

Ep # 253: How to Die on Purpose in Business

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With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

I Am Your Koren Mom with Simone Grace Seol

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Hey, I'm Simone Seol, and I'm the Korean mom you never knew you needed. I believe that we are all weird and glorious in our own ways. I help people let their own glorious inner weirdo out. Turns out, they're a genius. Let's get this going.

Let's talk about dying in business. I've had my friend Samantha Garcia on recently on my podcast to talk about regenerative cycles in business, right. Everything in nature happens in cycles. Our businesses are part of nature because we are animals doing our businesses. You know, I don't use the word animal in a negative sense. We are literally animals.

Humans are animals. Everything we do also has to follow animal patterns in order for it to feel humane. Animals, once again being part of nature, follow cycles. Cycles always, always, always involve deaths and sheddings and letting things decompose and decay and break down.

What I know from years of running a creative business “successfully” is that unless you proactively lean into and allow yourself to be alchemized by the thousand little deaths that want to happen, that deaths are going to do you. You either do the deaths, or the deaths are going to do you. We don't want that. Do or be done is what I'm saying.

Here is an incomplete list of things that I've had to let die in the years of me growing and running my business. I've had to let die the version of me who's too cruel to risk being seen wanting something really badly, or too cool to be seen believing in something so earnestly. I've had to let die the version of me that was too proud to ask for money, too proud to ask for the sale.

I've had to let die the version of me who's too proud to be rejected, too proud to put myself in a position where there was a possibility of being rejected. The version of me who was too proud to fail. I've also had to let die the version of me who had to be right, who had to be liked by everyone. This one I had an especially hard time with.

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I've had to let die the version of me who was a victim of a cold and uncaring and cruel universe. Like I'm a uniquely fucked up poor creature just like the victim of a mean, mean universe. Poor me. Woe is me. That identity, that was hard to kill. Still pops up sometimes.

I've had to let die the version of me to whom things just happened, you know, who had no power and agency and no will. Things just happen to me, good or bad. It all just was out of my control. I was just someone to whom things happen. I've had to let that version of me die.

Also, the version of me who just wasn't good at follow through and who just like didn't belong and who all these thoughts that I had that justified why I was just uniquely fucked up and doomed to stay uniquely fucked up. I've had to let those stories die. Boy that was not comfortable. I was really, really attached to those stories.

I have had to let die the approval and friendship and respect and affection of lots of people that I really liked and looked up to. That was also really painful. Like there were moments where I was like either have to choose my own truth, or choose the approval of this person who thinks that I am something that I'm not. I can't have both.

Letting go of other people that I really looked up to thinking nice things about me was so hard, but I did it. I've also had to let die a specific idea of me that other people praised and admired once it just started to feel like an old tight and scratchy sweater that just didn't fit anymore. In fact, was actively uncomfortable to wear.

A lot of people have their ideas about what I'm like, and a lot of it positive. I'm like well, actually. I've had to break a lot of that on purpose because it wasn't true. People's ideas of what I must be like had to die so that I could tell them what I'm actually like. I can show them what I'm actually like.

I've also had to let die very, very, very profitable business models once I realized you know what, I no longer want to do this. This isn't aligned with the new thing that wants to come through me. I've had to let die my dreams

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of being a big time CEO once I realized how much I fucking hate being a CEO. I hate managing employees. I hate having employees.

I need room to behave and create like a poet, like a visionary, like an artist, like an eccentric intellectual. Otherwise, I might literally die. A part of my soul, big parts of my soul, will wither and die if I have to manage an organization. I hate every part of that I do the absolute minimum that I have to right now. Right now I've got it to a level where I can manage it.

I've had to let die the version of me which sold little trust in herself, and so little trust in the universe that she was unable to leave money on the table. I had to say yes to every opportunity, every offer, every whatever because it'd be good for me, because I don't want to miss out, because, because. That part of me I've had to let die.

I've had to let die countless relationships with people who weren't on board with who I was becoming, who I was showing myself to be. This happened in every single stage of my becoming. People who liked the old version of me, people who thought the old version of me was better, nicer, more agreeable in whatever way. I've had to let go of those relationships. Not because I didn't like those relationships, but because it was incompatible with what's coming through for me.

I've had to let die pretty much every single political ideology I have ever held. Believe it or not, I've held pretty much every single possible one across the spectrum, minus being like a Nazi or something. Nothing hateful like that, but I've gotten across the spectrum. Like whatever political affiliation you have that's not like actively hateful, like I probably have held your position and could defend very well. Right?

Every one of those over time I've had to let die. Every single time that happened, it's like a reorientation of reality, right? On and on and on. I could literally keep going all day about all the things I've had to let die, all the versions of me, all the attachments, all the ideologies, all the things that I thought defined me, that were me, or were important to me. So many things.

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Almost every business breakthrough happened for me when I embraced a big death on purpose. I didn't do it elegantly. I often did it kicking and screaming, but I never dug in my heels and persisted in resisting the death. Why? It's not because I'm so wise.

It's because at some level, I think I always knew that death always wins. I can fight it, but it's just going to be like longer and protracted and more painful. I'm not ultimately going to defeat the nature of cycles. If I embrace that death needs to happen, and that I lean into whatever already is dying. It all just goes faster, and I end up with more wisdom if I'm willing to be a participant in the dance, if I am actively doing it.

So here's my question for you. What is the death you're resisting now? A pattern I see over and over again in creatives and entrepreneurs, it breaks my heart because it causes so much suffering. People resist a death that they know deep down is necessary. Then they try to solve for the discomfort by doing everything but actually letting the death happen.

