

# Ep #239: My Love Letter to the Exhausted and Burnt-out Creator

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With Your Host

**Simone Grace Seol**

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Welcome to *Joyful Marketing*! I'm Simone Seol, and I teach you how to get your life coaching practice fully booked without having to pay for ads, buy Instagram followers, or complicated sales funnels. It's not rocket science, and you can do it, too. Listen on to find out how.

Hey, friends. So, I wrote a whole thing sort of spontaneously in response to the coaching requests made by a particular client inside *Joyful Marketing*, saying that they feel exhausted. This client was saying that they feel burnt out. They've been going hard at it for so many years, and they don't feel like they have the results to show for it, right? They were feeling more than a little bit defeated.

They were talking about how they were looking around at other people enjoying success, and they feel this pang of pain. Like, "Why isn't that me? I've done everything. That should be me. I have worked so hard." That is a big, real, visceral pain.

So, I wrote this huge thing in response to this client's post, and I shared it inside our private *Joyful Marketing* Facebook group. It ended up being what so, so many people needed to hear that I decided to share what I said with you on this podcast. Like I said, I wrote this for a particular client, but really, it's for so many people.

It's for anyone who feels worn out, and weary from many years of hustling hard for their businesses, and maybe feel disappointed with where they are. Now, I know that there's many of you feeling this way, this is for you. I'm hoping that my message is going to bring you clarity, healing, and inspiration for what to do next.

Let's think about it this way. Imagine you're an aspiring bodybuilder, you want those Schwarzenegger muscles. There's probably a better reference than that, but that's all I can think of, Schwarzenegger muscles. And in

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order to get your body to an extraordinarily muscular state, there are the supplements you got to take.

Let's say there's the red pill, the blue pill, and the green pill. Each of the pills gives you essential nutrients and vitamins and minerals and stuff that optimize your body building. Each pill has different properties, and they all work together. To be the bodybuilder you want, you need to consistently take all three supplements.

And here's what you might have been doing. You might have been overdosing on the red pill and the blue pill. You might have been shoving them into your mouth by the fistfuls, and you might have been completely neglecting to take the green pill. So, as a result, your body's probably developing, for sure. You're getting many signs of bodybuilding excellence, for sure.

But are you feeling the full effect? Nope. But why? You are supposed to take all three, red, blue, and green. Red, blue, green, pills are, of course, metaphors for the type of skill sets that you need in order to create a sustainably profitable business.

And you might have been so busy taking the red and blue pills, so impressed with yourself for taking so many of them, almost feeling martyred about the lengths that you went to in order to take all the red and blue pills consistently, that you neglected to take the green pill and you might not even have noticed it.

The green pill that we're talking about, is a critical skill set that you need in order to create what you want. And the green pill, the essential, non-negotiable ingredient is this, it's the skill that it takes for you to be able to approach your business with lightness, playfulness, and non-attachment. The ability to love it and be its steward with joy. Primarily for the sake of

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creating more of the joy of aliveness and creative self-expression in this lifetime, without putting the pressure on it to pay the bills.

You know, business is just as much of an art, a creative endeavor, as it is about anything else, and you maybe haven't treated it as such. I'm going to read you kind of a long quote by Elizabeth Gilbert. It's a little long, but it's really worth it. She says,

“I adore creativity. I love her. I have devoted my life to her because she brings me joy. But I do not suggest relying upon her to pay the oil bill. She is not very reliable. Creativity has no idea what the words ‘oil bill’ even mean. Creativity doesn't give a damn about your auto insurance. She just wants to dance with you, and then sometimes dance away -- on her own schedule, on her own strange rhythms. This is why I made a promise to my writing life when I was about 15 years old. I said to my writing: ‘I will never ask you to provide for me financially; I will always provide for YOU.’ I was willing to work hard, in other words, so that Creativity could play lightly. I have seen so many beautiful creative souls murder their creative process because of this relentless insistence that they are not real artists until their art pays the bills. When it doesn't work out, (and often it doesn't, because, once more, Creativity is a FLAKEY AND WEIRD airhead goddess).” *I love that by the way.* “These people become angry, bitter, stuck, bankrupted -- and worst of all -- they often quit creating at all.”

Now, that's the end of the quote. And in this quote, when she says ‘artists’ I think coaches, because coaches are artists, entrepreneurs are artists. And when Elizabeth Gilbert says ‘creative process’, I'm referring to the process of building your business, because that is the ultimate creative process. The ability to approach your business with lightness, play, joy, and loving nonattachment. To be able to keep feeding it and dance with it, with zero expectation for what worldly gold stars it's going to bring you.

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I refer to this as a skill set because it is indeed an earned, non-intuitive, studied skill. It's an intellectual skill of the mind and an emotional skill, and probably even a spiritual skill. It's a skill that requires intentional building, the deliberate cultivation of new neural pathways, and new emotional habits, and new habits of action taking. Just like learning to play the violin or learning how to be good at hockey or learning how to be good at coding.

