

Stand out and connect
with the perfect clients
by creating website copy
that's freakishly you

DONE WITH DULL

GEMMA LUMICISI



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To my mother

For always carrying a torch, waiting all night for me to sign
important documents and who's wise far beyond human years.

CONTENTS

FROM THE AUTHOR	vii	
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ix	
INTRODUCTION	Being yourself is what works	1
CHAPTER ONE	The discomfort of writing well	7
CHAPTER TWO	Unalike the rest	25
CHAPTER THREE	Uniquely you	41
CHAPTER FOUR	The right clients free you	55
CHAPTER FIVE	Create your avatar	71
CHAPTER SIX	Hook	91
CHAPTER SEVEN	Killer formulas	109
CHAPTER EIGHT	Cut the crap	127
CHAPTER NINE	Writing the scariest page of all	147
CONCLUSION		169
CONNECT WITH ME		173

FROM THE AUTHOR

*If people try to put you down
Just walk on by don't turn around
You only have to answer to yourself*

I feel the above lyrics (and the whole song) to the S Club 7 1999 song *Bring It All Back* are entirely overlooked in their strength and what they say.

My mother has always called me an overachiever, and most of the time, it's because I'm addicted to learning, knowing and doing all the things. But often, it was to prove to myself I can do what others have told me I can't.

One problem I've seen on our glorious planet earth is when people don't pursue their dreams. I can see there's a desire for something burning inside of them, but they decide it's not possible.

Working with so many clients as a copywriter coach, I can see how challenging it is to open up through words, be vulnerable and

share your story with the world. I never let my clients give up at uncomfortable, no matter how bad their freak out is. Because an uncomfortable feeling means you're almost there.

You're pushing your comfortable boundary, so keep going, and you'll find greatness.

What if you didn't share your message with the world and missed the opportunity to connect and help others?

I always tell my copywriting clients their clients are out there waiting for their help. They just haven't found you yet. But together, we'll get you seen and found.

Please never let anyone tell you what you believe is possible isn't because you get to decide what is and isn't possible.

Apart from passionate my friends have described me as committed, dedicated and constrained. These are three traits I'm grateful I hold because they've helped me to do what I've dreamed of doing.

They're also something I can teach and help you with as well.

I hope my book inspires you to get your message out to the world and to pursue whatever you haven't done.

Gemma Xxx

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In this book, you'll read about the discomfort of writing well. For me, writing this page is scary because of the meaning behind it.

But I remember when I first watched the *Sex and The City* episode where Carrie dedicated her book to Charlotte, and I knew that would be me one day in real life.

So here it goes.

I dedicate this book to my high school maths teacher Mr Noonan. He allowed us to call him Mr Wombat due to his love of the hard-bottomed tunnelling Aussie marsupial.

When I was eight years old in grade 3, I overheard my teacher telling my mum I had no future in maths. At the same time, I was pretending not to listen to their conversation outside.

After doing a standardised test given to the state, I remember not being interested in it (I mean, numbers? Blah), so I didn't perform well.

Teachers have a significant influence on us, and as a child, I always believed what a teacher told me. So this thought stayed with me for years after hearing her say this, and I believed it to be true.

Mr Wombat knew this wasn't true. He saw something in me that no other teacher had. And he brought my love for the subject to life and made me realise, hey, I can do maths among other learnings.

His belief inspired me to know that there isn't anything I'm not capable of. So anytime someone said to me that I couldn't do something, I never believed it to be accurate, and I did it.

My cousin Angela Lumicisi brightens up any room she enters. She's always been the female figure I looked up to. No matter what, she sticks to her guns, keeps going and knows who she is. She's strong, a fighter and peruses her dreams. As I write this book, she's currently taking on an enormous hurdle in her life, and I'm so proud of her. She's a true inspiration to me and will be for many other women as well.

