

CHANGE CREATOR



HUFFINGTON

Unlock
Your
Potential &
thrive

arianna



**COVER
STORY**

UNLOCK YOUR

POTENTIAL AND

THRIVE

**WITH ARIANNA HUFFINGTON
BY AMY AITMAN**



We want this to be the year that you truly thrive! We couldn't think of a better person to talk about success, how to take care of yourself and your business and what it really means to thrive in 2017 than Arianna Huffington. As we put away 2016 and look forward to a new year, we are challenging you—the change creators—to:

Take a fresh look at your life, your mission, and your health.

We've wanted to interview Arianna Huffington since we launched *Change Creator Magazine*. Not only is she one of **Time Magazine's Top 100 most influential women**, but she embraces the social entrepreneurial spirit of "make money; make a difference beautifully."

Now with the launch of her new company Thrive Global, Arianna is putting her money, her time and energy where her beliefs are, challenging the status quo of 24/7 workweeks, and burnout. With valuable resources, a global approach, and a fresh perspective on health and wellness, Thrive Global is set to permeate our consciousness in 2017.



Develop a Mind to Thrive

COVER
STORY



Today, we see the Arianna Huffington who embraces wellness, who is a staunch advocate for women's rights, and as someone who challenges the notion of stress, burnout, and the overconfident belief that we can get by on less sleep.

Today, she's the first to admit that her very definition of success has changed over the years:

"I would say my definition [of success] is less conventional today than it was ten years ago. Now I think the true definition of success should start with: do you feel happy and fulfilled, do you feel like your life has meaning, and are you able to spend enough time with the people that you love?"

Even a few short years ago, Arianna defined her life and measured success much differently. We can learn a lot from her experience. How did Arianna's values change over the years? How did she discover her life's work? When did she decide to share her hard-fought wisdom with the world? If we want to thrive, we must first understand that there's more to life than money, power, fame or even doing a job that you love.



How Arianna Learned to Thrive

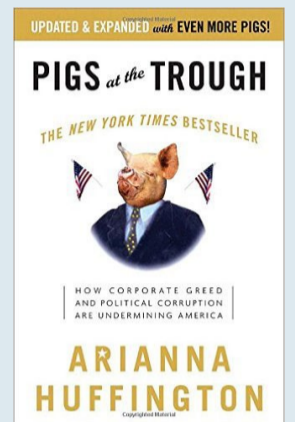
Overview

1997

Arianna sees corporate greed as a major problem which she dedicates her entire book to exposing. In 2009, she re-releases this book, and claims that there are still “villains playing with taxpayer money.” Greed, corruption—especially political corruption—are at the forefront of her thinking. She has yet to connect the lack of wisdom to health and wellness, and still defines success as influence, power, and money, although these are not part of her core beliefs.

Accomplishments

Writes *Pigs at the Trough, How Corporate Greed and Political Corruption Are Undermining America*



"My journey politically has always been about the role of government. My transformation had to do with my conclusion that to have a level playing field, we did need an activist government. That was the shift. It was a very specific transformation"

2003

After many years as a Republican, Arianna's political views begin to shift. She takes an opportunity to run as an independent in the State of California recall election, and continues to fight to give a voice to those who need it.



May, 2005

When Arianna launches *The Huffington Post*, her mission is simple: Get the news out to everyone. *The Huffington Post*, as we all know, becomes a beacon for free speech.

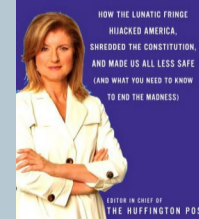
Launches The Huffington Post

THE
HUFFINGTON
POST

2008

In this book, Arianna confronts the “lunatic fringe” that is right-winged media, and takes on the compliant media.

ARIANNA HUFFINGTON
RIGHT IS WRONG

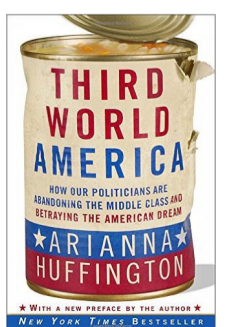


Writes *Right is Wrong*

2011

After her much publicized “wake up call” where she woke up in a pool of her own blood with a broken jaw and gash above her eye, Arianna begins to question the validity of her definition of success.

