere we looked, that's what we saw. So we complied. We used the templates, the success-recipes and 'persuasion hacks'... and we gave up our authentic selves.

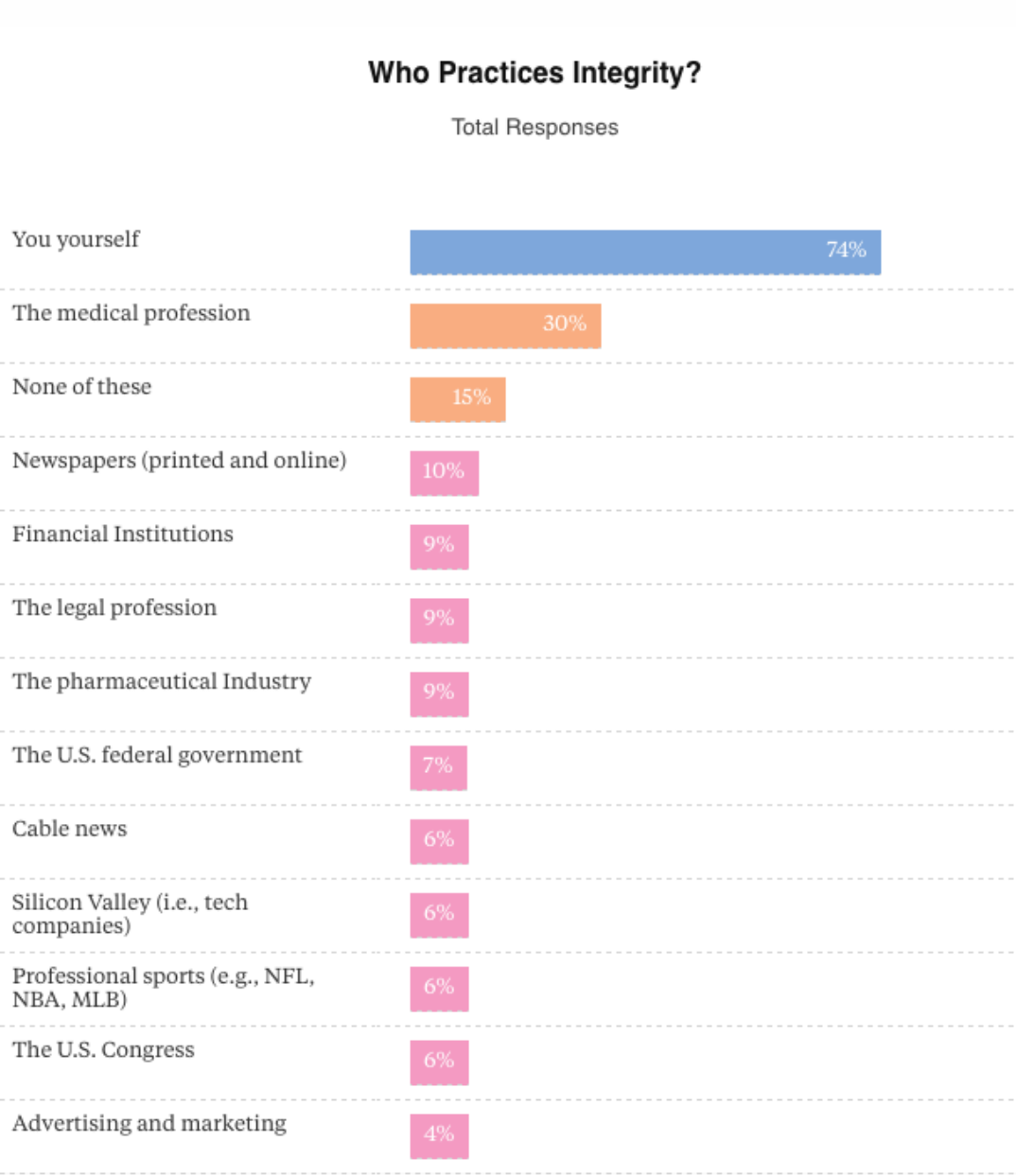
We forgot that it's all about the Human Connection.