And finally, dear mother and father, you may not be on board with the outrageous things I decide I'm going to do, but no matter what, in the end, you always support me. And without you both, I wouldn't have the fighting Lumicisi spirit I have or be the person I am.

Oh, and thanks for the excellent genetics too, for this I am forever grateful.

INTRODUCTION

BEING YOURSELF IS WHAT WORKS

If you're a business owner who knows your shit but who struggles to attract the clients you want to work with, this is the book for you.

When I started my business three years ago, I knew it was the right decision. It was the missing piece of my work-life puzzle – the section of emptiness I couldn't fill while I was answering to a boss. Furthermore, I wasn't using my creativity, and my head was full of ideas. But my brain shoved these ideas deep into crevices, because why offer them when no one listens?

Having my inspiration and ideas suppressed by the environment I was in was challenging. I felt a substantial resistance because I've got a brain full of thoughts and information I enjoy sharing. A friend of mine says I have a brain the size of a planet, which she gets from the *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* books. My poor brain felt like a large object orbiting the sun, alone in the universe, floating in corporate sameness.

Not long after starting my business, I joined a women-in-business mastermind group and met many other business owners like me. After getting to know them, with us all opening up and sharing our personal stories, I discovered they, too, had started their businesses to live their best work life and overall life. But most were not where they wanted to be since going out on their own: they were not working with their ideal clients, and they were feeling disconnected from themselves because they were trying to be different people in their businesses.

They were running their businesses from 9 am to 5 pm (which was until 10 pm, let's be honest) and losing so much of their lives because they were stuck working for the most brutal boss they've ever had: themselves.

If you're like most small business owners, you know the struggle to find and connect with the clients you want to work with. You no longer want to work with the type of people you were stuck working with when you were in your corporate job. You can't be yourself. I know this because the incredible women in my mastermind group weren't being themselves in their businesses.

YOU'RE ALREADY AMAZING ENOUGH

If you think you have to be a particular way and show up with a preconceived 'businesslike' appearance because you run a business, you are wrong. Being yourself is what works.

This book is about writing a website that reflects who you are, to help you attract the clients you want to work with. It's also about learning how to write awesome copy without wasting time. However, doing that well requires a fair bit of discomfort (which is what the first chapter is about). In reading this book, you'll save

tonnes of time when it comes to writing a powerful, converting website because you'll stop trying to be someone you're not, connect with the right clients and focus on your business the way you want to.

Put a stop to the disconnect between yourself and your business self, because there isn't one. It's your business, and you are you, so do it your way.

You're already amazing enough, and you know your shit.

In the early years of my business, I worked with clients similar to those from my corporate career. Because it was familiar, I knew how to write the copy and place the ads and knew their target audiences in depth.

It was okay, but it wasn't why I started my business.

I wanted to work with clients who lit up my day, and to help them grow their businesses. I soon discovered the key to doing this was being myself and not pretending to be something I was not. If you're trying to find this final piece of the puzzle, start by updating your website and using authentic words in your copywriting.

I'm a life coach, business coach, copywriter coach, marketer and international English teacher – and, as I write this introduction, soon-to-be-published author. I help successful (and overachieving) women stop pretending to be someone they are not and acknowledge their success. To create a business and life they love so they feel fulfilled and live their purpose. I want you to do this too. And by 'this', I mean taking action and not sitting around wishing for your plans, goals and dreams to come true. Oh, and not to mention I'm a copywriter coach.

I've never been one to wish because I didn't understand wishes when I was a child. I've been a dreamer ever since I was little,

and those dreams stayed with me until I could do them, and now I have done most of them. COVID has put a temporary pause on travelling 100 countries, but I'm sitting at 63% of achieving this dream.

Each birthday when my mum told me to make a wish and blow out candles, I wished for a castle with a drawbridge because I knew it was something I'd never get. I'd close my eyes, blow out the candles and make this make-believe wish year after year until I didn't have to anymore. To me, wishing was a waste of time. Why wish? *Do*. I always *did* because trying is better than hoping.



