

Chapter One: Why Start a Movement?

Wheresoever you go, go with all your heart. ~Kongzi

This book is about more than writing a book. *The Incubated Author* has a bigger vision. A vision for each book to become a piece of the puzzle, a step to starting a movement that matters, to having a following of hundreds, thousands, and, someday, millions. Starting a Movement is about understanding all the steps that I've discovered from working with authors over the last five years who wanted more than a book. My entire career has been spent with authors who wanted to write books and sell lots of copies, but in the last five years I've really focused on working with authors who want to start a movement with their message.

What are the things that make a movement? How can you take a book that can make a difference for one person and turn that into a movement with hundreds or thousands or millions of followers? How do you build a tribe? How do you nurture that tribe? How do you show people a new way of thinking about a problem?

If you're familiar with my work, you know that I have a very particular meaning in mind when I talk about making a difference. Making a difference is about having a powerful message of hope, healing, transformation, change, and revolution, but it's also about getting that message into peoples' hearts and hands and actually making tangible, measurable differences in their life.

You aren't making a difference if somebody doesn't know about your idea, even if it's the best idea in the world.

What I have seen with my authors who really break through and start a movement is that, yes, they have that concrete transformative message, but they're also doing the work that it takes to get that message to people.

If you think about the message that Jesus had — and it doesn't matter what your feelings are about Jesus — but he had a message, and let's say that he sat down in his living room and took a nap instead of sharing it. That message, it could have been the best message in the world, but in order to spread the word, he had to go get disciples, and he had to get apostles, and he had to get out there in a very vulnerable

way. This is not a pleasant experience all the time.

A Servant's Heart To make a difference, I truly believe you have to be willing to be uncomfortable, to be willing to share your message with people, and to really put yourself out there. Not on behalf of your ego, because I really don't think that works, and even if it did, I wouldn't be super-interested in it. But on behalf of the people whose lives you want revolutionize.

I talk about having a servant's heart, and often my clients have such a pretty image of what having a servant's heart would be. I think they picture Mother Theresa washing the feet of the lepers, and they're thinking, "Yes, I'm a servant, I would love to do that." But so often, having a servant's heart looks a lot different than that, and really being in a place to serve has a lot to do with building your own leadership muscle, building your own boundary muscle, and becoming an object in motion. Becoming a forward-moving being. Inertia works powerfully in all of our lives, and so, there is a strong desire to not move forward and not take action until we know if it's perfect or we know if it's going to work, or if we know that it's valuable—we want empirical data that it will be valuable. But those things don't come first. It works the opposite.

I was overweight for a very long time, and I thought, when I lose weight, then I will feel good, wear pretty clothes, and love taking pictures of myself. What I learned was, I had to feel those things and do those things in order to lose weight. And it's the same thing about building a movement with your message. You will need to be the leader of that movement before there are even followers, and, as their number grows, your leadership will always need to be one step ahead of them.

Recently, I was talking to a client. She is a ship's captain, she has a sailboat in the Caribbean, and she was saying that one of the most important things she's learned about being on her boat is that if you are not in motion — if you are just docked in the harbor — you can't steer the ship. There's no steering functionality. You could stand at the helm and you can move the ship's wheel but you won't go in any particular direction.

So many of the authors who have told me they want to make a difference and they want to have a tribe of followers are standing parked in the harbor, with the anchor down and the lines tied, and I watch them steering the steering wheel, but not really going anywhere.

In this book we are going to explore how you get the ship in motion. How you become

the leader of your movement — even before the movement is where you think it needs to be — to be that leader.

One of the keys to doing that is making your success and the success of your movement inevitable.

What are the actions that you need to take to make your movement inevitable?

One of the ways that I look at that, is to look at the people who have built a movement. What did they do? And what can we learn from them? What did they do intentionally, maybe, but subconsciously as well. Will a book be a part of it? Sure! You know I love books, but we need to understand what your movement even is before we can write a book that's going to beautifully feed into that movement.

