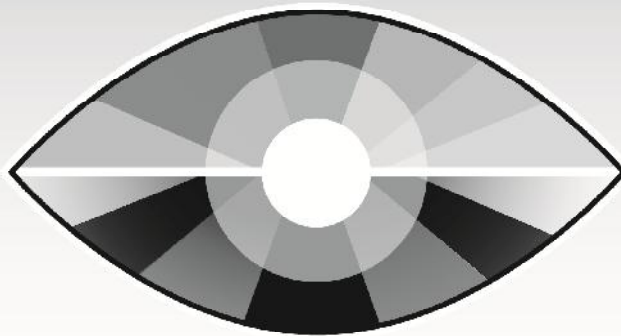


The 7 Graces of Marketing



How to Heal Humanity
and the Planet by Changing
the Way We Sell

Lynn Serafinn



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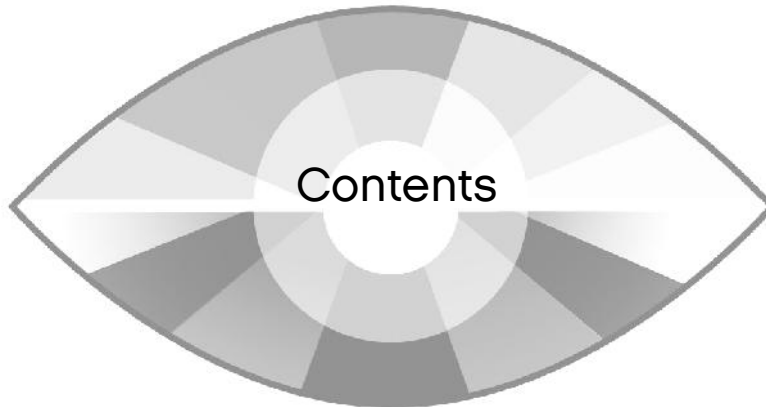
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the topic of ethical marketing.***



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The 7 Deadly Sins of Marketing	The 7 Graces of Marketing
1: Disconnection	1: Connection
2: Persuasion	2: Inspiration
3: Invasion	3: Invitation
4: Distraction	4: Directness
5: Deception	5: Transparency
6: Scarcity	6: Abundance
7: Competition	7: Collaboration

*For my grandson, Percy:
may your future be always full of Grace.*



'A single ray of light from a distant star falling upon the eye of a tyrant in bygone times may have altered the course of his life, may have changed the destiny of nations, may have transformed the surface of the globe, so intricate, so inconceivably complex are the processes in Nature.'

~ **Nikola Tesla**¹

This is a book of questions, not a manual of answers. And I shall make no apologies for the fact that you are likely to have many more questions after you have finished reading this book than when you began. For it is my belief that wisdom comes much less from finding answers than it does from formulating the right questions. Nor shall I pretend to be able to guess all the questions that might arise in your mind as you read, or to know the answers to any of them. For while I might be a marketer by profession, it does not mean I am an expert on this or any other subject. And while I shall openly share my thoughts, experiences and beliefs with you as we ask these questions together, in no way will I ever assume that my beliefs are yours, or that I could ever tell you what is true for you.

Instead of needing to find all the answers, let us agree to engage in the free dialogue of ideas. Let us unlock any barriers that may lie between us. Let us see and respect each other for what we all are—sentient, intelligent beings, who are made of the same 'stuff' and who

share the same planet. Let us see and hear each other. Let us allow ourselves to be seen and heard.

And now, with that in mind, let us begin with the first question of this book, and the one that will underpin all the other questions to follow:

‘Is marketing making us ill?’

It is my belief it is. Marketing is making us ill. It is making us ill not only as individuals, but also as a society. At an almost non-stop pace, from the cradle to the grave, marketing has been feeding us a steady diet of fear, inadequacy, urgency, rage, panic, helplessness and, ultimately, disconnection—from ourselves, from each other and from our planet. What this does to us is unbounded. It culminates in crime, a pandemic array of serious stress-related health issues, and an obsessive entanglement with debt and dependency that has all but destroyed our economic system.