I'm telling you this because I see so many people who make plans, have goals and dreams, but let them fade away. I created a business that works for me, and you can do it too. I stopped pretending to be someone I wasn't and discovered this was the way to grow my business. This discovery is why I now help other women do this, putting a stop to hiding behind their words and allowing them to reach their goals.

IT ALL STARTS WITH YOUR WEBSITE

The best possible marketing strategy is to be yourself and write website copy in the most authentic way. You can't forget to focus on your clients, but if you're inauthentic then you'll attract the wrong

ones and become exhausted with all your energy going into not being honest with yourself.

Believe it or not, it all starts with your website. If you show your authentic self here, you will connect with the clients you want to work with, creating a business (and a life) you love. *Done With Dull* will teach you how to write a memorable website without wasting time, and how starting with your website is critical. Because your website is the heart of your business.

You'll discover discomfort is the key to doing it right, and your story matters because it's what sets you apart from your competition. I'll show you the steps and the foundational process to set up your copywriting, so you start the right way and don't waste time doing anything unnecessary. I'll give you practical exercises in each chapter, and at the end of each chapter are action steps you can follow to complete each exercise. So when you are done reading, you won't just have a bunch of great ideas, you'll have made a start. You will learn copywriting formulas, how to be brave with your words, and how to write your About Page – because the About Page on your website is where you'll connect with your ideal clients.

Being your authentic self in your business is the first and one of the most powerful steps in any marketing strategy. It's one 99% of people get wrong, but you're about to get it right, so read on.

CHAPTER ONE

THE DISCOMFORT OF WRITING WELL

This approach of focusing on what it is to be yourself and using this as a tool for your business strategy is different from what you'll hear from most marketers. What I'm talking about is being *uniquely (and freakishly) you*.

The strategy of most marketers is to focus on your client. My approach is different. Now, of course, I agree with the notion of focusing on your client (which you'll find chapters about further on), but concentrating on your authentic self is something most marketers miss. And missing this is to the detriment of most businesses.

Unless you're behaving like yourself in your business, you won't make an authentic connection with your ideal clients. To be yourself often means feeling uneasy, and people want to bypass this discomfort. This avoidance is because they want to follow others' footsteps and ensure they're not making mistakes or blunders. This unsettling feeling isn't new, and you're not alone when feeling this way.

This behaviour is because one of the basic human instincts is the need to belong. After all, humans are herd animals. This pack mentality comes about because when you're belonging and in a group, you feel comfortable and safe. But if the group rejects you, the intuitive, prehistoric part of your brain sends you a message saying you will die. And this is why your brain is pulling you away from standing out. It wants you to blend back in and be safe again.

I wanted to belong when I was a child. I have an amazing mother who'd send me to school with home-cooked Italian food and various paninis for variety. But this was different to the other kids' lunches. I was teased for having 'worms' (marinated eggplant strips) in my bread roll. And stinky cheese. I remember longing to have sliced cheese and vegemite sandwiches in my lunchbox like the other kids. It's funny to think about it now because stinky Italian cheese and meats are fashionable these days. But everyone has the desire to fit in. Yes, even me. Because being rejected, picked on and tossed out of the herd or being denied access to the slide (going back to the schoolyard) feels terrible. And back when we were roaming the plains it was a threat to life, so our brain still sees rejection as a threat to our life.

As a consequence, many websites end up sounding the same because people aren't themselves. It's the power of our human brains telling business owners to lean towards the desire to blend in and be safe. Have you ever thought about writing something on your About Page (for example) that feels suitable for you, yet something prevents you from writing it? Was it because you're afraid of humiliation or rejection? If so, this is your basic human instinct keeping you safe. Which means nothing has gone wrong. You're human.

However, I'm going to demonstrate that if you're feeling uncomfortable when you write, you should embrace it. Because it's a sign: you're doing it right.

Weird, huh?

