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BADASSERY[®] magazine

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and more...*

3 Skills Required to

Build Your Bank Account

by Emily Ann Peterson

I'm the kind of person who goes ALL in when I want to know the answer to something. I'll do things like spend countless hours researching the absolute best way to have lusciously, bouncing curls of hair: use only clarifying conditioner, no shampoo, apply \$4 hair gel to sopping wet hair while still in the shower, do not towel dry, instead wrap a t-shirt around your head for 30 minutes, use "praying hand" to scrunch after it eventually air dries. If that sounds more complicated than "buy this miracle product" you're right - but it's still the absolute BEST thing for my hair. Believe me, I've tried everything. Evvvverything. It also turns out that following my curiosity is the absolute BEST thing for my sanity too.

Here's the thing about curiosity and obsession: when curiosity guides your every (sometimes obsessive) move, you're prone to pick up on subtle clues.

For instance, after a heinous year of one awful thing happening after another, my curiosity of bravery and courage led me to an obsession -- What the HELL is bravery? How come nobody has a really good definition for it? Is it born? Is it practiced? What are the ingredients?

My obsession for answers followed the subtle clues to this conclusion: Bravery is what happens when vulnerability, imagination, and improvisation get mixed together. This curious obsession to learn more about bravery fueled 4 years of research, countless interviews, turning those interviews into a podcast, and then writing a bestselling book about it. All in, remember? I don't tread lightly with my curiosity.

Another of these clues I picked up on during the book writing process was this...

Often there is a direct tie to someone's lack of bravery and their lack of money.

Obviously this is a generalization, but hear me out. If we cannot be brave and ask for the sale - we never have a chance at that sale's profit. If we are not bravely enforcing boundaries in client relationships, then our clients tend to walk all over our payment policies, pay late, or don't pay at all. If we shrink away and hide our introverted strengths, then our customers and colleagues won't even know our unicorn services or miracle products exist.

So allow me to present...

3 Brave Skills to Practice that Build Your Bank Account!

There are 12 total ingredients of bravery and all of them are outlined in my book *Bare Naked Bravery: How to Be Creatively Courageous* () but since this is an article and you aren't on a roadtrip listening to me read my entire audiobook out loud, let's use the 3 main ingredients for today's purposes.

Building our bank account by practicing the ingredients of bravery is pretty new. At least I haven't heard many folks doing this. But I know those of you who like to do everything with extra doses of intention will love these suggestions. Those of you pining for a few more decimals represented in your bank statements will love these suggestions too.

1. Practice Vulnerability

Our beloved Brené Brown de-

scribes vulnerability as "emotional exposure." I don't need to tell you twice, so I won't -- running a successful, profitable, visible, badass business requires extreme amounts of vulnerability. We have to take risks, acknowledge and enforce boundaries, listen to our limitations, and recognize the reality of our situation. All of that requires vulnerability and provides excellent places to practice vulnerability.

No, you don't have to go from never making a sale ever to finding the scariest sales situation. Rome was not built in a day. Let's be real here. Pick a small vulnerability. Maybe it's simply telling your assistant that you're stressed out. Maybe this is taking yourself to go get a pedicure with the expressed purpose of using that time to take an honest look at your bank's mobile app. (Who says vulnerability has to feel like your sock-covered velcro calluses!?)

Pick something small and honest, preferably daily. This will build your ability to display your authenticity, especially when it matters most.

2. Practice Using Your Imagination

The second skill to help build your bank account is using your imagination. I'm not talking about sitting with your mala beads on a yoga mat repeating mantras of abundance while dreaming of your mansion on a hill. I mean, if you want to spend your time that way, go for it.

Building your bank account through practicing imagination looks like mapping out the precise steps to get from your dingy 8-floor walk up apartment to that mansion on the hill. In my book I unpack this

further: possessing a vivid imagination requires a defiant expectation that life as we know it could be different, not just some day, but ASAP. If you practice building this kind of imagination, before you know it, you'll start making realistic yet bold demands from yourself and the people and systems around you. Those demands will exude a defiant expectation for your life and your business to be more efficient, more profitable, and all around better for your world!

