

Put It Out There!

5 Steps to Kick Fear's
Butt and Move Your Dream
Forward

Lisa N. Alexander

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my husband, the man
who always saw my greatness and wouldn't let
me rest until I put it out there.

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Acknowledgements

There are days when living the life of an entrepreneur is everything you would expect it to be. There are days it all goes right. You get the deal, you get the interview, your work is quoted and you're soaring! Then there are days when you swear you're closing shop determined to find a nice cubicle in a back office so you can hide. On the days when you're ready to throw your shingle out into the streets, it's good to have people in your life who can talk you out of destroying what you've worked so diligently to build. People who know you simply need to vent, cry, and then get back to plotting world domination. I am so thankful for the women in my circle who help keep me sane.

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To PR Maven, Mrs. Phyllis Bailey. You told me years ago to put it out there but I couldn't hear you. I was scared! I thought I had valid reasons not to pursue the dream. Thanks for your support and prayers.

I wouldn't be able to do what I do without the love and support of my husband, Mr. Elgin Alexander. What haven't we been through and gotten through together? Thank you for believing in me and for pushing me and seeing greatness when I couldn't see it in myself. You always knew.



Introduction

I have the pleasure of serving the young ladies of Freedom Place. It's the only safe house in Texas for girls as young as nine years old to rehabilitate after they've been rescued from sex trafficking.

I teach a life skills class and show the girls how to give voice to their stories through proper public speaking techniques. They've participated in a Moth-style StorySlam and at the time of this writing, we have a poetry slam scheduled. The girls have been working on poems and I'm in awe of their work.

Some of the girls love the stage while others are

terrified. Two of the girls have written pieces but haven't presented. The thought of standing in front of a group of people brings them to the point of fainting. The level of anxiety they exhibit breaks my heart. For them, getting their story out on paper and reciting it to me is a victory in itself.

One of the girls hates that she gets so physically ill at even the thought of performing. I told her not to worry. We'd take things slow. She wants to put her story out there. So this time, we'll record her reciting her poem and play it the night of the event. Does this count as putting it out there? You bet it does. In time, she'll heal and grow more comfortable with sharing her story with the world.

Is putting it out there scary? Of course it is. But it's also empowering. Not only for you but for the community who benefits from your offering. If this young lady is willing to share her story, I know there's strength in you to do the same. Put it out there dear one, let me show you how.



Section One

Why We Won't Put "It" Out There



A little something I call “Threwed-off Thinking”

Our lives are full of experiences that shape our beliefs, our thoughts and our responses to life’s situations. Some of these beliefs, thoughts and responses can best be described as threwed off.

Online dictionaries define “threwed off” as a type of thinking, or thought processes or actions that are far from the mainstream. Urban/slang dictionaries say, “not right in the head.”

My definition says throwed-off thinking is thinking that keeps one in an impoverished mind set. It's thinking steeped in lies because the truth is so different and so scary it's much more convenient to believe the lie. Throwed-off thoughts usually can't be traced back to scripture but can be traced back to beliefs your parents had or what someone taught you. Many times these throwed-off thoughts are reinforced by certain experiences. However this mind set came to be, throwed-off thinking must be dealt with in order to move forward.

I had a whole lot of throwed-off thinking to confront. I thought God was just waiting for me to slip up so He could say, "Aha, I knew you were worthless!" I thought He was distant and aloof towards me. I never felt secure in His love and thought at best God simply tolerated me. Contrary to scripture I know, but it's what I had come to believe. Over time, I finally realized that all of my important relationships mirrored a broken relationship

with my dad. The way I thought my father felt about me was how I presumed everyone felt about me; it even tainted how I felt about myself. I wasn't good enough. I wasn't lovable or desirable. I wasn't valuable. So I projected my own throwed-off thinking onto others and it simply wasn't true. I was loved. I was valuable and in his own way, my father did love me.