WHY YOU NEED A WEBSITE

You need a website. If you're a business owner, it's territory you can own and control on the internet. As a solo business owner, you're selling yourself and who you are as much as your products and services – if not more. That means your story is what sells you. I'm going to tell you all about why and how throughout this book, but for the moment, let me assure you stories are what works because humans love stories.

Writing your story and sharing it with what could be the entire world (because it's on the internet) is super scary. But writing to sound like everyone else means you're going to get lost in the vast world of the internet. Which means you're not going to stand out. You also risk sounding fake, so you'll connect with the wrong people and the wrong potential clients.

Humans have loved stories since day dot, according to a theory by Yuval Noah Harari. He's a historian and a professor in the Department of History at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. In his book *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*, he describes how human language evolved to allow humans to gossip because our social cooperation is integral to survival and reproduction.

Let's get started by examining in more detail why you need a website for your business. And how the website must display the genuine you. Now, you might be thinking, *I get so many*

clients from social media, why bother with a website? There are two reasons:

1. you are at the mercy of social media platforms if you don't have a website
2. your website is the heart of your business, like a mothership.

Let's look at each of these.

Your website is your territory

In February 2021, Facebook removed all Australian news organisations, such as *The Age*, Channel 7 and news.com.au, from Facebook and Instagram feeds worldwide. This was in response to the Australian Government's plan to make Facebook and Google pay for news, in a bid to protect Australian journalists and journalism overall. Facebook decided it didn't want to pay, so the company went to the extreme and removed all Australian news organisations from its platforms. It removed them overnight with no warning. If you were waking up in the morning to check Aussie news via social media, there was nothing there. And some non-news sites became caught in the kerfuffle as well. Now, if Facebook can do this to mass media organisations, it can do it to you too. As a result, those media organisations lost massive exposure to an audience they relied on. This could happen to you if you don't have a website alongside your social media pages.

You need a website. It's the territory you control on the internet. Social media is not. It might seem like you can rely on social media, but you can't because your account can get blocked or removed tomorrow with zero warning. But when you purchase a domain name, it's yours. No one else owns it, and you can't get it taken off you – unless you forget to pay for it.

In the past, business owners listed their phone numbers in a printed directory called the *Yellow Pages*. If you wanted potential clients to find you, this was the platform to use. And yes, for those not old enough to remember, the paper was yellow. If businesses wanted to stand out and get found, they'd pay the *Yellow Pages* for an advertisement. Failing to do this meant they missed the simplest and most widespread way to advertise their business. They also missed out on the easiest way to end up in every Australian's lounge room – there was free delivery of the *Yellow Pages* to every Australian house.

You may remember a well-known television ad from the year 2000. A woman named Jan gets in trouble with her boss for missing the deadline to put their advertisement in the *Yellow Pages*. Jan's boss opens the fresh delivered *Yellow Pages* and discovers the ad for her business is not there. The famous quote goes, 'Not happy, Jan!', yelled out the window as Jan runs down the street to get as far away from her boss as she can.

Not having a website today is like not putting an ad in the *Yellow Pages* back then. People used to turn to the yellow book to find a business, but now they go to the internet and search for websites to find out more about you.

Everything in one place

And now to the second reason: your website is your mothership. Your website is where people go to find out more information about your business. There is limited information you can put on social media accounts. For example, Instagram has a word limit for your bio. With a website, you have unlimited pages where you can do as you wish. Plus, it also saves you time and helps your clients if they have concerns because you can add pages like FAQs to handle queries.

A website also helps you look more professional. Many businesses advertise products on social media sites because news travels fast this way, but there needs to be follow through. For example, imagine there's a cool revolutionary pen on social media. You've seen the ad and your friends have seen it too. Before you click the link to buy it you search for the website to read more about the business. But they don't have a website. Would you buy from them? Does the business seem trustworthy to you? It doesn't look professional if you don't have a website explaining more about you and your business.