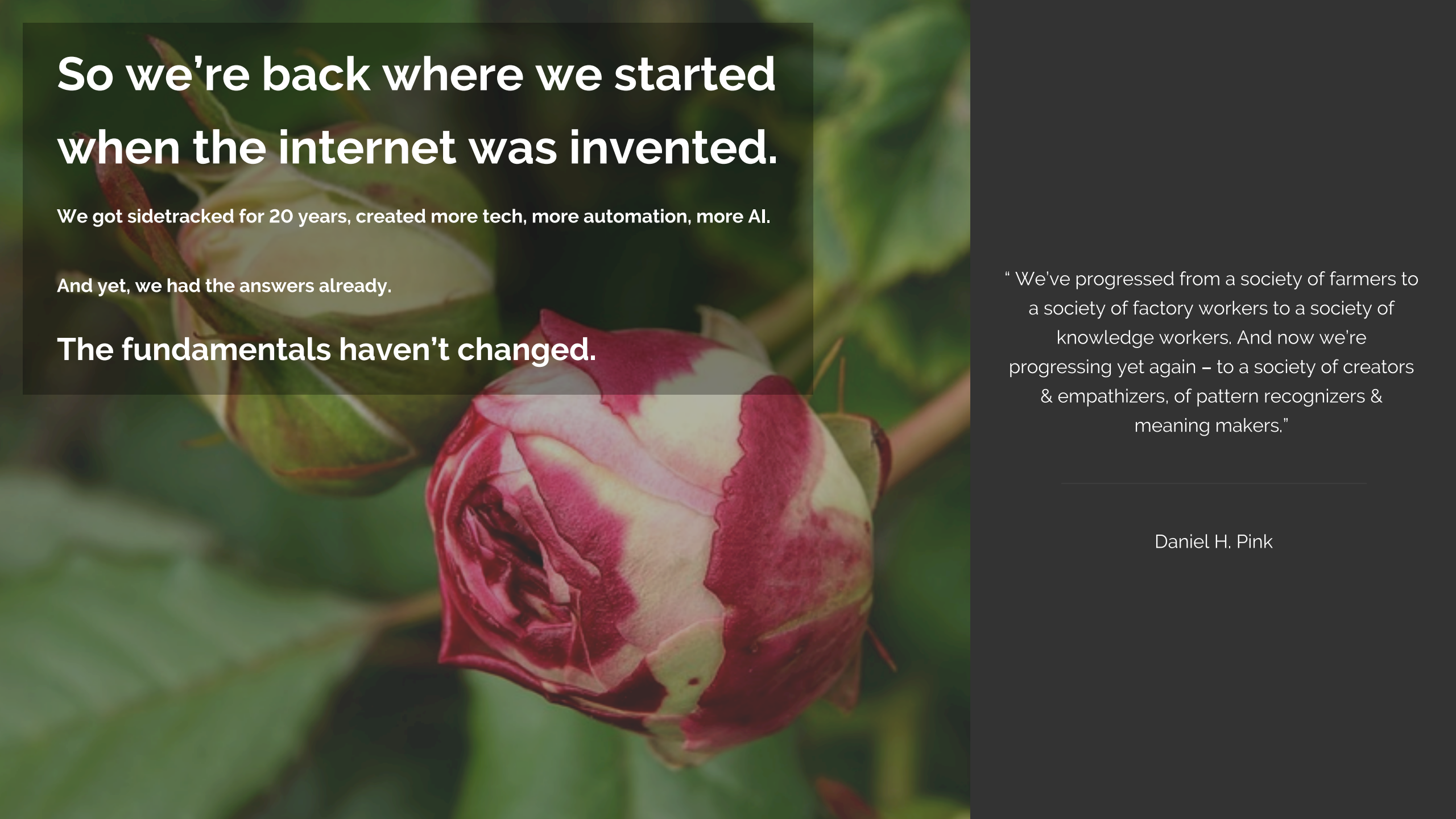
The truth is this: The current Marketing paradigm is broken. Again.

In his book 'Marketing Rebellion – The Most Human Company Wins' Mark Schaefer explains that we are in fact at the beginning of the third consumer rebellion.

Schaefer sums up this 3rd rebellion as 'The End of Control'. Consumers want no more lies, no more secrets, they want no more control. What they want instead are more human impressions. These observations are backed up by stats and research.

A United States based trade organization for advertising agencies called the 4As carried out a survey with Ipsos OTX which asked people what professions they trusted the most. The results aren't really that surprising: Only 4% of Americans think the marketing industry behaves with integrity.





So we're back where we started when the internet was invented.

We got sidetracked for 20 years, created more tech, more automation, more AI.

And yet, we had the answers already.

The fundamentals haven't changed.

