



YOUR HOLISTIC BUSINESS RECIPE

Essential Ingredients for a Sustainable
Health and Well-Being Business

HELEN HARDING

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By Helen Harding

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This book is dedicated to you and your ability to create a sustainable, thriving complementary practice, therapy or coaching business. I know you can do this!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Helen Harding is both a complementary practitioner and a chartered marketer. She spent over 20 years working in marketing and business before following her interest in personal development. Within four years Helen was earning a living as a practitioner, working three days a week but earning the equivalent of a full-time salary.

Her passion for marketing and business never left her, and she recognised that these were the areas her fellow practitioners struggled with most. She started to support her colleagues, helping them to build their own businesses, their way.

Helen's unique approach blends her skills in personal development, marketing, and business, specifically to support other complementary practitioners, therapists and coaches. She has had the opportunity to lecture at a university on business skills and planning, tutored and supervised student practitioners, and developed and implemented business structures for private practices and colleges teaching complementary practitioners.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

It saddens me when amazing complementary practitioners, therapists and coaches fail to reach their full potential or even stop practising altogether. When I trained as a practitioner there were 60 of us all excited about making a difference in the world. Ten years on, only a handful of us are still working as practitioners. Having spoken with hundreds from many different disciplines, there are common themes as to why they struggle:

- Limited business and marketing skills
- Lacking the confidence to practice
- Lack of ongoing support

I want to change this! This book is the starting point to help you flourish as a practitioner and help those clients who are waiting for your unique approach to health and well-being. It is all about creating a thriving, sustainable practice on your terms. There is work to do and it will be challenging at times. It is not about following yet another system, but about creating your own recipe, one where you are more likely to do the work because it is tailored to you, and will therefore ultimately succeed.

In the UK, we are living in a time where members of our government are calling for complementary, traditional and natural medicine to rescue our National Health Service (NHS) from financial crisis

According to a report by the All Party Group for Integrated Healthcare (2018), the rising costs to the health system require a whole-person approach to health delivery which focuses on prevention and tackles the root cause of illness. It concluded we should make greater use of natural, traditional and complementary therapies, which are widely used for a variety of conditions. There is a huge under-utilised resource of therapists which could work in collaboration with conventional medicine to improve patient outcomes and ease the burden on the NHS. This is great news for your practice!

There are literally hundreds of ways you can market yourself and your services, but you cannot do them all. In my experience, successful practitioners have a clear way of attracting clients: they build strong relationships and have a simple way to deliver their products and services. I will guide you through the business basics you need to create stable foundations on which to build your practice. I look at what you need to set up in your business first, where to start with your marketing, and how to begin developing your own marketing recipe which you can deliver consistently to attract clients.

This is your business and you are at the heart of it. I will help you work out what kind of business you want to create, how you like to work, and with whom.

This book is for you if...

You work in health and well-being as a complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) professional, therapist or coach and want to make a difference by building a sustainable business using marketing techniques that suit you and your business model. Whether you are new, or struggling, or if you are overwhelmed by the number of choices available and do not know where to start to grow your business, this book will seek to guide you through the process.

Get rich quick schemes and blueprints may work for the creator, but it does not mean they will work for you. The designer may have found their way of building a successful business, but there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach. What works for you will be completely

different from what works for me, or the online expert claiming to have “the answer”. The constant barrage of “work longer, work harder, work faster, work better” just leads to frustration, disappointment, and forgotten dreams. Unfortunately, practitioners often get disheartened when they cannot achieve the promised results or stick to the dictated routines after buying into the promise of overnight success.

By creating your own recipe for your business and selecting the right ingredients that work to your strengths and fit with your values, you can succeed where others fail. This book is about building your business without selling your soul or burning yourself out in the process. It is a pragmatic guide to help you build a sustainable health and well-being business, your way.

Depending on your discipline, you may call the people you work with patients or clients. For consistency, I refer to them as clients throughout this book and likewise I will refer to you as a practitioner.

Common myths about building a successful practice

Once qualified, clients will come. This would be wonderful but unfortunately it is a long way from the reality of building a thriving, sustainable practice. You must let people know you exist, and how you can help them. You must learn how to market yourself effectively and make offers to prospective clients.

If I do another course/qualification, clients will come. This is procrastination. No matter how much you learn, there will always be more to know. One more course or qualification will not help you find clients. You need to start where you are and do the best with what you have. You can always add to your knowledge in the future, but you must get started. Finding paying clients is your priority if you want to thrive as a practitioner.

The Universe will answer. I believe in the Law of Attraction, but I also believe you must make it happen, you cannot just sit back and wait. By all means set out your intentions to the Universe but demonstrate how serious you are by the actions you take.

It is impossible to be successful. This is a huge limiting belief for many practitioners. You are qualified, you do amazing work, but you are still scrapping around trying to find clients. Yes, it is hard work to

be successful and have a sustainable business, but it is not impossible. Look around at some of the amazing, successful practitioners you admire to see what is possible with the right recipe.