Think about where all the information about your business is right now. Do you have a little bit on your Facebook page? Do you have a bit more information on a brochure that's floating around? What about your booking system? What if you could put that all into one place? Then all a client needs to do to find everything they want to know about you is visit your website. It's all in one spot, which means it's so much easier for them.

Putting information together and consolidating it can be scary, as it may feel overwhelming. You're putting so much about yourself in one spot for the whole world to see. Remember, if you feel uncomfortable, it's your intuitive brain popping in to keep you safe. I want you to say to yourself, 'I'm not going to die', even though your brain thinks you are.

YOUR STORY SELLS

As a solo business owner, you're selling yourself and who you are as much as your products and services. Your story is what is going to sell you because that's what works. Humans love stories because people connect with people. Not with a service or a product. This

means your best tool is to be authentic. What you're selling is essential, of course, but what sells it is you – the person behind it. People may want your 'thing' or offering, but they want to work with you to help them with the thing.

The way you sell your thing and yourself is through your story.

Everyone's story matters. Some people may not think about it, but everyone has a story, and we connect with it. Take Richard Branson, who owns the airline company Virgin (among other things). His individual page on LinkedIn has 18,549,257 followers as of April 2021. Virgin Atlantic has 272,399. What a difference, huh? Everyone knows the brand Virgin, but everyone wants to connect with the business owner – Richard Branson, the person.

You might think, *Oh, people won't care about my story*, or, *I don't have a story. People don't care about my why. It's not important.* Everyone has a story, and no one's story is more important or less necessary than anyone else's.

Michelle Obama, the former First Lady of the United States, believes in the importance of telling your story. In her 2018 book *Becoming*, she encourages others to tell their stories: 'Your story is what you have, what you'll always have. It's something that you own.' Michelle tells us that we are all unique, and our story and experiences are ours. So don't run away from your stories, instead embrace them.

Reconnecting with your why

Often as business owners we can become stuck in the everyday grind of our business and forget our *why*. To go back and reconnect with your *why*, think back to the reason you created your business. An excellent way to do this is to go back to your business mission, whether it was last year, 10 years ago or 30 years ago when you wrote your business plan and your mission. Within your mission is your *why* and your story.

Reconnecting with your *why* also helps with your communication style for when you write website copy. Because when you have that memory sparking your *why*, and realigning with it, writing your website copy will feel more natural, personal and honest.

The best page on your site to put your story is your About Page. This is the second most visited page for most websites. If you check the analytics of your website, this statistic will show you the proof. And why? Because people want to get to know who you are. Your target audience goes to your website because they want something you sell, but where they make their decision to buy is on your About Page. They want to read your story so they can connect with you and discover if you're the person they want to work with.

So, what's your story? Go back to reconnect with it, embrace it and know that your experiences, failures, learnings and the silly things you've done along the way matter. They make you the fantastic unique self you are right now.

You might think, *maybe my why and my story aren't good enough, or, who cares? . . . people won't want to know about that.* But there will be people who *do* care, and those people connect with your *why* because they have similar reasons. They're the people who understand you. And they are your ideal client.

AUTHENTICITY SELLS

When you're yourself, you'll connect with the people who want to work with you and the ones who will pay for access to you. But if you're not yourself, your business may still do well, but it's not going to grow in the way you want it to. And it's not going to reflect your *why*.

I discovered what was missing in my copywriting and marketing business was *me*. Back in 2018, it was doing well but I was floating along. I have all the business degrees, and I followed the protocols of what I knew when it comes to business, marketing and communications. But after a while, I hit this point where my business wasn't growing. I started thinking about what it was and what was missing. I'd been in business for two years by this stage, and I had some great clients. But I knew I should be making more money, working with more clients and being out there in the world more.