I had throwed-off thinking about money that was deep-rooted in generations of poverty and mismanagement of funds. I thought in no way did God want Christians to be wealthy. I honestly thought that there was nobility and honor in being poor and constantly struggling. That line of thinking was painful to unravel and took years to undo.

I am convinced that throwed-off thinking cannot co-exist with God's purpose for your life. Those thoughts are contrary and destructive to your forward progression. Those thoughts have to be dealt with in order for us to live the abundant life He prom-

ised and in order for us to be truly free. Threwed-off thoughts hinder the life Christ ordained for us to live...a life free of Fear's limits and boundaries. Threwed-off beliefs are always challenged and they can't stand in the light of God's wisdom, intelligence and love. I learned that my threwed-off beliefs shaped through certain experiences never served me well. Now I ask myself, what was I thinking? When you submit to being transformed by the renewing of your mind, threwed-off thinking has to go.

A well-known bible verse says it this way, "When I was a child, I thought and spake as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things.

Bye-bye threwed-off thinking.



Step Number Three: Kill the idea that it has to be perfect.

Perfectionism like fear paralyzes and stops the best of ideas and dreams from manifesting. It's unfortunate too. If everyone waited to release their dreams until they were perfect, the world would have missed out on fabulous works of art such as the Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo is claimed to have said at the end of his life that he regretted not finishing a single piece of art!

For some, perfectionism stems from the fear of being harshly judged or ridiculed. A personal trainer once told me she had several clients with killer beach bodies. They were the wives of influential and powerful men. They lived in gated communities, drove beautiful cars, carried expensive purses and yet these women were miserable. They worked out like feigns! They worked out as though they were morbidly obese even though many would consider them picture perfect. The trainer told me that these women worked out the way they did because their husbands told them they weren't perfect. They were trying to win their husband's affection and fidelity by living in the gym. They were trying to live up to their husband's warped definition of perfection. Some of these husbands really wanted their wives to be showpieces. Some used perfectionism as a tool of manipulation to keep up their own bad behavior. These poor wives thought their husbands would love them and stay faithful if they attained physical perfection.

It's no wonder that "it" never gets out there. In their eyes "it" has to be perfect so it will be accepted, loved and appreciated.

Perfectionism seeks outward validation and always asks, "Is this good enough?" Perfectionism devalues the dream and the dreamer and says both are unworthy. That's why it's so important that we become women who know our own value and give legitimacy to our own dreams and ideas.

I launched my brand The Marketing Stylist™ almost three years ago and I can't even remember what my first website looked like! It's been through several rebuilds. Each rebuild was a more focused picture of my brand and incorporated new functionality to better serve customers and potential customers coming to visit my site. If I had waited till I had it all figured out, the brand wouldn't be where it is today. I needed to put it out there and develop it as I grew.

How I Ended Up Being Interviewed by American Express OPEN Forum.

It all started with one of those God-breathed ideas. I've learned to listen to them over the years. It was the holidays and business-to-business (B2B) companies don't typically participate in Black Friday, Small Business Saturday and Cyber Monday holiday sales. It really is a business-to-consumer (B2C) kind of weekend. But I had this idea to do a promotion for a business product and track its success.

Well, someone from Susan Harrow's camp (Susan is a well-known marketing and PR maven) read my blog and wanted me to be a guest blogger. Now mind you, my site is not perfect, but it is functioning and people are finding and reading my content.

I tossed around a few ideas on what I could possibly share on Susan's blog and settled on a story about my B2B Black Friday experiment. That blog post was read by a blogger over at the American

Express OPEN Forum site. I was interviewed and my story ended up on the American Express site.

Had I waited till my website was perfect, I wouldn't have written the blog post that was seen by a fellow marketing expert, who then invited me to be a guest blogger. Had I not written that guest blog post, a blogger for American Express OPEN Forum would have never seen that post and I would have never been interviewed and gotten the exposure for my brand.

It doesn't have to be perfect for good things to happen.