And as we mere mortals are part of the intricate eco-system known as Planet Earth, this illness has inevitably impacted the world around us, making our beautiful planet ill as well. If we stop running at our breakneck speed long enough to take a look at what’s really happening, we will be able to see how every environmental issue around us today can be traced back to the way we have marketed and conducted our businesses over the past century, especially since the rise of mass media.

Yes, marketing is making humanity—and our planet—ill.

But like any illness, if we can probe deeply enough to find the root cause, rather than simply focussing on treating the symptoms, we can find a permanent cure. It is my belief that a fundamental shift in our marketing paradigm can not only heal us of this global affliction, it can also help us rise to a new pinnacle of human connection and wellbeing. If we commit ourselves to this change, we can not only save ourselves from ourselves, we can also restore the essence of our humanity—and ultimately our Divinity.

In short, marketing (a new kind of marketing) can save our world.

And that is what this book is about.

That is not how the book started out, however. The original intention of *The 7 Graces of Marketing* was to serve as a handbook for small-business owners who didn’t ‘like’ marketing and didn’t seem to

be 'good' at it for reasons they couldn't quite understand. I had wanted to redefine the whole concept of marketing by taking the emotion out of the word, and to explore why a redefinition was needed. I also wished to offer a new paradigm for marketing along with practical ways for conscious business owners to apply this paradigm so their businesses could flourish.

But as I got into the crux of the subject, I started to realise the issues surrounding marketing went much deeper than I had ever imagined. Those sensitive souls who had come to me saying how much they didn't like marketing were messengers pointing me in the direction to examine an antiquated model that wasn't working for *anyone* anymore, if it ever did. And the more I explored, the more I came to understand how the social structures we call marketing, media and the economy were reflecting a cosmology that had gone seriously off-course for us as a society, taking us further and further away from ourselves.

This isn't a story about small-business people not knowing how to promote themselves; this is the story about how we lost connection to our own being-ness, and how we can re-establish it through a shift of perspective and personal practice. This is a story about how our own remarkable achievements in the 20th Century have sent us into an oblique orbit outside our own humanity, where we have become the proverbial prodigal sons of Creation, dreaming of finding the way home, and hoping we will be welcomed when we finally are courageous enough to knock on the door that leads back to who we really are.

This book is *not* about marketing inasmuch as it will not tell you how to advertise, master the art of social networking or close a deal.

But it *is* about marketing inasmuch as it takes the stance that marketing performs a vital role in our society: *the communication of our values*.

In the following pages, we will define marketing at its bare-bones level, and look far beneath the surface to explore the root causes of how we human beings came to create the very thing that is doing us so much harm. We'll explore how our relationships with ourselves, each other, our planet, our businesses and our economic system have created a sociological disease of global proportions. We'll

explore the distorted value system that has arisen as a result of these relationships, and offer a new paradigm—which I call ‘The 7 Graces of Marketing’—that can serve as a foundation upon which the healing process may begin.

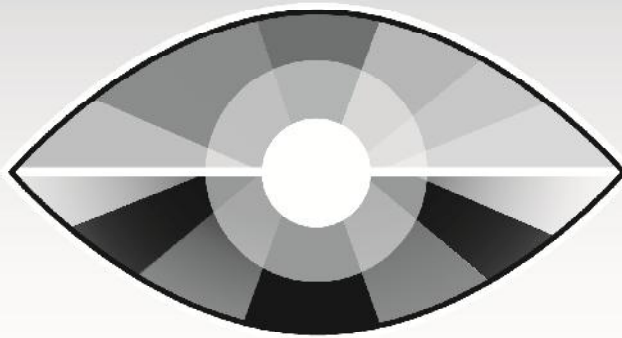
Kindly note:

This book is not only a call-to-action for business owners and marketing professionals; it is intended for *every* person on the planet. We are all ‘consumers’ whether we like it or not. We are all part of our intricate socioeconomic system—comprised of people, planet, economy, technology and belief systems—that is both creating the problem and is ultimately going to be the source of the solution. No one is ‘outside looking in’. No one is immune to the effects of this ubiquitous human creation we call marketing. And because of this, I humbly request everyone who reads this book to commit to ceasing to tolerate anything that falls beneath the standards of the value system to which your heart resounds—and hopefully which you will find within the pages of this book—and lead the way for the healing to begin.