I thought about it a lot, but I couldn't put the two and two together of why I was stagnant. But one day, I had a light bulb moment: *the problem is me. Everything else is right. I do things by the book. So maybe I'm the problem here.* I remember reading my website and thinking, *there's not much of me in there. Hang on a minute. I'm hiding behind my words here.* I get what's happening. I wasn't being honest. My website wasn't doing what I was telling my clients to do with theirs. Who would have thought? At this point, I realised if I'm doing this then others are hiding behind their words as well.

So I decided to let all barriers down and brain dump (write whatever comes to mind) a new About Page for my website. I wrote it in 26 minutes, gave it a quick proof and published it on my site. It's genuine, honest and I'm on display. I haven't looked back.

Here's a bit of it for you:

I always thought Gemma and business Gemma were different entities, and I couldn't quite put the two together. Because deep in my heart, I still thought they should be separate.

Because through my corporate career, I could never be myself. As I wasn't the professional, stuffy, and non-warped sense of humour type they expected me to be. I know you can relate to this.

But then, I had an idea.

Business Gemma is Gemma. And my reason for creating my business was to be who I want to be while doing what I love to do.

Which is to write copy, and create fear-free marketing strategies that bring other women's ideas to life. And coach them through how to do this.

Stop answering to the man. And sticking by the rules. Because we will be ourselves and cheer it from the rooftops.

Once you drop that barrier and become yourself in your business and life, your business will grow, and you'll connect with other real people.

'People won't like me.'

You might be thinking, *people won't like me*. As you know, we all have the basic human instinct of wanting to belong. It doesn't matter if some people don't like you because there will be other people.

And if you're like me, I've always said I'm a 'love me or hate me' person. There doesn't seem to be an in between. People either admire or despise me, which is fine with me because I know which ones I want in my life.

Go back and look at some of the copy you've written. See if there are sentences in there that stand out and reflect a little bit of who you are. Check this by thinking about if someone was to plagiarise or steal your copy and publish it on their website. If someone can copy and paste your words with their branding and no one would notice, you're hiding behind your words and blending in. It can be confronting to realise you sound like everyone else.

But if you've got little bits of your personality speckled through your writing, when someone tries to claim it as theirs, people would know it's not. This means you've done it right because it's not stealable.

Don't doubt the power of doing this. If you are hiding behind your words and not letting yourself be yourself in your copy, realisation is the first step.

Vulnerability prevails

Writing a website and your About Page means you're vulnerable because you're writing your story. And for your story to connect with others takes vulnerability. It's not easy to be honest with yourself and write it so the world can read it, because being vulnerable is challenging, but without vulnerability your website will struggle to connect with others. Vulnerability means telling your story with your failures, fears and affections. Throughout your life, you've had experiences – fails, wins, celebrations, disasters – that have made you who you are.

Include some of your failures. These experiences connect with people. Losses, funny stories and situations you've messed up – people love that. It's what makes you real.

It's confronting being honest with yourself and writing about it. If you're not feeling an internal battle because you're not allowing truth in your copywriting then you're not honest with yourself. Honesty also means people may be nasty and have something mean to say, but it's okay to get negativity back. All you're going to feel is maybe rejection or sadness.

Feeling these emotions is okay. Remember, you're human. But writing an honest website is essential. I'll guide you through how to do it, so your website engages people and sounds likeable as well.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* tells us the meaning of the word vulnerable is ‘weak and easily hurt physically or emotionally’. If you’re like me, wrapping your head around the word ‘vulnerable’ to mean you’re being brave and using it as a tool for connection is absurd. I always thought being vulnerable was being weak, which means I’ll appear fragile to others. And being brought up in the tough Italian way I was, I was taught being weak is a no-no. And all 45kg and 155cm of me has held the belief: I can’t be vulnerable. I’m susceptible to an attack, whether a verbal or physical one, because it’s easy to pick on someone smaller than you, right? I’m guessing the answer is yes as I have no idea. I’m the tiny chihuahua dog snapping back. I’ve always named this ‘little human syndrome’, like ‘little dog syndrome’. Us wee humans must stick up for ourselves with our non-vulnerable and bite-y words – lucky I have a way with words.