A lot of people will come to me and they'll say, "I really want to start a revolution in self-care." Or they'll say, "I want to start a revolution among young women because I want them to all know they're good enough." Or they'll say, "I want to start a movement for graphic designers and other freelancers, so they're charging what they want to charge." But they haven't really thought through what that movement looks like. Are we rallying? Are we all going to get on bicycles in Portland? How will you know you have a movement? And in order to write a book that is going to support that movement in the best possible way, we have to know what that movement's going to look like, and then we have to get people in a position where they are begging to be a part of it, when they're so clear on where they're going they can't wait to jump on board.

A book will be a part of that, but it has to be the right book.

The Selling Lots of Books Fallacy The first thing you need to know is that most book marketing information in the marketplace today is about selling books. Most book marketing techniques are designed to drive book sales. While it may seem counter-intuitive, focusing on how to sell the most books is **not** the most productive way to create your book or to support your movement. A book that would sell lots of copies has different qualities than a book that makes a difference and a book that starts a movement. That doesn't mean you won't sell book copies, but you need to understand a little bit about the traditional publishing industry and the liminal phase in which we find

ourselves in the world of publishing.

Traditional publishers operate like a casino, and they will place bets on ten or twenty or thirty or a hundred different authors, knowing that only a fraction of those are going to be successful. What they are doing is covering their bets. They're placing bets across the spectrum, knowing every book isn't going to hit, but the goal for each of the books is book sales. So, when you work with a traditional publisher, you get an editor and you get a designer, and the editor and the designer and the other book publishing professionals that you work with, they are working for the publisher, they are working on behalf of the publisher's interest.

The publisher has purchased the rights to your intellectual property, and their job is to "exploit" those rights. That's what the advance bought them, and now they're trying to make the most of their bet, and the way that they're going to do that is by optimizing your book for book sales. That may mean, when you look at the book cover, that it makes no sense to you, but it's something they think is going to connect with a hot market and make you more of a more likely *American Idol* winner rather than the stand-out contestant.

Really weird or really controversial or really stand-out ideas are not good bets. Jesus would have been a terrible bet for a publisher today. They would have been much more interested in a book by the Roman Emperor of the day, because it would be a guaranteed bestseller.

If you are trying to start a movement with your book, you are not going to be in a position to have the most book sales, which is great news, because we don't want the most book sales. We want the most rabid people to buy your book. In other words, we don't have a target of two billion Christians, what we're looking for right now are those first twelve Jews to get behind the idea of you being the Messiah. We are looking for those most dedicated, most bought-in people, people who are really ready to be a part of your movement — to be your apostles.

Your first twelve apostles are the people that are in the most pain and the most prepared to get out of that pain, to see the light and to join your cause, whatever that cause is.

What I see happen with people who have the dream of starting a movement with their message is that they spend tons of time trying to get that message right, but they're

trying to get it right the wrong way. They're either asking themselves questions or they're directly asking other people.

What is so much better than asking people if they like the wording, or the logo, or your new website, or whatever it is you're doing, is to actually take the risk of putting it out there and see if people respond in the real world. Go have a sales conversation, or set up a sales page and drive traffic and see if they buy. So, rather than asking people, "Hey, would you buy this?," do some real-life experimenting. This is called market validation.

Before you even write your book, before you get really committed, in your head, to the wording of your movement, let's see if we can "sell" it. How do you know you have the makings of a movement?

Get followers on a Facebook page
Get clicks on a Google Adwords ad
Get sign-ups for a free call
Post a flyer in your local coffee shop and get calls to a phone number

Don't worry about whether you can fulfill the expectations of the callers. You can put them on a waiting list and tell them it's coming. You just want to see if you can make the phone ring or your inbox fill up.

The 'Oops I Wrote the Wrong Book' Mistake One of the biggest mistakes I see people make is that they write the wrong book. They write the wrong book because while they're incredibly focused on getting the message out there, they don't even know if they believe it. They're not even all bought in.

I have seen the power of our programs, the power of our ability to launch a book into the world, and the almost negative power that comes up if you write the wrong book. When you have a book, you move your career forward light years faster than people without a book. You might be two or three or even four years down the line in your business by adding book, but if you don't write the right book, we're pushing you four years down the line in the wrong direction.

Having that market validation, is a concept I've adapted from Eric Ries' book, *The Lean Startup*. He calls that product you test with a Minimum Viable Product, or MVP. What's the smallest notion of a movement that you can get people enrolled into?