Each and every one of us is a vital part of that process.

So let the dialogue begin...

Part One



Where Are We
and How Did We Get Here?



Why Nice People HATE Marketing

July 6, 2010, 4:08pm BST

*Phone rings. I answer. There is dead silence for a moment.
Then, a pre-recorded voice of a dire-sounding man comes
onto the line saying (in a sombre voice):
'Every year, thousands of people die without a valid Will.'*

I hang up.

I spent most of my early adult life as a 'starving artist'. I was a freelance musician who chucked in my burgeoning career as a classical violinist at age 26 when I fell head over heels for a drummer who hated classical music. We married and together we formed many bands over the 20-plus years we spent together. Our division of labour was pretty clearly defined right from the start: he banged on the drums all day while I took care of what you might call the 'marketing'. Those being the days before the Internet, 'marketing' meant making and distributing lots of flyers, putting together lots of demo tapes and promo kits, and contacting lots of newspapers and magazines to see if they would run a feature on us. It was a non-stop job that resulted in mostly short-term results. And ironically, the one and only time the fruit of my marketing efforts resulted in attracting the attention of a major record label, when we actually came face-to-face with their A&R rep, we somehow couldn't pull it together to deliver what they wanted. Needless to say, we didn't get signed. I wasn't sure at the time why we had failed to land a record deal after

so many years of dreaming about it. It wasn't until years later I came to understand it was largely due to an underlying and somewhat unconscious resistance to relinquishing our proud 'starving artist' identity to 'the corporation'.

There is a widespread belief (sometimes conscious, sometimes not) amongst musicians that commercial success requires a compromise of artistic integrity—'selling out' they call it. And so, sadly, many gifted artists go their entire lives without any true career success, often financially destitute and/or working at 'day jobs' they loathe, not because they lack talent, but because they stubbornly resist the very thing that has the ability to bring them fame, fortune and the worldwide acknowledgement of their artistry: the business world. But it would be highly unfair simply to dub this attitude as mere 'self-sabotage'; there are actually many logical reasons why so many artists and other sensitive souls push away 'success', as we'll see in the following pages.

By age 46, and after over 30 years in the music industry, being a starving artist had lost its lustre for me and I left both my marriage and my career. For the next few years I worked in the educational sector, eventually ascending the corporate ladder to become an Assistant Director at a large college. But somehow I never felt comfortable as a 'company man' (or woman), and at age 52, I returned to my freelance lifestyle to begin an entirely new career as a life coach and author.

Once again I came face-to-face with the challenges of marketing and self-promotion. Not being satisfied with my former level of success in the music business, I wanted to do it 'right' this time. Like many new business owners, I started by joining local business networks—mostly the kinds that meet at 6:45 A.M. for a horrible, greasy breakfast (that, being vegetarian, I could never eat), where you have to do a '60-second pitch'. I hated this environment. Not just disliked—hated. Don't get me wrong; many of the *people* in these networks were lovely, and several became my clients. But there was something about the meetings themselves that made me feel positively alien. Slogging my morning coffee as I waited for my turn to do my pitch, I'd invariably sit at the meetings silently arguing with myself:

Voice 1 (yawning): *I wish I could leave. I just don't fit in here.*

Voice 2 (brashly): *Oh, get over yourself! Quit the 'starving artist' act and start acting like a grown-up. You'll have to learn how to fit in.*

Voice 1 (pleading): *But I can't be ME here.*

Voice 2 (chiding): *Ach! For once in your life, be responsible! If you want to be a REAL businesswoman, you have to act like one.*

Voice 1 (whining): *But I don't fit. I don't fit. I don't fit...*

Voice 2 (fed up): *Loser!*

Week after week, I would come home from these breakfast meetings stressed, suffering from indigestion and drained of energy to such a degree I would need to sleep for three hours before I could face my day. Nonetheless, I returned to the breakfast meetings week after week, partially because I had paid a small fortune in membership dues, and partially because 'Voice 2' was constantly bullying me into submission, and making me feel inadequate if I could not somehow learn how to 'fit' in to the business world.