" We've progressed from a society of farmers to a society of factory workers to a society of knowledge workers. And now we're progressing yet again – to a society of creators & empathizers, of pattern recognizers & meaning makers."

Daniel H. Pink

What consumers really want!

More purpose and meaning.

More human connection.

More community and belonging.

That's why people are tired of the old bully marketing.

Imagine what would happen—for us, for our clients, and for the world – if we would use more kindness & empathy in our business and marketing?

Inclusion instead of exclusion. And we'd use today's technology to our advantage, in order to make a bigger impact.

I believe it would be a whole new world.

A kinder world, a world without anxiety.

And I believe it's possible.





In fact there are signs everywhere that it's possible.

Mark Schaefer shares **stories from big companies that chose to integrate human connections** into their marketing, which stood up for their values, which created a sense of belonging for their customers.

He mentions Nike, Harley Davidson, YETI (a premium ice cooler), Lululemon and others.

Can you see the potential for us entrepreneurs if even these huge corporations can do it? Think about it.

What if, instead of coming from a scarcity mindset, we approached marketing from an **abundance mindset**? Instead of using fear, lies and guilt to sell more, we would use joy, transparency, empathy and more human connection?

What if we gave ourselves permission to do marketing and business our way? Not following anyone else's rules? Going back to the Human Connection?

And if we're willing to stand up for our values, our strong moral principles and give ourselves permission to do marketing our way, coming from a place of strength, confidence, and abundance, we can show the way.

Just like the big corporations mentioned above we just need to correct our path.

There are plenty of examples in the entrepreneurial world who are already marketing that way and they have thriving businesses. I'm thinking of Danielle Laporte, Brené Brown, Todd Hermann, Jonathan Fields and many more...

You can be gentle AND have a thriving business!





A personal story about getting lost in the Online Marketing Jungle!

About 3 years ago I turned 40 and had my 'mid-life unraveling' as Brené Brown likes to call it. I did some personal work with a therapist and remember this one particular session where, in tears, I told her: It's so damn hard to be different!

If I had to summarize my experience in business in one word, then 'different' would be it. And this fear held me hostage for many years...Out of fear of being different or being rejected I changed who I was, tried to be like everyone else, just to fit in.

I started to wear a mask.

And with that mask on, I was so adaptable: I blindly followed advice of all the big marketing gurus out there.

I tried a little bit of everything.



Webinars

They told me to sell on webinars, then that's what I did, applying their advice of using urgency and fear of missing out (feeling like such a fraud while reading that script).



Systems

They told me that they made millions on their latest launch, so I bought their 'launch-system' (but never actually implemented it because I just could not bring myself to schedule 4 'cart-closing' emails).

