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With Your Host

Simone Grace Seol

Hey, I'm Simone Seol, and *I Am Your Korean Mom.* I am also the descendant of teachers, healers, and scholars, and I teach you how to remember your humanity through marketing and business.

Hey, friends. I want to share with you today an idea, a concept, a practice, that I have consistently practiced myself in my own business, in my own copywriting, for years. It has been, honestly, one of the most impactful things that has brought me all the wonderful things in my business. It's a really simple idea, and I really, really want to...

Imagine that you're in front of me, imagine that I'm holding your shoulders, looking deeply into your eyes, and saying, "Please, please, please do this when you write your copy. Please, do this when you write your posts. Please, do this when you send your emails." Have this moment with yourself when you check in, slow down, and do this before you post.

Because this is going to be what gets you that scroll-stopping content that people aren't just going to gloss over. That makes people stop and read and look and think and engage. I get so much wonderful feedback on my copy. I get emails all the time, from people on my email list, saying, "Your emails are the only ones I read. I can't get enough of your emails. I print these out and I read them over and over. I just love your emails so much."

Why do I get those emails? It's because I do this. At my revenue level right now, a multiple seven-figure revenue level, compared to other people at this range, I have very few followers. I don't have a big audience. But the reason that I'm able to have the business that I have today, is because the comparatively few people who do follow me are just obsessed with everything that I say.

Again, how do you cultivate that? It's by doing this one thing: To create scroll-stopping content over and over and over again. It's this: Take emotional risks; it's three words. It's such an important, profound, game-changing practice if you commit to doing it consistently. Don't just write to write, take an emotional risk. Don't just show up and talk. Before

you talk, think about what emotional risk you're going to take to get real with the people that you're talking to.

Of course, I'm going to expand a little bit about what it means to take emotional risks. A lot of the time, the reason that our copywriting, our marketing falls flat is because we unconsciously go into a kind of performative mode. When we write, we accidentally end up writing in this kind of infomercial voice, which is different from the way you normally talk to your friends and family and the people you know in real life.

It takes a lot of practice and skill to do this, actually. But very few people write copy the way they talk. I am willing to bet that if 98% of my listeners, that's you, were to read your own copy out loud to yourself, it would sound nothing like the way you normally talk. If you were to read your copy out loud to your best friend, your best friend is probably, most likely, not going to say, "Yup, that basically sounds like you." They're going to be like, "Who is this marketing persona?"

The reason that happens is because we just unconsciously get into this dissociation between our real selves and our marketing selves; we put on this persona. The antidote to that, is to take emotional risks.

The act of taking an emotional risk, what it does, is it kind of punches a hole through this performative marketing persona with this infomercial voice. Like, "Have you ever experienced... Well, I've got the solution for you. Click here if you want to book a..." You know what I'm talking about? That's the infomercial voice.

So many of us end up writing or "speaking" in that voice. We say, "There's so much inner fulfillment that you can experience and…" You would never use those words if you're just talking to your close friend.

So, what taking emotional risks does is that it'll punch a hole through that fake marketing persona that creates a distance between you and whoever is listening to you, because it doesn't sound like you, and it'll bring what

you're saying down to a very personal, intimate level. Which is, inherently, 100,000 times more interesting to the listener, to the reader, and it draws them in in a way an infomercial voice never will. Because it'll actually sound like a human being is talking to them.

Let's say, for example, that I want to write copy about the importance of good habits. This is a totally generic example. The importance of good habits, and how they're actually a lot easier to build than you would think. So, let's say that's something you want to talk about as a life coach. Left to our own devices, on default, people just stay at the level of talking about abstractions, about concepts. "This is why habits are important. This is why we don't tend to cultivate good habits. This happens..."

We kind of get onto this conceptual, abstract level where we're talking about ideas, about what habits are like, why we have them and why we don't, how to cultivate good ones, and here's step 1-2-3. I call these "staying in the realm of ideas and concepts."

This was me not too long ago. I was a general life coach, coaching on all of the topics; I was not always a business coach. And then, when I caught myself thinking, "Okay, I want to write something about habits, and I want to let people know how to create good habits. Or let people know that I can help them with that."

Instead of going to the default thing that my brain wants to do, which is to talk about habits, and talk about ideas related to habits, I would ask myself, "Okay, how can I take an emotional risk with this topic?" Often, the way was to get a little more personal.

Because there's no emotional risk in talking about the nature of habits, you just spout off your thoughts and your ideas. You know that all of those ideas are good, it'll be enlightening, and it'll be interesting. These are all good ideas. Great. There's no emotional edge there. There's no risk taking there. You're not revealing anything interesting; you're just trying to teach them an idea.