We put far too much pressure on ourselves to have something be perfect when big corporations don't even put that kind of pressure on themselves.

Software companies release buggy software knowing full well that they'll fix the bug in a later update. The goal was to get it out there, have it function

relatively well and fix issues as they arise. If they waited till it was perfect, some products would never hit the market, revenue wouldn't be generated and jobs would be lost.

The next time you happen to watch TV, count the number of pharmaceutical commercials you see. Then notice if any of them fail to mention a long list of possible side effects. Chances are, every single prescription drug commercial will note nausea, vomiting, headache, and even death as possible side effects and yet they're advertising the drug as safe for public use and beneficial in the relief of an ailment.

Someone decided that the positive results of the drug outweighed the negative side effects and met the U.S. Food and Drug Administration guidelines. The drug didn't have to be perfect. Does the FDA always get it right? No. Do pharmaceutical companies and researchers sometimes get it wrong? Of course they do. Do they wait to get it perfect before

they release a drug that has the potential to save life and lessen suffering? No they don't. Should they? Depends on whom you ask.

I'll never forget a class lecture that forever changed my need to have something be perfect before launching. My professor was explaining how control was a good thing. At first that idea was met with the typical resistance you would expect. Who wants to be controlled? That statement ruffled a few feathers and once everyone settled down, we understood how control is a good thing. According to my professor, control is the ability to correct in real time. In a manufacturing plant, you never want to bring production to a full stop; you do your best to correct in real time because stopping production is costly.

One of the things I loved to do as a graphic designer was go on press checks. I loved the smell of the paper and the ink. I loved the sound of the machines. It was music to my ears! When conducting

a press check, you're looking for correct color and proper registration (proper alignment so text and pictures don't look fuzzy). Well, the press operator wouldn't stop the press just because the a piece had too much cyan or magenta or was too dark or too light, he'd adjust in real time. The press operator was using control methods in order to the job just right.

If you never get started, you'll never know what needs to be corrected so you can continue to move forward.

Should you at some point review your work or have it critiqued? Of course you should. You want honest feedback. You can always control whatever your "it" is, to make it even better. But you'll never know how to improve on it if you never put "it" out there.



Step Number Five: Put It Out There.

You see it. You've researched it. You've banished the notion that it has to be perfect. You've quieted the negative self-talk to a low whisper.

Now it's time to put it out there.

If your knees are still knocking, it's OK. One of my favorite bible stories is of Gideon. God called him a mighty man of valor when in the beginning he seemed to be everything but! Gideon's instructions were to tear down an altar. Gideon, afraid of

reprisal from his community, waited and did it at night. To Gideon's credit he got the job done even if it was at night when no one could see him. He had a plan, executed his plan and accomplished his goal.

This isn't much different from what my student at Freedom Place did in order to get her story out (check the Introduction for her story). Sometimes you release in phases and that's OK. What's not OK is to sit on something great because Fear said so.

How to Put It Out There

You can:

- Do like my student and release to an audience of one.
- Submit it to your social media groups and online communities.

- If you're a speaker or direct sales person, you can do a mock presentation for a select audience and get their feedback.
- Use a free service like Blogger or WordPress to create your own online platform.
- Donate samples to community groups and organizations. (Be sure to get clearance first.)
- Conduct blind taste tests with coworkers.
- Volunteer and share it with those who can benefit.
- Hire people from Fiverr.com and Elance.com.
- Find local venues with open mic nights for spoken word artists and musicians and make a date with yourself to go and perform. If there's a Moth StorySlam in your area, go put your name in the hat for a chance to speak.

Once you put it out there, you make room in your life for more and it does get easier each time you share your gift. And not to mention there's the reward for putting it out there.

I especially love when I put things out there and it results in a key connection or new opportunity. Those things add credibility and expand your network and your influence. The financial reward means you get to help even more people.

Follow these steps and you can consider Fear's butt duly kicked.

I'm rooting for you.