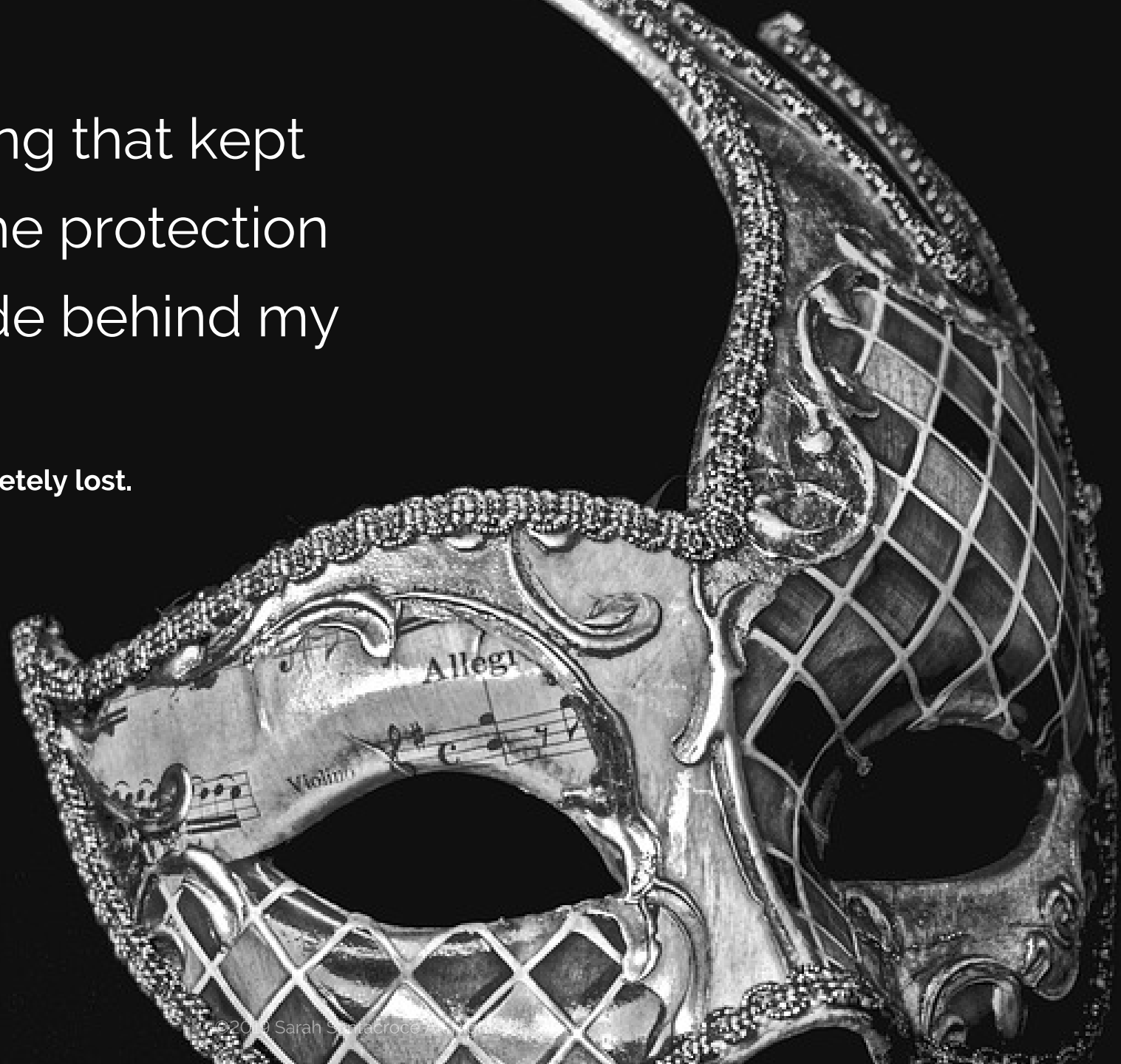


Ads

They told me they made millions (different guru, same message) with Facebook ads, so I hired a coach to help me with Facebook ads and created a funnel (I'll let you figure out how that one ended...).

And the only thing that kept
me going was the protection
and safety to hide behind my
mask.

Because without it I was completely lost.





Time for a Change

Without it I felt a deep existential anxiety, a feeling that gave me hot flashes, knots in my stomach and kept me up at night. But something happened on that ugly therapist chair.

That moment, sitting on the leather arm chair in my therapist's office a seed was planted.

I was ready to come full circle – and do marketing my way.



My Community

Love and kindness and values of community and fairness were ingrained into my psyche from day one.

You see, I grew up in a peace & love environment called the Colombina, a community living experience co-owned by my parents and their friends. It was normal to me, but abnormal to everyone else.

I was taught early on that I was very privileged to be born in a society that has everything and that this privilege came with a responsibility: take care of our world and take care of those who are not as privileged as me.



Ready to take a Chance

Over the past 12 years I have coached and mentored entrepreneurs and business owners, helped them get clarity and outside of the box thinking to achieve their marketing and business goals.

I've lost track of my authenticity countless times in an effort to blend in, to belong, to succeed.

But that day, I came to realize that I no longer wanted to follow everyone else's model – EVEN IF it worked to some extent.

I was ready to take a chance and give myself permission to do business and marketing my way – EVEN IF that meant that I'd fail the first few times.

I know my story is not unique.

I have talked to many entrepreneurs and therefore know that my story is not unique.

I know of so many heart-centered entrepreneurs who are struggling with marketing because they want to share their gifts with the world, to make the world a better place, but the only examples they see when it comes to marketing are the loud, aggressive & manipulative strategies.

Together we can re-invent marketing.



Just like my parents created a new way of living together, of raising children in a community, we can do this together as well.

We help each other to find our way back to human-centric marketing that makes us and our clients feel good.



I don't have all the answers.

In fact, I'm still and always will be learning along the way. And catching myself when using phrases that include FOMO (fear of missing out) or false emergency. Over 10 years of the old marketing training does that to you. It really messes with your brain.

I have changed though. And so has my marketing. I'm showing up fully, quirks and everything. I'm being Sarah. Whether people like it or not.