In taking a stand for this kind of imagination you will have no choice but to change the activity in your bank account. For example: If your life and our global environment would be so much better without the necessity of doing 4 loads of laundry in the water-wasting machines 8 floors below, go make plans for your business' first hire to be a laundry service, not a social media assistant!

3. Practice Improvisation

As you guessed, it's not just about making plans and imagining your life could be different. That sounds

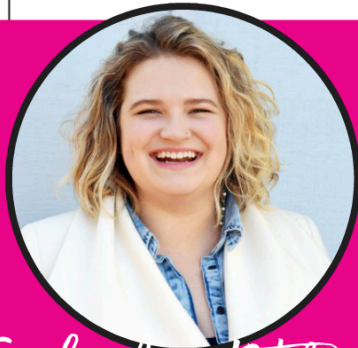
a little too good to be true, yes? Bravery is about *acting* on those desires. Use the friction of your fear to make different choices. I'm not an advocate for the "feel the fear and do it anyways" as I'm a firm believer our fear exists for a reason, it's important to listen to it. However, the reactions created by all that friction are from your improvisational skills.

We practice using fear's friction by actively working within our limitations and constraints. Again, to practice this with the intention of building your bank account we're not talking tremendously huge feats of improvisation. Asking for help after practicing vulnerability is a perfect example of how naturally (or unnaturally) improvisation can play out. Or maybe after taking a vulnerable look at your bank account you can sense that your "scraping the bottom of the bank account barrel" has inspired you to improvise with your constraints by making bean soup with homemade bone broth for dinner! (Delicious and super cheap!) Eventually, those of us skilled with improvising within our limitations

will see the results of this practice appear in your bank account. Maybe it'll be a spontaneous product announcement, or a last-minute, insanely successful product upsell.

How do practicing these skills equal dolla dolla bills? Those tiny acts of vulnerability, imagination, and improvisation add up. If you commit to practicing these skills everyday, eventually you might find yourself making a spreadsheet with a honest financial forecast. You'll have a presence of mind to pull together the scary numbers. Vulnerability combined with imagination will have built up enough fortitude to read the numbers that foretell of your business' demise if you wait too long to launch your next product.

My hope for you is that you'll have the vulnerability, imagination and improvisational skills to make that brand new book/product/course/client package appear out of seemingly nowhere and -- BOOM -- land in your bank account.



Emily Ann Peterson

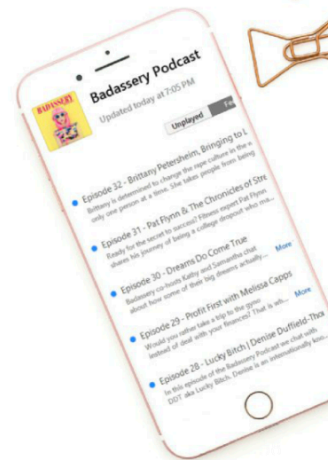
In 2013, Emily Ann Peterson was diagnosed with a degenerative neurological hand tremor, which forever altered her two-decade livelihood as a cellist/cello teacher. Refusing to lose her life's love of expression, she knew she'd have to be brave. In an act of neurological defiance, she expanded into wider mediums and broke through her creative glass ceiling, opening the door to limitless possibilities through songwriting. Her book *Bare Naked Bravery: How to Be Creatively Courageous* helps people from all walks of life understand what bravery really is - allowing them to step into it by creatively using vulnerability, imagination and improvisation. Her podcast, *Bare Naked Bravery*, features conversations with everyday heroes and creative entrepreneurs about the quiet successes and loud failures required to do the brave things for which we know and love them. Alongside the podcast, Emily also facilitates a Facebook group that offers a welcoming, safe community for creative misfits to finally find belonging and acceptance.

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