Writes *Third World America: How Our Politicians Are Abandoning the Middle Class and Betraying the American Dream*

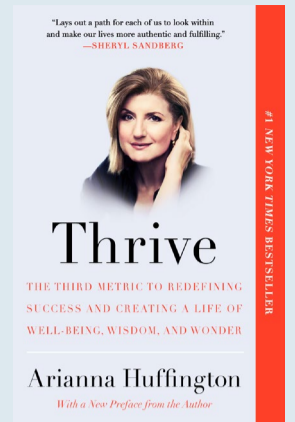


2014

After examining her life, Arianna discovers the great fallacy of power, money, and success in our culture, and defines the *third metric of success* in her book, *Thrive*.

This the beginning of her passion and drive to change the cultural status of burnout, bringing permission to take care of ourselves.

Writes New York Times best seller, *Thrive*.



2016

Sleep is the foundation for true cultural shift, as Arianna shows in this groundbreaking book that explores how our culture of sleep deprivation and burnout undermines our work lives, our personal lives, and keeps us away from discovering true wisdom.

Writes *The Sleep Revolution*



December 2016

Launches *Thrive Global*



COVER STORY

A Wake-up Call

If we are going to challenge conventions, we must first look within ourselves and acknowledge that there is a problem worth changing.

"To end the misery that has afflicted the human condition for thousands of years, you have to start with yourself and take responsibility for your inner state at any given moment. That means now." —Eckhart Tolle

For Arianna, this look at her life came from a broken cheekbone and a nasty

gash over her eye, the result of a collapse from total, utter exhaustion.

Here she was, growing one of the world's largest and most influential media companies as co-founder and editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post Media Group. She defined her success as power, influence, and wealth.

Waking up in a pool of her own blood did more than wake up her sensibilities; it started a cultural shift. "This isn't what success feels like," she thought. So began her search for what she now calls the third metric of success—finding true wisdom.

More Wisdom. Less Burnout.



With all the technological advancements we have at our disposal, with so many ways to discover our world, learn about what's going on, why do we lack true wisdom?

As Arianna says, *"We are starved of wisdom."* We are running on empty. In our interview with Arianna, she continues on to say, *"Thrive Global is a response to the escalating global epidemic of stress and burnout which is costing hundreds of billions of dollars per year in healthcare costs, in high turnover, employee disengagement, and productivity."*

It's time to redefine our priorities. If we want to embrace true wisdom in our lives, to discover that source of inspiration within all of us, we need to give back to the well, and that starts with taking care of our health.

In the past few issues of *Change Creator Magazine*, you may have noticed a shift in our consciousness, not only in the type of content we've been providing you but also in our deliberate efforts to give you valuable personal health and wellness takeaways.

If you don't take care of you, how are you going to discover those solutions that are vital to changing your world?