And guess what. My kind of people like how I show up ☺ And it's not only in my business I'm seeing the results of this transformation. I feel less stressed, I sleep better and I make time for the things that truly matter to me, like yoga, nature walks and time with my family.

There are **four steps** in this journey to market **from within. I call it More of You TM**



AWARENESS

It all starts with waking up from the trance.

Realizing that **we are 100% responsible for our actions** and our non-actions. That we are responsible for every word we use in our communication – and the effect it has on the people we want to serve.

We can no longer use the excuse that **everyone's doing it**'.

We need to restore our **integrity**.

We need to **reclaim our power** and our freedom of self-expression.

In this process, not only will we notice how much brainwash we have really endured, we will also no longer buy everyone else's Hype Marketing. We will **see right through it**.

The next step is to give ourselves **permission**.



PERMISSION

Permission to do **marketing our way** and feel good about it.

Permission to show up fully. But also permission to make mistakes along the way.

Permission to give ourselves **time**.

And permission to not wanting to take radical leaps that cause our business to be so disrupted that we can't take care of our financial obligations.

Permission to be **gentle** with ourselves.

With this permission slip in our pocket it is now time to get to work. And I'm not yet talking about writing blog posts, email campaigns and Facebook Ads.

I'm talking about the 'inner work'.

Four steps in this journey to market from within: More of You TM



WHO ARE YOU?

If there's one thing I've really become an expert at these past three years its knowing myself! **Really understanding who I am, what my values are, my unique super powers, how I want to show up in the world and who I want to work with.**

Brené Brown refers to it as 'rumbling with your story'. Owning your story. For me it meant coming full circle with my upbringing, something I had been hiding from the business world all these years.

What's your story? Write it down. Own it.

And then see how it relates to your marketing. I believe that as Conscious Entrepreneurs it is our responsibility to do this inner work so we **can free all this powerful energy from within and bring it to our marketing.** It is our job if we want to see the change that we wish to see in the world.



MORE OF YOU

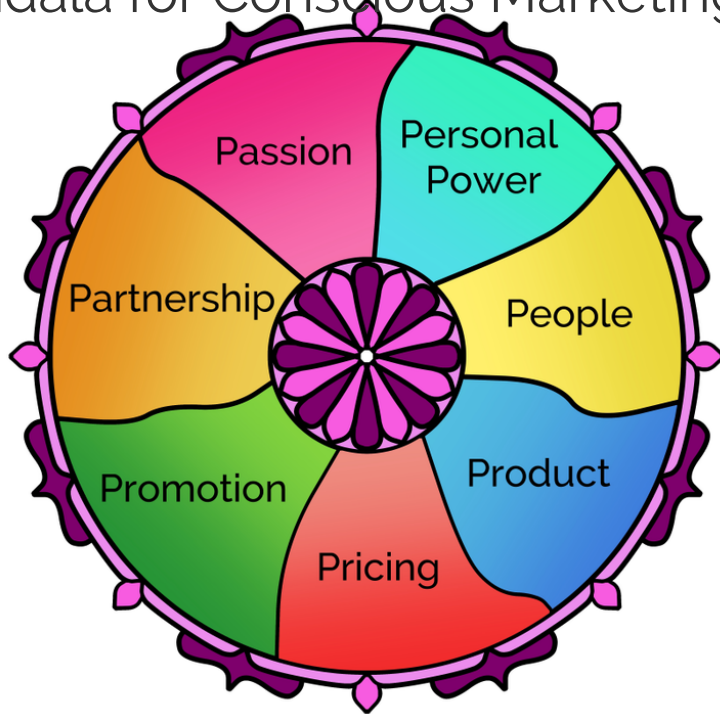
And now, and only now, you are ready to roll back your sleeves and write your new About Page, emails, sales pages and Facebook Ads.

Because when you market from within, it's easy to **promote your offering authentically** and communicate with integrity, kindness and true care.