This is not the only way to take an emotional risk, but oftentimes, when I would ask myself how can I take an emotional risk with this, the answer was, "Okay, I could get a little personal with it." So, instead of talking about habits, I could think about, "Let me see, what's a time that I personally struggled with a habit? How could I get even more personal? Maybe I can talk about that time recently where I was trying to stop eating junk food."

I'm kind of making this up, but not really because this is not that different from what I actually used to do, and still do. I will talk about my own successes and failures. Actually, I would pick a specific story from my life, that would illustrate the point I'm trying to make, that would actually get me to slow down and reveal something about myself and risk being seen. Risk being known. Risk people having thoughts about this specific aspect of my life, because I'm telling them an intimate story about it.

Or if I were to get more specific and get more personal, it might not be about me, but I might tell you about a story from one of my clients. When I do that, I would either leave the specifics vague, so it's not identifiable who I'm talking about. Or I would get permission from my client to talk about it in my marketing, first. That's important.

But when I think about, "I'm going to tell this story about my client," that's far more of a risk than just talking about the nature of habits. Because there's risk in specificity. I'm going to say that one more time because it's really important. There is risk in specificity.

Because if you're being general, if you're being abstract, if you're being conceptual, nobody can fight you about it. Nobody can disagree with it. If you say, "Good habits are important," who's going to argue with that?

But if you give them something way more specific, you tell a real story from your life, and you're like, "This was the cost of abandoning the habit that I committed to," and you're specific about what that is, "This is what tangibly improved in my life because I did this habit," again, just as an example, that

gives the reader or the listener, whatever, far more to think about, and to potentially disagree with you about, or potentially pick bones with, pick problems with.

That is what emotional risk means. And, that is a good thing. If there's nothing in your copy that anybody can disagree with, or be offended by, or potentially misunderstand, that is not good. That's what makes your copy generic and forgettable and scroll past-able.

So, I always just start by asking myself this question: How can I take more of an emotional risk with this? Like I said, I either get personal and tell a more personal story that feels a little bit vulnerable to tell. I get more specific about how something shows up in my life, or the lives of people around me. And I take the risk of giving a specific example that people may or may not resonate with, or that might make people feel called out or make me feel called out. There it is, the emotional risk.

Another question that I ask myself, when I'm about to say something, when I'm about to talk about something, is: What's the more honest version of what I'm trying to say? Let's say I'm talking about goal setting. I want to talk about, I want to write copy, about an aspect of goal setting that I want to teach my people about.

Instead of talking about 'this is why it's so important to set goals and this is probably what you're doing wrong with goal setting,' I ask myself: How would I say this if I were telling a more honest version of this topic? How can I be more real about this? What would be a way of saying this without any bullshit? That's one of my favorite questions. How can I be more real? What's a more honest version? What's the version of this without bullshit, without pretension?

When I just kind of fling that question out there for my brain to play with, it always comes up with something really interesting. It always comes up with, "Oh, you know what? Here's how I'm going to get real about this. Here's the part where I'm going to be really honest about the thing that

would be so much easier to pretend to be more whatever; more socially appropriate, more polite, less risky."

I'm telling you the complete truth. I actually stop and ask myself this exact question in probably two thirds of the emails that I send to my people. Literally, if you're on my email list and you've ever thought, "Oh, my God, her emails are so good," it's literally because I stop, before I start writing, and I ask myself, "Okay, I want to talk about a thing, what's the most honest version of that that I can talk about? What's the real version? How do I say this without bullshit?"

And that, these questions, point my mind to where I was trying to pretend. Where I was trying to put a little distance, a formality, and performativeness, between me and my audience. I just sweep that layer away, and what it has the effect of, is pulling you in closer to me.

I imagine I'm pulling my chair up closer to you, to be like, "Listen, I don't tell everybody this, but this is what's really going down. I trust you, so I'm going to tell you the version without bullshit." That is the effect that that has, and that is what gets people being like, "Wow, this is actually interesting for me to read."

A related question that I ask myself: How would I say this if I weren't in a performative kind of mode? That's a million-dollar question. If I wasn't trying to be performative, if I wasn't trying to be an expert or whatever, how would I say this if I were being fucking real? If I were going past the noise and the politeness and being appropriate and looking like an expert, if I take all of that away, what would I say?

What story would I tell? What is the emotional risk I can take here? Say something that feels like the edge of safety. Push the boundaries. Say what you really mean. Say the thing that's a little bit scary for you to say. Say something where you're like, "Oh no, I know who's going to get mad about this. Oh no, I know who's going to misunderstand this. Oh no, this is going to get some people unsubscribing. Oh no, if I say this, they might think..."