Author Janette Dalglish wrote a two-part series with us. Her books, *Your Everyday*

Superpower and *Mastering Your Everyday Superpower*, are two of the best we've ever published, and they are written for skeptics of the law of attraction, to help them see the link between LOA and hardcore brain science. Janette is a beautiful writer, and at the time that she wrote the book she was really excited about working with skeptics of the law of attraction. Until she worked with skeptics of the law of attraction.

It turns out that if you love the law of attraction, it's no fun to spend your time with people who doubt that the law of attraction really works. Janette definitely had a book that could start a movement. She had a ton of interests, clients, and the market validation we'd be looking for, but what she didn't have is the passion to be the leader of that movement. Today Janette calls herself a Soul Archaeologist, Brain Whisperer, and Joy Pilot, and is running a website called Identity Shift Ninja. She's totally passionate about her mission to wreak more joy in the world using brain science and LOA, but her new positioning does not attract very many skeptics, which is just more fun to her. That's not to say you can't be the leader of a movement of skeptics, but now Janette doesn't have to explain brain science four times a day, and her clients have something solid to give their doubting loved ones. But her books weren't the right ones to start the movement she's passionate about.

To start a movement the right way, you want to make sure you're writing the right book, and we do this with market validation. You can test your ideas with ads, Facebook posts, blog posts, guest articles, and in other ways where we can see if people actually take action rather than just telling us they will.

Eric Reis says this approach "isn't simply about spending less money. Lean isn't just about failing fast, failing cheap. It is about putting a process, a methodology around the development of a product." For our purposes, it's taking this from his ideas of product development to movement development — but the principals test out.

If people are not feeling your message, if they won't sign up for a free call or an eBook preorder, for instance, we either need to change the message or we need to change the communications around the message. Of course, the other obvious mistake that people who want to start a movement make is that they don't write a book at all, and if you want to have a movement the number one most critical component is having a book. There are lots of reasons for that, starting with the credibility it gives you as the author of that book, and the media opportunities and the speaking opportunities that come with being an author, but also, and perhaps most importantly, attracting those first 12 apostles. I don't think that your first book about your movement needs to be a \$50,000 or 5-million copy bestseller like a Malcolm Gladwell book in order for us to be able to generate

significant evidence that you are starting a movement.

Building that evidence, to me, is so much more important than the book sales, because if the book sales end there, who cares whether you sold the book if you haven't been able to rally people to be a part of your cause, if you haven't really changed people, if you haven't made the difference that you've committed to making at the beginning of the process. All you have is a book. And by the way, building that evidence also usually means you make money. Sometimes more money than you can selling books.

You with
me?

The Less Important Than a 'Lost Dog' Mistake The next mistake that I see is that when starting a movement, people focus on being perfect. The truth is, there is no way to get it perfect because there is no arbiter of perfect. I say, if you really care about this movement and the people who this movement is going to help, then start now. Start your movement with flyers. Start your movement with crappy free websites. Why would you do that? Why would you put it out imperfectly? Because you care about the people on the other side of the revolution! If you're really doing it for your people, you'll put up an imperfect website. You'll get your message out there, even if it's homemade flyers posted on a billboard at Panera.

Think about this. What if your mission in life was to get your lost dog back. Yes, some beautifully designed posters may be nice, but time is of the essence. You need to get your dog back, and I want you to have that same urgency with your movement. The idea of waiting to put it out perfectly would almost kill you because you know what that would be doing to your people.

The Oprah Mistake I talk to people who want to write a book all the time. One of the first things I ask is, "What would success with your book look like?" Sometimes they tell me it's helping just one person, or just writing it and finishing it. But most of the time, when I peel back the layers, there is a secret desire. A desire to be on *Oprah* or on the TED mainstage. Some people have told me, "I want a million followers on Facebook," or "I want a million-dollar advance from Random House." They're so focused on those specific outcomes that they can't see the next steps in front of them.