So they like work like crazy around the thing that they actually need to work on. It looks like this. Okay, let's say someone, let's call this person Taco. Taco is their name, okay? Their name is Taco. I don't know why. Taco wants to grow their business and make more money. In fact, they need to.

They've got this long standing pattern of hating potential conflict, hating disappointing people, hating the possibility of like causing any kind of negative emotion in anyone else. They would rather die than have that happen. It's so uncomfortable. They hate that.

So here's what happens when that's happening is that taco doesn't filter clients that they're not all that thrilled to work with. They say oh yes, I'll work with you because they should, right? Because I don't want to say no. They don't ask for what they want because it might end in an uncomfortable conversation or the other person doesn't understand or doesn't get or doesn't want to give them what they want.

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They don't let go of the clients who are happy to keep paying them like a third of what their price should be because they're terrified of saying those words to their clients and potentially dealing with the reaction that might not be positive. They don't follow up with the contractor who just ghosted them because they'd rather eat caca than have a confrontation.

Taco will allow every random ass Joe Schmo and their mom to leave mean argumentative comments on their social media posts because well, we can't just delete it. That wouldn't be nice. What if they get mad? I'm sure they didn't mean it like that. I don't want to upset.

Listen, Taco knows. Every time I've talked to a version of Taco, and believe me, I have talked to many, many versions of Taco. Taco knows it's a problem. They know that in order to move forward and business, they have to disappoint these people that they really don't want to disappoint.

They have to do these things that might upset some folks. They have to expose their nervous system to what feels like conflict. They know these things have to happen. They also know that for as long as that part of them that is resisting all of it is driving the show, they're going to stay exactly where they are.

However, they know this deep down, but they're also in denial. They really, really, really, really don't want to do the harm, do the really uncomfortable work, which is understandable, right? But also it's causing lots of problems.

So instead of doing the work to let that part of them die, you know what Taco does? Taco signs up for another sales webinar because maybe they should change up their sales sequence, and that's gonna solve everything. Taco hires a new branding consultant because maybe if they had like nicer photos and prettier graphics then maybe they'd make more money.

Or Taco hunkers down and decides I just got to work harder. Okay. I've got to grind. I've got to make more posts. I'm gonna create more mini courses. I'm gonna send more emails. I'm just gonna sit my ass down and work

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some more. All of this leaves them broker and more exhausted than before each thing they do to try to solve the problem. That's not the actual problem. It just leaves them just like more depleted, and the results don't change. They don't get more sales. They don't make more money. Why?

Because there's only so much you can do to move the needle when you're not allowing the death that needs to happen to happen. Everything Taco tries to make things better is throttled in every direction by the limitations of how they handle your relationships. I know this from business coaching so many people over the years. The minute taco decides that you know what? Enough. Come hell or high water, the conflict avoidant part of me needs to die, or else I'm going to be stuck here forever. I don't want that.

So the minute they start leaning into the pain and discomfort of that death, the minute they say to their client my rate has increased, and braved the conversation in which the client says oh my God, no. I can't afford to work with you anymore. Why are you doing this? You're a terrible person.

The minute they allow that to happen, terrible, right? The minute they allow that to happen, everything they've been wishing for and working so hard for starts to happen. They get better clients. They get paid more money. They have so much more peace of mind. People start talking about the more. The momentum they've been working so hard to try to create happens without so much hard work.

Now, I'm not trying to make this sound like it's easy. God knows it's not. We avoid things for a reason. They're tough, but it's also temporary. The truth is never going to stop following you around. When you allow that critical death to happen, it's going to enable all the things that all those sales seminars and branding consultations couldn't enable.

I picked that example because it's pretty common scenario. You might be listening, and more than half the you might be like yep, that's me. It's probably one of the number one that's that needs to happen amongst my clients. I have all the compassion for how hard it is because I go through it myself too.

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Let me give you another concrete example of a slightly different nature, but my own life example. I believe that there's no way I could have the current situation that I have in which I am abundantly provided for, and I am wildly in love with my clients. I'm like so happy every time I get to sit down and coach my clients. I'm like happy in general every day.

I wouldn't be here, there's no chance I'd be here if I didn't earlier kill this idea that I should be making bigger and bigger money every year. If I didn't let die all the identities and beliefs and all the ideas around that idea and all the relationships that fed that idea. That was not easy. Not easy is an understatement.

It felt like a crisis of the soul to let go of that idea that I believed in for so many years. Not because I cared about the money that much. I never really did, but because it just felt like that was the thing to do. It was expected of me. If I'm supposed to be a good exemplary entrepreneur and a good business coach, I'm supposed to keep making more and more money every year.

It was a whole emotional, spiritual 180 to decide to kill that idea, like actually thoroughly kill that idea. Not just intellectually, but like in my deep emotional body to really break up with that idea and make all the practical decisions that come with prioritizing something other than that. It took time. Lots of tears and moments of panic and confusion and just being a mess. That was one of my big recent deaths.

It doesn't mean I'm not going to make money anymore. It doesn't even mean that in the future, I might not keep like growing my numbers. But just I am thoroughly, thoroughly, thoroughly like broken up with the idea that that is like a necessary thing, or necessarily even a good thing automatically in any way. It was a big one for me.

So what about you? What's the death that needs to happen for you now? What's the part of you that's become an identity? That inherited an ideology and just took it in as yours? An entrenched habit of your mind, something that you're just used to thinking, believing, and doing, but is actually

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outdated and worn out and needs to die and decay and decompose to keep that regenerative cycle going so that you can step into what's truly yours.

What funeral is waiting to be held so that new life can be born? I hope you spend some time with these questions. More importantly, I hope you'll act on your answers. Because the life and business you meant to have is worth it. I'll talk to you next week.

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