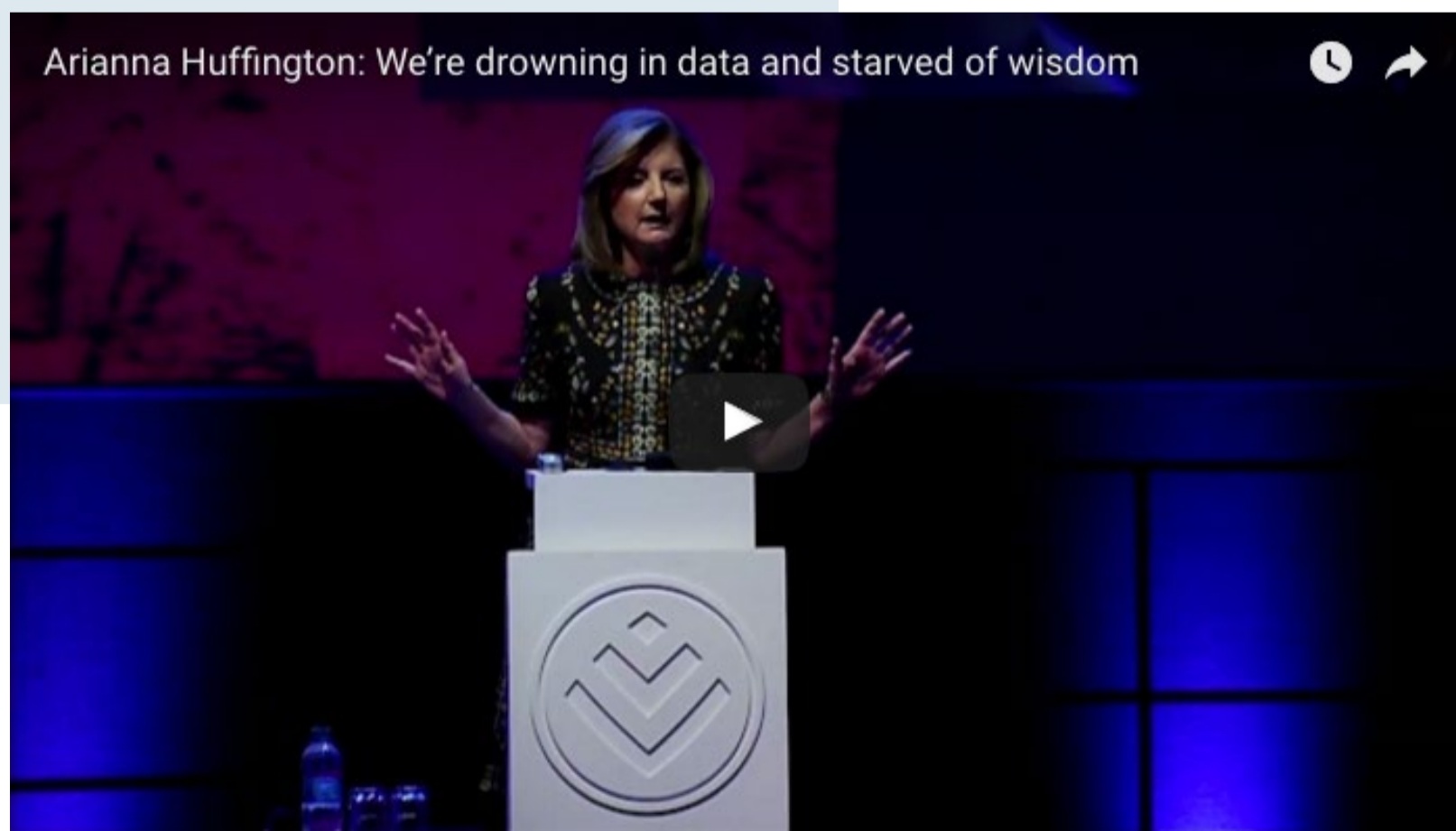
What it Means to Thrive

When asked about the role of money in society today and its impact on human behavior, Arianna explained:

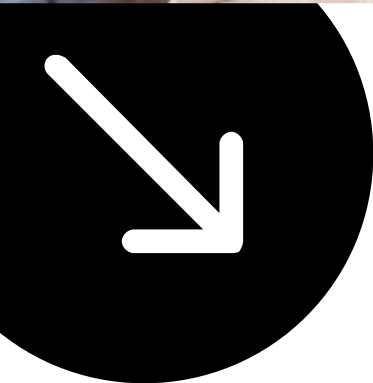
"Right now, our society's definition of success is still largely about the money and power. In fact, success, money, and power have practically become synonymous, and are each used as proxies for the others. This might work in the short-term, but eventually, money and power simply by themselves are like a two-legged stool—you can balance on them for a while, but eventually you're going to topple over. And more and more people around the world, at all levels of conventional success, are toppling over."

As we have seen in Arianna's personal transformation throughout the years, we must learn to define success more holistically. Systems, corporations, and people are **"toppling over"** because they haven't embraced the third metric of success.

We are living in a time of great change, yes, but we must not forget that many of us still define our value based on our paycheck, fame, or even influence over others. We have bought into the myth that even when we don't define our values by money or power, we are living a balanced life—that if we have a job, a career, or a mission that we love, our life is somehow balanced, and we should, therefore, be happy. This is inherently false.



Are We Unbalanced?



Although our society has begun to evolve the definition of success, we're still missing the mark. If we look at a scale where we place work on one side and life on the other, we are—by its very definition—opposing both sides. Arianna contends that this definition of success also needs to be

reexamined and changed—that life and work balance is a myth. We will never achieve work/life balance because they should never be opposing forces in our lives.

For far too long, we have been an unbalanced society, talking about life and work balance as though they shouldn't mix well together—that in order to have happiness, you are required to be in a constant struggle for resources, time, and priorities.

How many of us—even those of us who love our work—have thought, “My life is out of balance,” because we've spent too much time at work, and neglected the rest of our lives.

We're here to tell you in 2017, this does not have to be the way: Stop struggling. Stop wasting time and energy. Stop hoping that this will be the year you spend more time with your family. What about your work? It doesn't have to take over your life, even if you love it. Remember, quality of work is more important than quantity of work. Let's stop this dichotomy.