Picturing the million-dollar advance or the special segment on the O Network actually

BLOCKS you from being able to see the next steps in front of you that are REQUIRED before Oprah or TED or Random House come knocking. Just hoping “I’ll just write something really good and then I’m going to be discovered” is like playing the lottery. That might be fine if it was just about vanity or ego, but if we have a revolution to start, if we have peoples’ lives to change, we don’t have time to hope that we get plucked out of a line or selected randomly in a lottery.

Can you imagine doing that if you lost your dog? Just hoping someone turned up with your pooch with no effort of your own? It kind of sounds crazy when you think about it like that. It’s almost like you don’t really love your dog that much or don’t mind if he’s gone forever.

Is that how you feel about the people you want to help?

The Next Three Steps to Starting Your Movement The first thing that every movement needs is a vision. Now, you probably think you have that vision, but I want you to work through this process with me, which will include that market validation we talked about so that we can find out if your vision is viable. If your vision isn’t connecting and resonating with other people, we may need to change the message, we may need to change the places where that message is heard, or we may need to change the market you are targeting with the message. Until we know who wants this message, where we can find them, and what the message is, we actually don’t want you writing the book, because I don’t want you to end up with a book that isn’t for your people and I don’t want you to end up with a book that it isn’t right for you.

Writing the wrong book is like posting notices about your lost dog inside libraries in San Francisco when you last saw your dog running through Central Park near where you live in New York City.

Step Two: Notice Likely Apostles Let’s start off with who you want to make a difference to. This is the person you most want to change. This is the step that almost everyone skips, or just assumes, “I’m the target market, so I already know who I’m serving.” And really, that’s a movement that falls apart. That is definitely not what is going to get your movement to the next level, because people are surprising.

Even though you may have been that person at one point, it takes a lot of work to remember what you were thinking and feeling before things changed for you. I want you to actually define the person you’re trying to serve, think of this person as your

apostle. Who is your ideal revolutionary? Who is the person that you most want to convert, and who will go out on your behalf and convert more people? Who is your “John the Baptist?”

This is an individual person. It could be a composite for you, but even this composite must be based on people who really exist, who have real problems. The way that they describe their problems may not be — in fact, almost certainly is not — the way you describe your problems.

I want you to think about three people that you’re trying to serve. Name them, describe what they look like, what they do for fun, what their frustrations are, and how they would explain their frustrations. What are they looking for?

These first people we’re looking for, for you, are the early adopters. They’re at the bleeding edge. These particular people are not going to be the mainstream when this is a mainstream idea, these are the people to help you start the movement, and so, there is something special about these early adopters. That’s why we’re not just going for mass book sales. If we were, I would tell you to write another *Twilight* book or another *Harry Potter* book, but what we’re going for is building a movement, so what we need here are apostles and disciples to spread the word.

Step Three: Communicate Shared Suffering The next step in making a difference is to identify a shared oppression or shared pain among the people who are likely to be your early adopters, so we need to understand your future disciples’ lives now. We need to understand the “before” so that we can create the “after” in a way that will resonate with them.

Let’s say you want to have a revolution for freelancers. You think all freelancers should be unionized. The next question to ask is, what is the shared pain of the people who are likely to be the first people to get on board with your movement?

Sara Horowitz, the founder of the Freelancer’s Union, is, according to their website, “the daughter of a labor lawyer and granddaughter of a vice president of the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union.” Now, her reason for starting this movement might be about carrying on a family tradition or because she believes in the labor movement. Sara might believe freelancers are being exploited and that in order for freelancers to have a chance, they need the benefits of collective bargaining in

order to get affordable insurance.

But you know what? Those early adopter freelancers probably weren't thinking about America's long history of Worker's Rights. They were probably thinking something like, "I need to get paid more and I need to stop having to deal with crazy clients at 3 a.m."

Your job here is to communicate that shared suffering, that shared pain, something you agree with but that your early adopters would also recognize for themselves before they are fully converted. You need to understand what their life is now, "before," and what it's going to be after the revolution has been a success.

Here's something from the Freelancer's Union, right on their homepage: "8 out of 10 freelancers get stiffed by deadbeat clients. Annually, an unpaid freelancer loses an average of \$6000 in income due to client nonpayment."

Whoa Nelly! That sounds painful! \$6K in lost income for 80% of freelancers! Now we're talking! Much more powerful than a dissertation on the rise of the 40-hour work week.

