

Message in a Bottle:  
The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices



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**"The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices."**

Kelly McCausey

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## Message in a Bottle: The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

**Kelly:** Hello and welcome to issue number 11 of [Message in a Bottle](#) from [Beachpreneurs.com](#). You're here with Kelly McCausey. Today I want to talk about raising your prices; the emotional side of raising your prices. Back in September 2014, Nicole and I had a great chat with Debbie O'Grady. Our topic was Knowing Your Value.

We talked a lot about raising your prices and charging more for your time but I really feel like this is a topic that we can circle back to more than once. That is because there are so many shades to the issue. We talked with Debbie about knowing your value, knowing what you bring to the table. For example, Debbie knew the value of her time and experience.

She has a lot of confidence in her education, in her career history. She doesn't have a difficult time just saying, "This is what I'm worth. This is what you have to pay to spend time with me." I shared that, coming from a completely different background of being a high school drop-out, of never having earned more than \$11 an hour in a day job, that I had a more difficult job saying, "This is what I'm worth. This is what you have to pay to spend time with me."

I've come a long way but I hadn't really completed my journey. I don't think we ever truly complete our journey in this area, do we? Maybe. Maybe some of you have. Let's talk about it. Let's talk about the emotional aspects of raising your prices. What's going on inside?

What are the feelings that you have that stop you and might be causing you to sabotage your efforts to take things to the next level financially? I got my start in business working with work-at-home moms. Everyone said, "Work-at-home moms don't spend money," but that's not true. Work-at-home moms spend money on things that matter to them.

They spend money on resources that will help them earn money, save time and get what they want out of life. I built a business serving them running membership sites, selling information products and doing one-on-one coaching. In my day job, I had never earned more than \$11 an hour. As a graphic designer, I had earned anywhere from \$30 to \$75 an hour for my work.

With my coaching, I actually started out coaching at \$25 an hour. That is because I had this weird idea that, "Well, I'm just talking. My goodness, \$25 to talk on the phone for an hour. Isn't that awesome? I don't have to do anything but talk?" Yes. That's not the right attitude to have about coaching. It's not the right attitude to have about how you value your time and your expertise.

## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

However, I was young in the business world and that's the only way I knew to think about it. For years, people told me I should be charging more for my time. I 100% resisted because I loved my market. I loved the people I got to work with. I felt in my heart that they couldn't afford more than what I was charging. As my coaching schedule would get filled up, I would slowly inch up my prices until I was charging \$50 an hour.

I did this simply defensively to not overwhelm my schedule to be charging a little more but still be fair and accessible to my market. That's really where I hovered. I think I actually dabbled with \$75 an hour, and then went back down. I did this because I got a little scared that I was going to be outside of what my market could afford. In 2011, I re-branded. I left Work-at-Home Moms Talk Radio and became [Solo Smarts](#). I was no longer focused on the work-at-home mom market.

I was focused on online solopreneurs. I didn't make this change with the idea of being able to charge more for my time. I made the change because I was no longer a work-at-home mom. My son was all grown and had been living out of the house for a few years. It was starting to feel silly to refer to myself as a work-at-home mom. I found that I was starting to have trouble relating to my market.

I hadn't forgotten what it was like to be a work-at-home mom. The situations they deal with I could certainly still today talk about it and be right on target. I was starting to talk about what I was doing in my life, traveling more, thinking about maybe getting an RV and driving across the country for a couple of years. My market could not relate to me. My market was actually panicked for me a little bit.

They were worrying about my safety. I was getting emails from people saying things like, "Oh, I wish I could do that but there's just no way." I realized that I'm starting to live something that they can't live yet, being an empty nester. Work-at-home mom didn't fit me anymore. Solopreneur did. I'd shifted markets. I didn't do it so that I could charge more, but then I did wake up one morning and realize I should be charging more.

Actually, I didn't wake up and realize that. Friends and people I respect told me that. They would take a look at what I had going on, my coaching and my products. They would say, "You're not charging enough. You need to charge more." Again, I had initial resistance but I thought, "They're right." They would say things like, "People aren't going to respect you if you only charge this much."

Look around and see what other people are charging for the same thing. These are people who have less experience than you, less real-world proof of success than you have. They're charging more. When you charge so much less, people wonder why and they're probably not respecting you." I listened to this and, with much fear and trepidation, I raised my prices.

## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

Everything goes well. People are still buying my products and hiring me to coach them, even though I'm charging more. I rather proudly share that I raised my prices and everything is going great. However, I was in a little group coaching program and someone I highly respect said, "These prices are still too low. You need to raise them more. You're still at a level that people are just not going to respond to."