“I definitely don't believe in balance,” Arianna says. “for too long, we've had this notion of balance that not only

doesn't work but is premised on a myth. The truth—and the basis for Thrive Global—is that work and life, well-being and productivity, are not on opposite sides, so they don't need to be balanced. They're on the same side, and rise in tandem. Increase one and you increase the other. So there's nothing to balance; increasing well-being and the productivity that goes along with it is a win-win for work and life.”

We need to start approaching our lives, our priorities, and our values as a whole; we are not separate parts. Taking care of who we are helps us be better at everything we do. Arianna is not alone in this thinking; science backs her up:

*“Researchers report decrements in sustained performance as a function of fatigue, especially during and following one or more nights of complete sleep loss, or longer periods of reduced or fragmented sleep. Sleep loss appears to result in reduced reaction time, decreased vigilance, perceptual and cognitive distortions, and changes in affect” (Source: *Work & Stress: An International Journal of Work, Health & Organisations*).*

These are not just ideological theories; lack of sleep decreases productivity. When we take care of ourselves, we'll not only feel better, but our work will be better. So the next time you feel like staying up late to work on a project, skipping your morning workout, or not giving yourself a break, consider this: You are making choices—not just for you, but for our world.

Arianna knows more than anyone how important it is to slow down to do your best work. We asked Arianna what changes she made in her life when she had her wake-up call. She tells us:

“I made a lot of changes, most of which had to do with sleeping more, slowing down, and making time to disconnect and recharge with things like meditation, hiking, taking breaks. And though this meant working less, it also meant working better. I came to realize that being productive isn't about quantity of work, but quality. And that's the basis for my new company Thrive Global. As the science shows, when we prioritize our well-being, our creativity, well-being, and productivity all go up across the board.”

Make Money and Make a Difference



"A select few disrupters—the social entrepreneurs—develop, build, and scale their solutions in ways that bring about truly revolutionary change" (Huffington, Forward to Getting Beyond Better: How Social Entrepreneurship Works)

If we want to scale our efforts up a few notches, and be those social disruptors, we must first define our values, and know our work will play a vital role in this world. As Arianna says:

"I think social entrepreneurship is incredibly important and will play a vital part in redefining the role of business in the world, which we urgently need to do. Our world is facing multiple crises and government action alone isn't going to be enough to meet our challenges."

How do we define and prioritize our values? First, we acknowledge that to build sustainable, long-term companies, we must take care of our personal resources. If an entrepreneur wants to make a living and a difference, what needs to happen? Arianna explains:

"First, it's about values. Entrepreneurs—and especially, social entrepreneurs—need to define and prioritize their core values, not only in their business, but also in their lives. This is important because they need to launch and grow their business in a way so that their personal resources are as sustainable for the long-term as whatever product or service or technology they're marketing. It's like what they say when you get on airplanes: Put on your own oxygen mask before helping others."

Next, we must acknowledge that values can change over time, that the status quo of our society can and will change. Every generation can do things differently. Today, millennials are thinking about their lives differently from the previous generations. They aren't happy to just "find a job," but also require that job to have meaning or shared values with their lives.

When we understand that the undercurrent of meaning for our lives is changing, we see firsthand the impact of people like Arianna Huffington, who has been advocating these changes in our thinking for many years.

Our Values are changing

As we have seen, our values guide us. They help us make tough choices.

Imagine, then, that you are faced with having to decide between two new jobs. Both positions appear equal, but one role pays more. Easy choice? Take the job that pays more, right? But what if that job paid more, but didn't align with your values, and the other one did. Do you take the lesser paying role whose values are yours, or do you take the job that pays more?

These decisions are what drive us each day. We could justify taking that bigger paycheck. It's how our society has chosen to reward our hard work; it is one indicator of success that we're used to.

Or, we could put our lives where our values live, and seek out work that aligns with who we want to be. The great news: We are changing our values. The better news: We might not have to make these kinds of choices, anymore.

If we align our values, do work we believe in, and take care of our greatest resource—ourselves—the money, the influence, the success will come.

7 OUT OF 10 MILLENNIALS BELIEVE THEIR PERSONAL VALUES ARE SHARED BY THE ORGANIZATIONS THEY WORK FOR.

56% OF MILLENNIALS HAVE RULED OUT WORKING FOR A PARTICULAR ORGANIZATION BECAUSE OF ITS VALUES, STANDARDS, OR CONDUCT.