The magic formula. There are many people out there pedalling their system, blueprint or formula as “the” answer to building a business. Unfortunately, there is no one-size-fits-all solution that will work for everyone. How you market yourself will be different depending on you, your clients, your resources, and the stage you are at in your business. You have to develop your own recipe and build your business your way for it to work for you.

I do not need to know my numbers. Accounts may not be your thing and you may choose to outsource your book-keeping and accounts. You do however, need to understand and track your basic numbers to be able to make good decisions for your practice.

I can do everything myself. As with every small business owner, you wear a lot of hats. Whilst you may be able to stumble your way through all sorts of jobs, there is a lot you should not be doing.

When you start out, you do more than you should because you probably do not have the budget to get the help you need. As you grow, your time is your biggest asset and there will be certain tasks only you can do. There will also be lots of tasks you should be outsourcing to professional services.

Practitioners often shy away from using marketing service providers such as photographers, copywriters, or designers in favour of doing things themselves. If you are a medical herbalist, why would a client come to see you instead of visiting their local health shop? It is because they will get superior healthcare, knowledge and service. So, why would you design your own leaflet instead of hiring a graphic designer once you can afford it?

I do not need help. Working as a practitioner can be a lonely journey and you need help to thrive. If you are very independent and used to digging deep and battling through it can be tough to ask for help. Working solo, you are too close to what you are doing and you can easily make some pretty costly mistakes. Having a team of supporters will help keep you focused and moving forward with your business.

There is too much competition! Practitioners often feel discouraged because there are so many others out there competing for new clients. This can knock their confidence and they end up feeling they will never be successful.

If there are others successfully offering a solution to the same problems as you, consider it a good thing. This shows that they are solving a problem that people need help with and, more importantly, are willing to pay for it. This means your business is viable.

It is true, there are many, many different practitioners out there. But there is one thing many have in common, they do not stand out!

So many of the practitioners you view as competition ignore marketing. They do not build their profile to attract the right clients and just spend time waiting in the hope that the phone will ring. The only reason they are visible to you is because you are consciously looking for and therefore, noticing them.

Procrastination will kill your practice

Procrastination comes in many forms and will stop you in your tracks and prevent you from ever getting your business off the ground. Be aware of your favourite ways to procrastinate. A few common forms are:

Waiting for something to happen. Putting off things until something happens is a sure-fire way of never getting going. Once the first thing is achieved something else quickly replaces it.

Waiting until you are ready. The reality is you are never ready! At some point you must take the leap, or you will always be waiting and watching everyone overtake you.

Perfection. This saboteur is something I have struggled with over the years and see in many of my clients. Why do we strive so hard for something unattainable? Seeking perfection is a guaranteed way to never feel good enough and to stop you from achieving your potential and helping the people you want to. You can find more on “perfection” in Chapter 19, When the going gets tough.

Fear of failure. You spend your time imagining how you will fail dramatically and how shameful it will be. People will say “I told you so” and you will be found out for who you really are. Running these thoughts repeatedly will keep you from ever being successful.

Imperfect action

Taking action is the difference between those who are successful and those who plan to be, but never quite get there. It is very easy to get caught up in the dreaming and planning stages of your business and

before you know it you are a month past your initial deadline and still have not started.

It is time to start doing! Imperfect action is the remedy to procrastination. The skill of getting things done supersedes talent and intelligence when setting up and marketing your business. Cultivating this skill will help you build a sustainable and thriving practice. Taking action requires you to face your fears and find the courage to move forward. The rewards can be outstanding and you will be doing the work you were born to do. Are you ready to get started?

How to use this book

Buy yourself a beautiful notebook or create a file on your phone or computer, you need something to keep all your notes and ideas together. Ultimately, you want a go-to reference point for your business where you note your thoughts and decisions and can refer to it as you need to.

Start from where you are, right now. It does not matter where you are in the year, you will benefit from checking you have the right foundations for your business in place and creating your own special marketing recipe.

Give yourself time and space to do the work. You will not get it all done in one sitting but that is okay, your business will always be a work in progress. It is however important to build in regular time to work on your business rather than constantly working in it. This is where the magic happens and the opportunities will present themselves.

Work through the different sections of this book and if one does not apply to you skip it and move onto the next one.

Have your notebook or file at hand so you can refer to and add to it regularly as you do the work. Your recipe will constantly be evolving and as you develop you want to capture your ideas and decisions as you go.

As you work through the sections, we will identify some of the common mindset issues that may threaten to sabotage your progress. There may be times when you need to call on your favourite technique to help you work through the challenge, whether it is journaling, meditation, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP), Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), visualisation or something else. Do what works for you!

There is no one approach that fits everyone, but I have included a few of my favourite tips throughout this book to help you flow through the challenges.

If you find yourself particularly stuck in one area, I urge you to work through it with a coach or practitioner as they will assist you in finding a faster resolution than struggling on your own.