But here’s the thing: Brené Brown, in her successful book *Daring Greatly*, defines vulnerability as ‘uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure’. She’s a research professor at the University of Houston and a vulnerability expert, and she debunks the myth ‘vulnerability is weakness’.

When writing your website, you must embrace ‘uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure’ because you don’t know what will happen when people read your words. You risk taking a chance with your business, exposing yourself to emotions. So then, are you in? How can you have a business without uncertainty, risk and emotional exposure? You can’t. Are you ready to embrace vulnerability?

Be brave

Perhaps you think people won’t like you or you don’t want to be vulnerable when writing because it’s scary. Feel the fear and write

it anyway. What's the worst thing that's going to happen? Someone says something negative or decides they don't like you? Pfft. Big deal. You're not going to die. You're brave.

There is a fine line between the way fear feels and the way being inauthentic feels. Start being honest with yourself. If you're writing a story and it feels wrong then you're not being real. If it feels right but you feel uneasy in your gut, then you're doing it right. Close your eyes and feel it in your body, then acknowledge the feeling and explore the difference between them. The human instinct is strong. Remember, it's there to keep you alive. If you can get in touch with your intuition – what feels right and what feels wrong – then you'll start to be honest with yourself.

I know I'm asking you to stop and get in touch with a feeling in your body. It may sound wanky, and you might feel foolish doing this, but getting in touch with your intuition is the key to being honest with yourself. It also might feel confronting. Like I said, sharing your story and being honest with yourself will be a journey of personal growth. It's an excellent opportunity for you.

Who knew you'd get so much out of writing a website?

WRITING ABOUT YOURSELF WILL CHANGE YOU

Writing your website throws up a lot of personal growth. But this book shows you how to navigate that. If you're starting to feel scared, it's normal. If you feel uncomfortable writing your website, you are doing it right.

It's okay to feel uneasy at this point. It's a beautiful accomplishment to write a website with such honesty. You will change and grow.

Most people think it's a business task, but it's meaningful and an overall personal challenge.

Guess what? I've got all these quivers and unpleasant feelings as I write the pages in this book. Believe it or not, for me this has been a challenging journey. I, too, feel uncomfortable writing about and telling my stories. Think about this. You're reading this page right now. So other people are too, and as you know, my brain tells me this is scary, so I should run away and hide. But I have strong intuition, and I've had a desire to write a book since I was a child.

Because of this urge to write a book, I push through the discomfort. Can you believe I'm feeling super uncomfortable right now? I am human too, you know. Since I was a little girl, I dreamed one day I'd write a book. My name would be under the title with a penguin on the side. This book may not have a penguin on it. Or maybe it will, who knows . . . but either way, I'm jumping into uncertainty, taking the risk and exposing my emotions, which is damn fucking amazing. I'm making my dream come true even though I feel petrified when I'm writing this book.

Brooke Castillo is the founder of The Life Coach School, and she says 'discomfort is the currency of success'. (I guess writing this book must make me successful then.) When she became comfortable with being uncomfortable, her business grew, and she could step into being herself. Staying comfortable doesn't create or change results. It also doesn't allow you to be yourself because authenticity creates an uneasy feeling.

I bet you're thinking, *I don't want to feel uncomfortable. Or to be petrified – it sounds terrible. Why would I want to do that?* You don't have to. Do as you wish. But it's the key to success. If you're at a point where you don't want to stay as you are, embrace discomfort.

You're not going to grow yourself or your business if you're not welcoming discomfort. Nothing terrible is going to happen. It does take courage, but you're going to get the results on the other side of it.

Remember earlier when I told you about Gemma and business Gemma? Well, old separate un-business Gemma is fearless and has done some crazy things. In 2017 I decided to make my dream (yes, another one . . . I've been a thinker and doer my whole life) of trekking the Amazon into a reality. I dreamed one day I wanted to see a snake large enough to eat me (which is not as dramatic as it would be for some people). Why did I dream of this? I can't answer that question. I just did. Now, did I love my Amazon trek? Nope. I wouldn't say I enjoyed a lot of it while I was doing it. However, after the fact, I love every bloody part of it and wouldn't change it for the world.