But as the months progressed, no matter how much I tried, I felt worse and worse after every meeting. And the worse I felt, the fewer clients were referred to me via my business network. And truthfully, who *would* refer clients to a coach who looked so bloody miserable? Naturally, the lack of referrals only made me feel even worse, which in turn made me more miserable, which led to even fewer referrals. It was a vicious cycle. The unhappier I became with the environment, the more I contributed to making it worse. But I was so 'in' the situation, I couldn't understand WHY I was so miserable. I started to ask myself: *Am I incapable of being a 'real' businesswoman? Am I destined to be a starving coach for the rest of my life, just as I had been a starving artist? Am I a failure at 'real' life?*

Tired of feeling like an alien being, I decided I needed a social outlet. At a local coffee shop, I saw many flyers of people in the area who were in holistic professions. Being into a holistic lifestyle, I started contacting some of these people and began meeting them for coffee. I made many wonderful new friends, and to my surprise and delight some of them also wanted to become my clients. Working with them made me feel enlivened, confident and peaceful. Now I was happy. Now I fit in.

Organically, and with little effort, I soon developed a small but identifiable niche of clients with a specific profile: small-business owners in the fields of homeopathy, Reiki, massage therapy, Reflexology, nutrition, etc. And what I found so interesting was that dozens of my newfound clients were now echoing the same ‘voices’ I had been hearing in my own head. They complained of not feeling comfortable in business networks, but were at a loss to know how else to market their businesses other than distributing leaflets. They said, almost unanimously, they ‘hated’ marketing and ‘dreaded’ whenever they were faced with self-promotion. They said they didn’t feel like they ‘fit’ in the business world, but if they didn’t find a solution quickly, they would have to give up their businesses and go back to employment.

These people sounded an awful lot like the artists’ crowd I had known for years. There seemed to be a whole sub-culture of business owners comprised of highly-sensitive, intuitive, creative and even spiritual people who just couldn’t click with mainstream business culture, and whose values and motivators were far more intrinsic than financial. Most had a genuine passion for wanting to ‘do good’ in the world, but they had no idea how to communicate to their potential clients and customers, what to speak of when communicating with ‘real’ businesspeople in the networks.

In short, they were all ‘nice’ people who ‘hated’ marketing.

Furthermore, *I* was one of them.

No longer was I a lone wolf braving the howling masses; I was part of an emerging group of entrepreneurs who, without knowing, were calling for change. How could I facilitate that change?

DID YOU KNOW...?

Now on a mission, I decided to get out of my self-pitying bubble and start paying attention to what was actually going on around me at the breakfast meetings. Perhaps if I could figure out exactly what it was that was making me feel so drained and miserable, I could also help my clients. I began listening very closely to the 60-second pitches people delivered, and noticed there were invariably striking similarities in the pitches of the networkers who received the greatest

number of referrals week after week. Here are some paraphrases of the highlights I recall:

- *'Did you know that break-ins increased last year by 11%? Let me give you a free quote for a household security system.'*
- *'Did you know that mortgage rates are predicted to rise to an all-time high next month? Take out a new mortgage with me today.'*
- *Did you read the story about the father of four who was killed by a drunk driver last week? Did you know he had no life insurance policy? Don't leave your family unprotected. Book an appointment and get covered today!*
- *'Did you know that without a Will, your children might not inherit your property? You just heard from the guy right before me about how that father of four got killed by a drunk driver. It just goes to show you never know what's going to happen. Call me to get your Will made today.'*

And so on.