What problem are you solving, and do the people you want in your movement want that problem solved?

You want to solve self-care and self-love, and you want to help people through a transition, and you want people to meditate so that they aren't so filled with anxiety, but the part you are not clear on is, what does your ideal apostle want to be seen wanting? What is the problem that they want solved? What's driving them crazy? How is it holding them back? What is the cost to them of staying where they are, and why can't they get there without you?

Step Four: Understand Your Enemy You know what all powerful movements have? An enemy! You can't be the hero if there isn't a villain. Every movement needs an anti-movement; every revolution has to have a dictator. Your movement isn't necessarily about destroying this bad guy, but we want to put you in contrast to someone or something. It helps us ground ourselves in what the revolution is that you're bringing and what the revolution isn't.

There has to be someone who would be totally against your movement in order for your movement to be something to fight FOR. I'm going to go back to my buddy Jesus, because Jesus' whole message was about love, right? Who can be against that?

Everyone's "all in" for love. But Jesus wasn't really about love, he was about loving your enemies. Love even if someone's trying to kill you. He was about love even when somebody was a criminal. He was about love even in the face of being publicly shamed. And many people were really against this, because they felt like it was impractical and unsafe and just a generally terrible idea. There are still people today, clearly, who are against that.

One of our bestselling authors, Jill Angie, has written several books about running for women of all shapes, sizes, and speeds. You might ask, "Who would be against women running?" You know those pickup trucks that go with the "No Fat Chicks" sign in the back window, that sticker? Those people! That's who! Body Shamers are the enemy of Jill's movement. And there is no shortage of Body Shamers who feel perfectly justified in their quest to live in a world of smaller women.

Without an enemy, you can't get followers and you can spread the word with your message. You can make a difference, but a movement needs you to construct a bad guy.

I don't want you to vilify your enemy. I want you to understand your enemy so that you can know who your movement is *not* for. Not because they're bad or shouldn't have a movement, but because your enemy needs to be defined narrowly enough that it's an identifiable group. An individual person, or "all men," or "all of Western society," or "all of anyone who doesn't believe in love" — these are not helpful enemies. We want to have a group that we can identify. They don't have to be currently around, so it can be something from the past. Who would be totally irrelevant if your movement succeeded?

By the way, this is what PR agencies do all the time, and it is a really key part of corporate communications. Even Apple has a bad guy, I bet you know who it is, and Apple's done a really great job of making PC the bad guy. Remember those fantastic Apple vs. PC commercials from a few years back? But has PC made Mac the bad guy? Well, they tried a couple of times, but they don't really have a movement, they have a commodity. See, not having an enemy doesn't mean that no one will ever buy your stuff or you won't make a difference, but what I really want to focus on are the commonalities, whether conscious or not, among people who really have a movement with their message, not just a book that matters.

In the next chapter we're going to talk about actually starting the movement, but in order to make a difference, you need to be very clear on who you're trying to make a

difference for, what the shared pain or discomfort that they would all admit to is, and who the bad guy is in your story. Then, we can start to make some magic.

Inside the Author

Incubator

On Market

Validation

Q: I'm thinking, it would be really cool to run my ideas for my movement by actual people, rather than act it out ourselves? Is there any reason I shouldn't do that?

A: When you ask people, you're tainting the research, because they will always tell you what they think you want to hear. Even if you said to somebody, "Don't tell me what you think you want me to hear," they will be doing just that because you, as a researcher, are affecting your research.

Surveys and quizzes and asking doesn't work, that's why we're talking about market validation. For instance, try this: Come up with the name of your movement and do a free call by that same name. Let's say you did a free call titled "Free Your Inner Author." If nobody comes to that free call, you haven't found the messaging yet. If they won't pay the price of their email address, then you know.

Now you could call ten of the people who saw the ad for your free call and never clicked on it and you could ask them, "Hey, I'm doing a free call, do you think it's a good idea? Here's the name of it." I guarantee you eight out of ten of them will tell you they love it and they will be there. But when you actually ask them to sign up, they take no action, so that isn't it.

It seems like a good idea. I really wish it was.

This is exactly where most people go wrong, so your urge is normal.