

The Speedy Startup:



Building a Solid Energy Work Practice in 3 Months

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When I started doing energy work in Port Townsend, Washington, everything seemed to flow very easily. People there seemed to understand what energy work was – or at least they had a framework for it in their minds already. So when I announced my start-up by sending emails to a number of listservs and my small personal network saying that I did energy healing and a little blurb about some of the benefits people could experience, new clients just called and emailed to schedule with me. Voila! Instant practice.

However, following a recent move to Bend, Oregon things were different. I knew no one. There were no community listservs in the same way. When I told people I did energy work they looked at me with a blank stare. I knew my approach to entering this market was going to have to be vastly different. Fortunately, with my background in

marketing, I was already well prepared. But truth be told, the methods I am using could be employed by anyone and they would likely be just as successful.

When I arrived in Bend it took a little while to get settled. Feeling grounded at home had to come first. Also, I knew there was prep work that needed to be done. I found an office. I worked on developing my new brand - **Becoming Joy** - creating a logo and business cards, building a website. Finally, I worked on personal issues that I perceived might inhibit my success.

I knew to be successful I needed to network at a level that I never had before. To be good at that, I needed to feel confident and comfortable talking to people about what I did. This meant dealing with all those throat chakra issues about speaking my truth - and the mega challenge - coming out of the closet as an intuitive. I realized that I wanted to feel, at a core level, that the work was normal – not



weird in any way. If I was comfortable with the work and myself - other people would be too.

After a few months in my new town, I had done the necessary work and was good to go. I was invited to attend a women's networking group as the guest of a chiropractor I had been seeing personally. She was my angel who generously introduced me to others at the event and made it easy for an introverted outsider. From that one event, I got three clients who paid me enough money to pay for my full membership to that group by the following month. It was the first networking event I had ever been to that I actually enjoyed and it gave me hope. Hope that I could do this. Hope that I could tell my story - really be the fullest version of me - and not die - literally.

Prior to this, the idea of walking into a roomful of strangers and talking to people I did not know was about the worst thing you could wish on me. However, I knew that

The key with networking is this - you cannot just attend an the event, meet someone once, and then expect that anything will come of it. You have to follow up. What is strange to me is that almost no one else does this - so you will be remembered if you do. Using the contact information on the business cards I was given at events, I sent an email saying (genuinely) how nice it was to meet the person and anything I appreciated learning about him/her through our conversation. If I had any resonance with a person at all, I sent an invitation to meet for coffee, lunch, or my favorite date - a walk by the river to get to know the person better. After that one-on-one I sent a hand written thank you card whenever I could. I set up one to three meetings like this per day until clients started taking priority over these appointments. Truthfully, quite a few of these people have become clients themselves.

Because most of the people I met had no idea what energy work was, they needed to connect with me

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doing this was part of my journey - part of being the new me. By the end of the first month of getting out there I was totally on board and there was no bad place to meet people. I started attending any event where I might have the opportunity to connect with a few people personally. Whether or not people were interested in what I had to offer did not matter. I was planting seeds and doing my job to spread the light, knowing that the rest would come together in perfect timing.

Everything that I did was mainstream - Meet-up groups, Chamber of Commerce events, networking events for green businesses, women's groups. You name it, I was there. Each event seemed easier and easier. Over time, I discovered a strategy that worked well for me. When I arrived at an event, I found one person I knew and started there. Once I am grounded and centered in the room, it is infinitely easier to bravely walk up to some people I do not know and introduce myself.

personally to understand more about what I did and feel comfortable coming to see me or referring a friend. Having a lot of one-on-one conversations also enabled me to learn more about people to whom I might refer my clients and helped me find quality services I was interested in using personally. A distinct advantage was that each relationship I developed was one more person I knew in the room at future networking events.

Another thing I started doing was giving free talks about energy healing. My first one was to a group of 40, an event that was paid for and promoted by someone else. I was offered the gig through a woman I had a one-on-one with after we sat at the same table at a networking event. So far I have gotten at least four clients from that event, had my face and business name in every local publication at no cost to me, started developing a permission-based email newsletter list, and began establishing credibility in the community. Event better, the free talks have given me something to which I am able to invite people after I



meet them at other events. If nothing else, they give me a reason to follow up and connect with them again, which I do individually, not by spamming an entire list with an invitation.

When I arrived to town, I placed one ad in a wellness directory which led to an article being written about me in the newspaper - resulting in five clients. I did not renew the ad because what I discovered is that there is too much education needed to really sell what I do in an ad. Yes, advertising is passive – but it is expensive. For me that money is better invested in an opportunity where I can connect with people over and over again face to face. Trust is everything here and people just do not believe ads. On the other hand, search engines optimizing my website have proven to be effective and have brought several clients through the door.

I traded a photographer and three models for my services and got great pictures for my marketing materials. The visuals made the process much less intimidating to people. Now when I meet someone new and explain what I do I often just hand them a brochure and point to the pictures as I describe what I do in more detail. The more straightforward I can make an unfamiliar process, the easier it is for people to feel comfortable with it.

What I have learned so far is that in a community where relationships are king, it almost always takes more than one point of contact for someone to choose to book a session (unless it is a referral). That is a basic marketing rule, but one that definitely has been proven true. My goal is to create as many opportunities as possible to educate people about the benefits of what I do so I am on the top of their minds when they need me.

I go to the same events over and over. Better to saturate a few groups well than spread myself too thin. Then I connect again by following up via personal email. I might have a one-on-one meeting with them. They might receive a personal invitation to a free talk. They might get my email newsletter. They might have heard me speak or they might have read about me in the newspaper. My target audience needs to see my name and business out there at least a few times a month. As I continue to show up professionally - eventually - when they are confounded by something in their lives and are ready for help – I know they will think of me as a possibility.

From the point where I had a business card and website and was actually ready to get started with heavy promotions, the whole development process unfolded over roughly three months. By month three I was seeing 10-12 paying clients a week. In a few more months I expect my schedule will be totally booked with 16-20 appointments every week.

Now the number of networking events I attend is definitely less than when I started. I am busy enough that I need to pay attention so that I do not burn out. I attend one meeting with the same group every week. Then there are four other events per month that I definitely attend. I go to additional events only if it works for my schedule and I feel drawn to attend. Currently, I schedule one-on-one meetings to get to know others in the community only one to two times per week. If my calendar feels pinched, this is the first thing I drop when I need more space to stay balanced.

All in all, it has been a full-time job building the practice I now have. However, it has been a fun adventure and I have had the opportunity to work through a lot of my personal issues which has helped me expand. By envisioning the practice I wanted to create, consistently showing up, and walking through the doors that opened easily, I have been able to create a sustainable lifestyle and business that feeds my mind, body, and spirit on every level. My personal experience proves that success in your energy work practice is possible, even probable, if you fully commit yourself to the journey. ☺