But what I did love at the time was being uncomfortable, the entire two weeks. One day my guide took a photo of me before my camera batteries ran out. There's no electricity in a house you built yourself out of palm leaves. In this photo, I'm sitting on the ground in water up to my stomach. I'm in a raincoat that no longer keeps me dry. I'm saturated, with a garbage bag over the top of my coat and a look of pure defeat on my face. I later posted this photo on Facebook, and an old friend of mine commented on it, saying she remembers 'that' face from when we were kids. So I guess I've always embraced being uncomfortable, jumping into uncertainty and taking risks even without knowing it.

But here's the thing: un-business Gemma could do this, but business Gemma couldn't be this daring and bold. I figured out it's because un-business Gemma can be fearless and jump into situations that I know should scare me. I'm embracing the fear because I know



it's there. But in doing something as simple as being honest with myself when writing my website, I hid behind my words because I felt uncomfortable.

This feeling comes from fear. The same fear I got from hundreds of giant Amazonian poisonous frogs' red eyes glistening at me in the night. These eyes were all I could see in the darkness. Trust me, it's terrifying. But thanks to my mum, I'm a torch and battery packer, so when my headlamp batteries died, I had spares. This terror feeling is the same as being honest and authentic in my business.

Bloody crazy, huh?

But it's true. Fear is fear, and it's the same feeling whether you're aware of it or not.

If you're feeling uncomfortable writing your website, remember you're doing it right.

I want you to start listening to how you speak. Ask friends, family and people close to you, ‘What’s a few words I always say? What’s something I find funny? What sort of mannerisms do I have? How would you know what Gemma (you) would say?’ Pay attention to their answers. Because these are the little bits and pieces of authenticity you can start to speckle into your copy without feeling too uncomfortable or overwhelmed at this point. But little by little, you can begin to stop hiding behind your words.

People may say things that you don’t want to hear. And you’ll start thinking, *do I say these things so often? Oh, my god . . . urgh*. But again, it’s okay if you do because you’re you.

* * *

In this first chapter, you’ve learnt you must have a website as a business owner, and if you’re feeling uncomfortable about writing your website then you’re doing it right. The key to writing your website and being authentic is writing to sound like you. Because being authentic in your writing connects with people, so it’s not all about the client. And throughout this book, I’m going to show you how to do that.

You must overcome not wanting to feel uncomfortable. And embrace feeling it. So you can begin the journey of being honest with yourself. You may still not want to be authentic at this point because you think people won’t buy from you or they won’t like your story. But are you ready to be yourself in your business and your life?

If so, once you embrace this and the discomfort that comes with it, you’re going to grow.

Did you notice I shared stories with you throughout this chapter? I did this so you can begin to relate to me. When you were

reading these stories, how did they make you feel? Did you enjoy reading these first few stories about me?

Keep reading.

Now you understand how important having a website is, I can show you how to transform yours so it sounds authentic. I want you to commit to being authentic and doing it everywhere – not just through your words. Stop hiding behind your words and who you are.

The next exciting topic is about what the heck copywriting is and how writing it isn't as scary as you think.

Chapter one action steps

1. Reconnect with your why and your story.

Take some time to remember your why for going into your business. Write down your reasons and reunite with them.

2. Review your copy.

Go back to copy you wrote on your website, blog or emails. Review it for where you've reflected your personality and take note of the words and phrases you used.

3. Feel your gut quiver.

When writing copy and you feel an uneasy sensation in your body, close your eyes and allow it to be there. Acknowledge its presence and continue writing anyway.

4. What do you say?

Ask your friends and family for words and phrases you say a lot when speaking. Write these down and keep them handy.