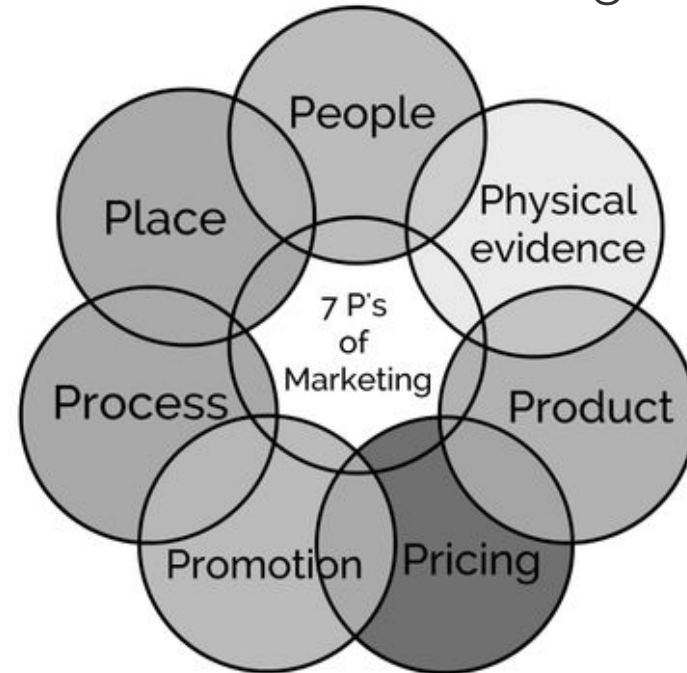
And that's where the 7-Ps of Marketing Come In

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Mandala for Conscious Marketing TM



Traditional Marketing



Here is the potential for the future:

- A world where joy, empathy and kindness are the currency
- A world where marketing fosters a sense of belonging, not isolation
- A world that focuses on the human connection (all while using modern technology)
- A world where entrepreneurs who use ethical marketing are the ones that not only make the biggest impact; they also make the most money. And they use that money to make the world a better place.

Let me give you some examples of how this would look like:

- Instead of creating mass webinars with thousands of anonymous attendees and us showing up as 'the guru', we use Zoom to actually connect with our audience and have REAL conversations with them. Bring them in and make them feel like they belong
- Instead of using 6-Figure headlines that give people anxiety because they feel not good enough, we focus on how our program can actually help people.
- Instead of pretending that we are perfect and have it all together we admit that we don't always do. We show up as humans - and this way foster a sense of belonging for our audience, not isolation.
- Instead of selling we serve (which then leads to sales).

The Gentle Business Revolution will make it a reality.

Together we can make it happen. So I'm asking you to raise your hand and join me.

To be part of this revolution and help bring more kindness and empathy to business and marketing.

To be the change.





Stay in touch

To stay connected and follow the development of The Gentle Business Revolution, [please sign](#) up to receive your One-Page Marketing Plan based on the Mandala for Conscious Marketing TM.

And would you do me one more favor?

If this manifesto has resonated with you and you know of other heart-centered entrepreneurs in your world who might connect with its message, please share it widely.

I'd love to speak about The Gentle Business Revolution & The Gentle Marketing Revolution on your podcast, to your Facebook Group, mastermind or other community (have a look at my [speaker sheet](#)).

Thanks for reading the Gentle Business Manifesto. I'm tremendously grateful.

Warmly,

Sarah

The Gentle Business Revolution Creed

- 1 We run our business to make a *difference and money*
- 2 We believe in *kindness and empathy*
- 3 We believe in *authenticity*
- 4 We believe in *community*
- 5 We believe in *fairness*
- 6 We make the world a *better* place
- 7 We align *who we are* with *what we do*
- 8 We believe in bringing back the *human connection* to marketing
- 9 We do business and marketing in a *gentle way*
- 10 We see marketing as a creative process
- 11 We approach marketing and money from a place of *abundance*
- 12 We are gentle *visioneers*





About Sarah Santacroce

Sarah Santacroce is an internationally recognized LinkedIn Consultant, entrepreneur, podcaster, 'Hippie turned Business Coach' and the Founder of the Gentle Business Revolution.

In addition to her LinkedIn expertise, Sarah is known for helping fellow entrepreneurs market their business authentically & anxiety-free, sell their services & make a difference. She's also the host of the 'Gentle Business Revolution' podcast where she has conversations that aim to disrupt the current marketing paradigm and bring more empathy and kindness to the business world.

Sarah's upbringing and life experiences inspired a yearning to create a global movement that encourages people to bring more empathy and kindness to the business world, live a more meaningful life and take care of our mother earth and each other. [The Gentle Marketing Revolution](#) is an integral part of The Gentle Business Revolution movement.

She lives in beautiful Switzerland where she was born and raised, but considers herself an alternative thinking citizen of this world. When she's not working she loves adventure and traveling (ask her about her alter ego in Sicily), yoga and nature walks or hanging out with her husband and two teenage sons.