Can you see the pattern? No, it's not that each one starts with 'Did you know' (although, that is a marketing strategy we were 'taught' during our network training). If you look at these pitches carefully, you will notice that every one induces a feeling of urgency, anxiety and lack of safety.

In short, they trigger one of the most primal of all human emotions—*fear*.

FEAR AS A MOTIVATOR

When we are anxious or afraid, our endocrine system becomes flooded with stress hormones, such as adrenaline and cortisol, to enable us to respond to danger. These hormones help keep us safe in genuinely dangerous situations, as well as help us deal with daily stresses. But the body interprets danger very liberally. There doesn't

have to be a tiger in the room; we merely have to *believe* there *might* be one. When we imagine there's a monster under the bed as children, we are afraid even though there is no monster. When we hear a loud noise, there may be no imminent danger, but our body jumps nonetheless, getting us ready to respond, just in case. Similarly, when we hear marketing messages that create doubt, fear, anxiety or confusion, our bodies respond even if our intellect says there's nothing to worry about. This makes fear a great motivator, and marketers know this. It gets us to move quickly, which is the reason why fear-based pitches invariably evoked rapid responses from the people in my business network.

But fear can only ever be a *short-term* motivator. Once triggered, the body stays in a heightened state for some time, until it is satisfied the perceived danger has subsided. Over a period of *several hours*, the body gradually returns to a balanced state and stress hormones return to normal levels. One nutritionist I consulted says it takes about 8 hours for cortisol levels in the body to return to a balanced state after a mere 5-minute period of stress.¹

Knowing that, let's take a closer look at the impact of those sale pitches. Our network had about 40 members, meaning we listened to 40 one-minute pitches in a row at every weekly meeting. Now imagine that of these 40 messages, at least half of them are using anxiety or fear as a marketing motivator. At 60 seconds a pop, one after the other, there is absolutely *no physical possibility* for the mind and body to return to a balanced state as we move continuously from one pitch to the next. This and all the cups of coffee we drank to stay awake must have turned our endocrine systems into Gatlin guns of stress hormones every Thursday morning.

Could that have been why my messages of 'empowerment and overcoming limiting beliefs' seemed to land like a lead balloon every week? Were people simply not 'in the space' to receive such off-the-radar messages? Maybe. But I think there's more to the story. It had to do with the space *I* was in. The fact is that every time I stood up to speak to the group, I too had been unconsciously affected by the previous marketing pitches. And no matter how intellectually confident I might have felt, if I had been inwardly 'triggered' by the fear and negative beliefs around money, illness or death of those

itches, there would be no chance I could inspire confidence and courage in my listeners. I'd have to be either the best actress or the most disingenuous person in the world.

I made a shocking confession to myself—I had indeed been 'hooked'. I was not standing in power. I was standing in muck. Finally, I began to comprehend not only why I had always left the meetings feeling so drained, but also why I had failed to communicate my message effectively to my audience.

While fear is a powerful incentive to quick action, it was never designed to be a *long-term* motivator. It cannot. Our bodies are not designed to withstand long-term fear and anxiety without some ramifications. When our brains are continually fed a stream of stress-inducing, 'urgent' messages, our bodies never get the chance to recover. The next 'dose' of cortisol gets fired through our system before our hormones have a chance to stabilise, and the vicious cycle of chronic stress begins. Our endocrine, metabolic and immune systems all become compromised. For many, it may affect their cardiovascular and digestive systems as well.

We compensate our exhaustion with caffeine and other stimulants, and our worries with a variety of diversions and intoxicants. Overworked and underpaid, our adrenal glands become like tired horses being whipped to carry a heavy load. We become susceptible not only to emotional and physical stress, but also to a plethora of other chronic conditions and auto-immune diseases plaguing our society at an alarmingly rapid and widespread level today. For me, this isn't just theory. I know it first-hand. It happened to me, and let me tell you it took me a long, painful time to recover.

Fear makes sales, but comes at a heavy price.