It requires trial and error. It requires commitment, even devotion. It requires making decisions against the grain. It requires tolerating a lot of discomfort. It requires learning from "failure". From all of that, you get better at it over time, you get more skillful at it over time. And, as of this moment, your skill in this may not be the strongest. It may be the only big thing that's glaringly missing from your business. Where if you were to add this, everything else is going to click into place.

Actually this is not your fault that you're missing this. It's not a personal failing. I have so much compassion for you and anyone else who finds themselves in this boat, and I have a ton of admiration for the tenacity and the resourcefulness that allowed you to survive, even thrive in parts, without these skills.

If you think about it, we're born into a culture that's dominated by the Protestant work ethic. You know, I live in South Korea, and we're even dominated by the Protestant work ethic because we've been westernized by primarily American culture. It's a capitalistic, colonizing worldview. Such a worldview is deeply suspicious of fun and play. Pain and sacrifice and hard work are considered noble.

By the way, these are the red and blue pills that you've already been overdosing on. And creative endeavors, of which building a business is one, of which coaching is one, creative endeavors are only "legitimate and valuable" if it yields capitalistic output. If it's giving you money, recognition, and success. If it's paying the bills, then it's valuable.

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We breathe this “air”, we drink this “water”, every day. It is what we're born into. It is what we are trained in, in school and in the workplaces. And you, like everyone else, including me, has been aggressively programmed to think this way about business. By also, a ravenously profit hungry online business industry, which is also steeped in these toxic paradigms and works it to death, in order to create more and more and more and more money.

You were doing your best. Actually, sounds like you were doing more than your best and you're tired from it. I have so, so much empathy for you. And admiration for your passion, your drive, your commitment. You never quit, that's amazing. And that doesn't change the reality. You haven't earned the full results you want because you haven't taken the green pill, and it's time to take it. Take that green pill regimen as seriously as you've taken the other pills.

Look, I'm not as successful as I am because I have the best ideas. Lots of people have similar ideas. Lots of people have even better ideas than me, right? And I'm not successful because I'm the most hardworking person. A ton of people, tons of people, are more hard working than I am. Hard work is always dodgy to an ADHD brain anyways.

But I'm as successful as I am because I take the green pill very seriously. I built my business on the foundation of the green pill. The lighthearted, playful, loving, non-attached attitude of seeing my business first and foremost, as a body of my creative work, as a work of art, without asking it to validate my worth in a capitalistic society, or pay for my livelihood.

That all sounds very fun and frothy, but really, it required an incredible amount of discipline. A commitment to pay my own bills, if need be, without asking the business to be responsible for my safety. And a deep level of personal growth and spiritual maturation for me to be able to consistently be in that state. It took me more than a decade to get competent in it.

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I distilled all of that into *Joyful Marketing* so that it doesn't have to take my clients 10 years. But here's what I'd like to offer you next, as an action step. First, if you're feeling tender about a lot of this, use one of the tools, the coaching tools that you have at your disposal, your self-care tools; whether it's breathing or going for a walk or hugging an animal, journaling.

Whatever it is, down-regulate your nervous system so that you're feeling okay, neutral, calm, safe. Then have a conversation with this Goddess of Creativity. You know, the same one that Elizabeth Gilbert is referring to.

Imagine you could literally talk to that flaky, airheaded, weirdo, Goddess of Creativity, who nonetheless loves you, adores dancing with you, wishes you'd dance with her some more, and wants to use your dance together to make amazing shit happen in the world.

And let's be honest, you may have been trying to squish her into a capitalist machine of hard work and sacrifice and take more action and do all the things, and why aren't you making me rich and famous yet? And the Goddess of Creativity has probably been like, "Oh my god, what are you doing to me? What is this? Get me out of here!"

You might even find that she wants an apology, but she probably just wants a conversation. Have a conversation with her and hear what she has to say to you. Be open-hearted. Know that she loves you, wants to dance with you, and considers you an amazing creative partner, amazing dance partner. Ask her what would make it easier for her to dance with you.

Next, I invite you to the work on giving your past self so much love, compassion, respect, and, yes, forgiveness. Imagine you could go back into the timeline of your life and hug all the past versions of you, who's really doing your best. And give them the comfort, the affirmation, and the healing they need.

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None of this is happening because you fucked up and you're screwed. All of it is happening because God or the universe or whatever you want to call, it has a precious and uniquely brilliant child in you. And you're being cultivated, you're being made right now, to create something extraordinary in this lifetime.

If you know anything about the narratives of people who create extraordinary things, those narratives are not smooth, they're not bump free. You're in the right place. You've done it all exactly as you should have. You're exactly who you're supposed to be, exactly who the world needs you to be right now. And now, it's time for a new kind of learning.

Hey, if you want a shot of fresh inspiration and actionable tips to improve your marketing every single week in your inbox, you better get on my email list. Sign up to receive my free e-book called *20 Unsolicited Copy Tips*. It's been known to get people to come out of the woodwork and ask to work with you. So, get on that link in the show notes, and I'll see you in your inbox next time.