This was confusing for me. My people were responding. However, what she was saying was that there's a whole world out there that expects to pay more; that values what you do and expects to pay more. "They're not finding you. If they are, they're not trusting and respecting you because your prices are so low." Again, I raised my prices, this time to what I think is a pretty scary level.

This is because I didn't know if my people would pay it. Again, my people do pay it. Yet again, a few months down the road, I'm proudly sharing, "Look what I've done. I've raised my prices again, and everything is going well." I hear it yet again. "Why are you still so low? Why are you still here when the market bears this?" I've got to be honest. I started to get frustrated by this feedback.

I looked at where I'd come from with \$25 to \$50 an hour for coaching, to where I was charging \$100 an hour, \$125 an hour, \$150 an hour and feeling pretty doggone good about it. I thought, "Do you see how much I'm charging?" They're shaking their heads and saying, "Don't you get it? You're still charging too little." I realized I was pursuing incremental increases.

If I'm honest with myself, the first time someone told me I should be charging more, I knew in my gut that they were talking about a big change. "Don't charge \$50 an hour, charge \$300 an hour." I couldn't go there. I could only take this little safe bump, then another bump and another bump. I thought, "I'm tired of being told I don't charge enough. I'm frustrated by it."

We're talking about 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. I thought, "Alright, I want to quit it with this incremental change nonsense. I want to go for it." I want to be charging so much money that no one looks at me and says, "You're not charging enough." I want someone to look at it and say, "That's just right." Or "Wow, you're expensive." However, I was frustrated.

The thought of actually putting these big numbers on my website or quoting these big numbers in a conversation was utterly terrifying. It was so completely overwhelming. There's one thing at this point that happened that really made me want to set the fear aside. That was realizing people in my market were spending more elsewhere.

Over this three to four year period of time, I was struggling with my numbers. All the while, people in my market that I had coached, or had bought my products, or had been

## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

to an event with me, were hiring other people. They were also paying them huge numbers for coaching and consulting. As my eyes were open to this, I thought, “Here I am caught up in my own head, my fears, insecurities and worries. I was not making a big offer.”

So now my feelings are hurt because they went and accepted someone else’s big offer? This is crazy. It’s time to let go of this. It’s time to figure out what’s going on in my head and just go for it.” These are people who I would have loved to have worked with at that capacity. It drives me up the wall that they’re working with someone else. Someone else got that money and opportunity to work with them.

Not only that, but I won’t lie. Some of the people in my market spent that big money with someone else and got very little to show for it. That also frustrated me. If they had spent that money with me, I know the progress we would have made. I’m so progress-focused with my clients. I was primed and ready but I still needed help. It became a little bit of a heart’s cry.

How do I get out of this incremental nonsense? How do I just put that number up there and go for it? What is holding me back? In November of 2014, I had an incredible opportunity to go to a weekend retreat called [Radical Leadership](#). My friend and fellow Beachpreneur, Therese Sparby is a Radical Leadership coach and facilitator. She invited me to come to Radical Leadership.

I knew several people who had been through Radical Leadership and said it was life changing. I decided I want to go. I want to find out some things about myself. I feel like if I’m going to pursue future business the way I should, I need to experience a change. I need to change how I think about things. I need to change how I make decisions, and I need to get over this whole pricing thing. I need to embrace a higher price without fear and go for it.

I went to Radical Leadership with that as one of my primary objectives. It was to deal with why I was having such a difficult time just going for it with my prices. Radical Leadership is an amazing experience. You spend three days with a small group of people. There are two to three facilitators. Therese Sparby was my facilitator together with two other women.

I was in a group with six other women. Five of them were managers and executives from the corporate world. One other one was an entrepreneur like myself. It’s very intense, so intense. You work through exercises together. You learn so much. You get massive feedback from the facilitators, and from your fellow Radical Leadership attendees.

You get to pick up some amazing skills. I left Radical Leadership completely ready to embrace a higher price point with my coaching. I want to share how that came about.

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## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

One of the things they teach at Radical Leadership is about the Trickster's Triangle. Whenever we're in a situation in life where we go into reaction, we're taking a place on the Trickster's Triangle.

There are three possible places on the triangle. There's the villain, the victim and there's the hero. There came a point in the weekend where we had an opportunity to work on one of the complaints that we brought. My complaint was, "Why can't I just charge more? Why have I been stuck in this incremental process that's taking forever and frustrating me? I know in my heart I should be charging way more. Why can't I just go for it?"

They actually had us do the exercise with the triangle on the floor. There were three corners on the floor, villain, victim and hero. A couple of my fellow attendees and one of the facilitators were coaching me. They were asking me, "Why don't you charge what you're worth? Tell us about this problem." I said, "Well, people keep telling me I don't charge what I'm worth."