FIGHTERS, FLIGHTERS AND FREEZERS

Many of us have heard about the three classic responses to fear: fight, flight or 'freezing'. It seemed to me that many people in my business network were engaged in a constant, albeit unconscious, battle of reacting to their anxieties. When responding to marketing and media messages they were being fed, they sometimes used humour and sarcasm to push it away, attempting to make it look

like they had it all together. Invariably these stoic types were the kinds of people who bought the insurance policies, purchased the Wills, made sure they had the best deal on their mortgages, ensured they had good credit ratings and paid their taxes early. They watched the news, read the newspaper and talked a lot about current affairs. They viewed their responses to marketing and media as signs of being a 'responsible' adult. These people were the 'fighters'.

Conversely, we have the 'flight-ers'. These are people with an unconscious aversion for aggressive marketing, such as those holistic professionals and creative artists I mentioned earlier. They 'fly' by resisting the whole idea of marketing (and sometimes business) altogether. They tend to live more peripherally and frequently feel 'outside' the status quo. They tend to be sensitive and idealistic, and justify their resistance to business and marketing by citing their values. They live with less, and get overwhelmed when they have to keep accounts.

To the 'fighters', the 'flighters' are frequently viewed as being irresponsible or childish. To the flighters, the fighters are frequently deemed materialistic or aggressive. Sometimes you'll find fighter children have fighter parents; this can cause decades of family battles where the adult children feel judged and rejected by their parents, and the parents feel judged and let down by their children.

And then, there are the 'freezers'. Freezing happens when we go physically, emotionally or mentally numb and cannot move or make a decision. It is at those times we might yield to someone else, allowing them to make up our minds for us because our numbness cuts us off from the higher functions of the brain, including our own creativity. Artists in all fields know that fear is probably the most common inhibitor in their capacity to be productive, as anyone who has suffered from stage fright or writer's block can tell you. When we respond to fear in this way, it stops us dead in our tracks and renders us useless at responding to a situation, no matter how talented or intelligent we are.

Thus, freezers are neither towards nor against; they are blasé and dissociated from what they see and hear in the media, and are unlikely to realise the effect it is having on them. They have become so overloaded with emotionally charged information they no longer

react, but operate almost autonomously, without questioning their own motivations. They become the compliant consumer. They overspend. They use their credit cards—a lot. They go into debt. They look for ways to transfer their balance from one card to a lower interest card. Unfortunately, this describes the majority of consumers in the world. And like it or not, most of us have been there at one time or another.

Now it all started to make sense to me. Fear seemed to be running the show. The ‘nice’ people I knew who seemed like they were ‘no good’ at marketing were the ‘flighters’. To them, fear in marketing conflicted with their core values of healing, serving and creative freedom. I could see where I fit into all of this. As a business person, I was a dreamy ‘flighter’ at heart trying to pretend I was a responsible ‘fighter’—and it wasn’t working. That explained the battle between Voice 1 and Voice 2 in my head (furthermore, I realised that Voice 2 was the voice of my parents, and they had been dead for years!).

But while I might have been a ‘flighter’ in my business, in terms of my consumer habits, I realised I was pretty much a ‘freezer’. I had become an unconscious consumer who had unknowingly bought into the myth that our ability to consume was in some way a measurement of our normalcy. I, like so many other people I knew, worked like a fiend every month counting every penny hoping I’d have enough to pay my credit card payments.

This is absurd, I thought.

I looked around my modest flat and started to wonder, *What do I have to show for all this debt? How did I get to this place? I don’t remember spending all that money.*

Something...something...had made me spend. Could it be marketing? If so, what is it about marketing that has made me such an unconscious consumer? Could it be fear? What else might it be? Were there other things about marketing that unconsciously programmed me to act, to spend, to fear?

But what if this was not the only way to ‘do’ marketing? What if we eliminated fear and these other factors (whatever they were) from marketing? How would this change the way people responded to marketing?

How would it change our businesses?

How would it change our economy?

How would it change our health?

How would it change our world?

Early next Thursday morning, I awoke as usual for my business network meeting. And as I opened my eyes, I heard myself saying:

I don't fit?

...Hallelujah! I don't fit!