Your brain will give you so much crap to keep you from taking emotional risks, because your brain thinks that safety is found in safety; being bland, being generic, being polite, being conceptual, being performative. Putting a safe distance between you and the reader so that you don't have to take any risks, you don't have to risk being known. You don't have to risk triggering thoughts in them.

What that does, is it makes you likable. It makes you unquestionable. It makes you forgettable. This is a maxim that I live by, a marketing principle that I live by: If it's not repelling anyone, it's not powerfully drawing anyone in either. I'm going to say that again, it's so important. If it's not repelling someone, it's not powerfully drawing in anyone either.

If you're not inviting some people to say 'no, I don't get it, I disagree,' or whatever, then you're not inviting people into a 'fuck, yes!' experience either. When you take emotional risks, that's when you become interesting. That's when you become scroll-stop worthy. When you try to be safe and likable and professional, and all of that, that makes you forgettable.

Now, this isn't like being... this is an important caveat... This isn't being provocative for provocation's sake. This isn't like, you've got to piss people off, you've got to also always tell super personal stories, or you have to be super edgy all the time. That's not what I mean.

What I mean is, that you have to, every time you write, every time you speak, I encourage you to pause a little bit and check which part of you is showing up that kind of wants to hide behind this marketing persona. Then, instead, getting rid of that, instead drawing the reader or listener into a kind of intimacy with you.

Intimacy requires trust. You have to trust your reader first. You have to trust the listener first, to see you, to like you, to get you, to be on board with you, to want to go there with you. You have to trust them to be honored and

interested and appreciative that you're sharing your truth. That you're taking this emotional risk.

Now, will everybody feel that way? No. But then, guess what? Not everybody is your people. Not everybody is going to buy from you. What taking emotional risks does is it repels those who are never going to be your clients, who are never going to give you any money, who are never going to go with you to the place that you want to go with your community, with your business. And then, it lets your people know, 'oh, this is the conversation I want to be a part of.'

It's about intimacy. It's about a relationship of trust and realness and honesty, that you first take the initiative to show them. On my end here, I am showing up as the real me. I'm inviting you to sit down in this conversation with me.

We all want more of the real, authentic you. And the real, authentic you is not a pastel cat video that everybody likes. It's not. You are complex, you are gritty, you have lots of opinions that not everybody agrees with, and you have a unique way of looking at things that not everybody agrees with.

Show us all of the edges. When you ask yourself: How do I take an emotional risk with this? That question is going to point you to a place where you can show up and experiment with trusting people with some of your edges. That's going to get people to stop scrolling and pay attention to you.

So, we don't have to make it more complicated than it needs to be. Every time you want to say something, ask yourself: What's an emotional risk I can take here, so that I can get into a deeper intimacy with the people I serve? What's an emotional risk I can take here, so I can be more real with the people who I want to trust with their inner lives? That's what we life coaches do, right?

We're inviting them to trust us. We're inviting them to basically tell us their deepest, darkest secrets. And to have enough trust in us to feel safe, really, handing over the inside of their hearts and minds. Isn't that our job? That is our job. That's what we do as life coaches.

And so, to create that relationship of trust and mutual seeing, you've got to show up and do your part first. Do you want them to trust you? You have to trust them. You have to trust them to see you and love you, through what you reveal by taking those emotional risks.

Alright, so that's it. Very simple. Before you write, before you speak, ask Yourself: How can I take an emotional risk here? What's the honest version of this? How can I be real about it? How can I say this without the bullshit? Who am I willing to offend with this? Where am I willing to be misunderstood? Because it's that important to me, to just say what I mean. How would I say this if I'm going beyond trying to perform? If I'm going past the noise, if I'm going past the politeness, what would I say?

Reach within. Pull out the answer. That is going to be the glue of connection that puts your business on a totally different level. It's going to change everything.

Alright my friends, I'll talk to you next week.

Hey, if you're looking for a one-stop shop where you can find the best of my teaching, all organized into a beautiful and actionable sequence, guess what? I got you. I took the best of my podcast episodes and created a whole damn workbook around them. It's called *The Simone Starter Pack* and it's the ultimate marketing cheat sheet.

I got countless emails from folks who downloaded it, saying, "This free resource is worth more than all these courses I paid thousands of dollars for." So, what are you waiting for? Go grab *The Simone Starter Pack.* The link is in the show notes. I can't wait to see what amazing results you'll get from it.