So they moved me to the victim spot on the triangle. Then they said, "So how does that make you feel?" I responded and, as we talked about it, they would move me from place to place. First I'm the victim. Then I'm in resistance and I'm mad, so I'm the villain. Then I'm defending what I'm doing. Then I'm talking about my market. I love my market so much.

Then they moved me over to hero. This process, I wish I could remember it all verbatim. It was really kind of comical how fast you could move around this triangle. I said, "But this is what I really want," but this, but that. You're spinning around, victim, villain and hero. Then they kept asking me questions. It came down to a moment of, "What are you afraid of if you charge more?"

I totally got emotional and said, "I'm afraid I'm going to leave someone behind." They moved me over to hero. With tears streaming down my face, I knew that was the real heart issue here. It's not about knowing what I'm worth. It's about loving my market so much, and loving the people I got to coach with so much. These are my friends. These are my contemporaries.

I cared about them so much. I cared about their success so much. There were literally faces popping up in my mind in this moment. They were friends I loved so much who, when I charge more, will not be able to afford me. They're just not there yet financially. I was very attached and feeling very responsible for them. I also just flat out loved them. We all knew it. We had found the true issue. The true issue was being very attached to my market. It was about loving them, caring about them and not wanting to leave them behind.

## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

In that moment, my facilitator asked, “Are you ready to get off the triangle?” I said, “Yes. Let’s get off the triangle.” Getting off the triangle is being 100% radically responsible for what you want. She said, “What do you want?” I said, “I want to charge the higher number. I want to go where I know I’m supposed to be going with my business, not responsible for what my friends do.”

It was a very powerful moment. I realized I needed to let go of my responsibility to others. This is the thing that had been holding me back. I was holding on and feeling responsible for others. As a coach, when I’m hired, I get very engaged. I get very invested in the coaching relationship. I fall in love with their projects. Sometimes I want it more than they do. That’s not okay.

I can’t want it more than they do. The truth is, I probably always will get excited, invested and involved. However, I have to know when is when. I have to emotionally disentangle myself. I have to let go of responsibility for others. I have to let go of my responsibility for my friends for where they are in business, and for what they choose to value right now.

I am single, an empty nester and I am so invested in my business. I’m so ready to push it to the next level, do more and spend more. All my friends can’t all be there. They can’t all be doing that. My going to the next level is not a rejection of my friends. They’re still my friends. I’m not responsible for them. I can let go. I can do my thing. I can watch the new people come in who are ready for it.

This was November of last year. I came home and immediately went to work at re-vamping my coaching program. I am now a \$10,000 a year business coach. I don’t offer coaching the same way I did before. My coaching is not about having an hourly rate in any way. It’s about having access to me. It’s about tapping into me, my brain and my 13 years of internet marketing experience.

For that, with no shame in my game, I proudly say, “It’s going to cost \$10,000 a year to work with me. Yes, there are a lot of people in my market who can’t afford that. They can afford [Solo Masterminds](#) memberships. They can afford my products and my group coaching. As for my private coaching, my elite coaching, that’s \$10,000 a year. It’s okay if you can’t afford that. Someone can.

I’m also very happy to announce that people do. As I increased my prices, people kept buying. What do you know, when I finally embraced this increase, customers kept coming. That’s what I was afraid wouldn’t happen. Should you be charging more? Should you be raising prices on your products and memberships? Should you be charging more for your consulting?

## Message in a Bottle:

### The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

Should you be raising rates across the board? If you're a virtual assistant, are you specialized enough that you should charge \$75 an hour instead of \$35 an hour? Are you a business coach, a life coach or a consultant who's charging too little and know in your heart you should be charging more? Your issue may not be my issue. Your issue might be something else. It may be lack of self-confidence.

It may be a little bit of a poverty mentality. It may be fear that people won't pay it. Whatever the emotional response you have to raising your prices, will you make up your mind that you're going to pursue an answer? I can tell you to just do it afraid. Just raise your price. However, I've seen for myself what happens when people do that. They choke and they don't promote.

It doesn't do any good to raise your prices and then not put yourself out there to promote it. I want to challenge you to figure out what it is. I highly recommend Radical Leadership as an experience. You could check out Therese Sparby at [RadicalLeadership.com](http://RadicalLeadership.com). I highly suggest that you spend time with a really good life coach thinking about working through what it is that's holding you back.

I offer up myself as a resource, for sure. You might not have an emotional attachment that's holding you back from raising your prices. You may just say, "Hey, I'm ready. I just need to know the logistics." I'd love to help you through that. Get in touch. Thanks for spending this time with me. I hope it's been helpful. I hope it's been encouraging.

See you in the next [Message in a Bottle](#).

# Message in a Bottle: The Emotional Side Of Increasing Your Prices

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