49% OF MILLENNIALS DIDN'T WORK ON A PROJECT BECAUSE IT WENT AGAINST THEIR PERSONAL VALUES OR ETHICS, EVEN IF THE COMPANY THEY WORKED FOR BEHAVED IN AN ETHICAL MANNER.

Source: Deloitte 2016

Harnessing Technology to Move Forward

Technology has always shaped our lives. It makes the impossible possible and gives us more transparency in our world. This has allowed human empathy to reach further than ever before and now people have a desire to help solve problems around the world.

When we asked Arianna for her thoughts about the role technology has played in the shift toward conscious business, she said:

“Technology is obviously a powerful force in our world today with consequences both good and bad. It’s brought us to an inflection point in history where technology has given us powers that sped up the pace of life and change beyond our capacity to digest it.”

We know that technology is never the inherent problem and it isn’t going away. Why not embrace it? Through technology, we now have a greater sightline into the conditions of humanity.

As Arianna asserts that we need to use technology “to help us serve our best interests Conscious business will clearly need to harness this technology and innovation to not only come up with new solutions and make them more effective, but also to help people integrate them into their lives.”



COVER
STORY

The Future of Thrive Global

COVER
STORY



After leaving *The Huffington Post*, we wondered what lessons Arianna learned there that she's now applying to her work in Thrive Global, and she told us:

"Some things are the same and some things are different. What the companies have in common is passion, a sense of mission and teams that are incredibly dedicated. But what's different—what I learned from the launch of HuffPost—is that we're all more productive when we take the time to recharge."


The mission of Thrive Global, as Arianna says, is to "change the way we work and live and end the collective delusion that burnout is the necessary price for success. As the latest science shows, our performance actually improves when we make our health and wellbeing a priority."

Thrive Global promises to "...revolutionize the way we work and live by ending the burnout epidemic with three key components in their action plan for 2017:






Prioritize the Wellbeing of Employees: Thrive Global is creating employee wellness programs, training, and workshops that help companies improve recruitment and reduce the wasted healthcare costs relating to stress and burnout. Uber, SAP, Accenture



Commerce: There are both a pop-up store and an e-commerce site with products sourced that will help entrepreneurs reduce stress and improve health in their lives. *"And third is our e-commerce platform that offers our curated selection of the best well-being technology, products, and services," Arianna says.*



The Media Platform: This is the hub of the Thrive Global brand where you will find inspirational stories from other leaders such as Jeff Bezos, Howard Shultz, Danny Bader, and even Ashton Kutcher in which they talk about how they thrive. She explains, *"The **Thrive Journal** is designed to be the global hub for the conversation on productivity and well-being. This features not just the latest science, but also commentary by new role models showing how you can be in the arena and be a successful leader without burning out."*



Thrive Global's main objective right now is expansion: *"Since our stress and burnout epidemic is global, Thrive Global was global from day one of launch. I hope our 2017 will include a great acceleration in the global culture shift that's already happening to roll back this burnout epidemic."*

It's up to us, the change creators—those brave souls who look inside themselves, discover a global problem, align our values with our lives, and then use whatever means necessary to disrupt norms around the world.

As we move forward in 2017, let's continue to thrive.

SUBSCRIBE

SUBSCRIBE NOW AND GET THE
FIRST MONTH 100% FREE.

SUBSCRIBE

ITUNES

GOOGLE



CHANGE CREATOR



Rebuilding
Communities
with Tropical
Fisheries

DR.
ALASDAIR
HARRIS

SKOLL
FOUNDATION
SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEUR
AWARDEE

COVER STORY

A RELUCTANT SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR



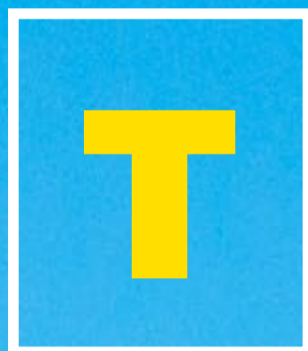
*The biologist who
turned conservation
into a social enterprise
with Dr. Alasdair Harris,
founder of Blue Ventures*

**BLUE
VENTURES
IS A RECIPIENT
OF THE SKOLL
AWARD FOR
SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

BY LAWRENCE MAKANA EYRE

On the southwest end of Madagascar live a semi-nomadic people called the Vezo. As they have for many centuries, the Vezo depend fully on the sea for subsistence, income and cultural identity, a reality reflected in their name which means “to struggle with the sea.”

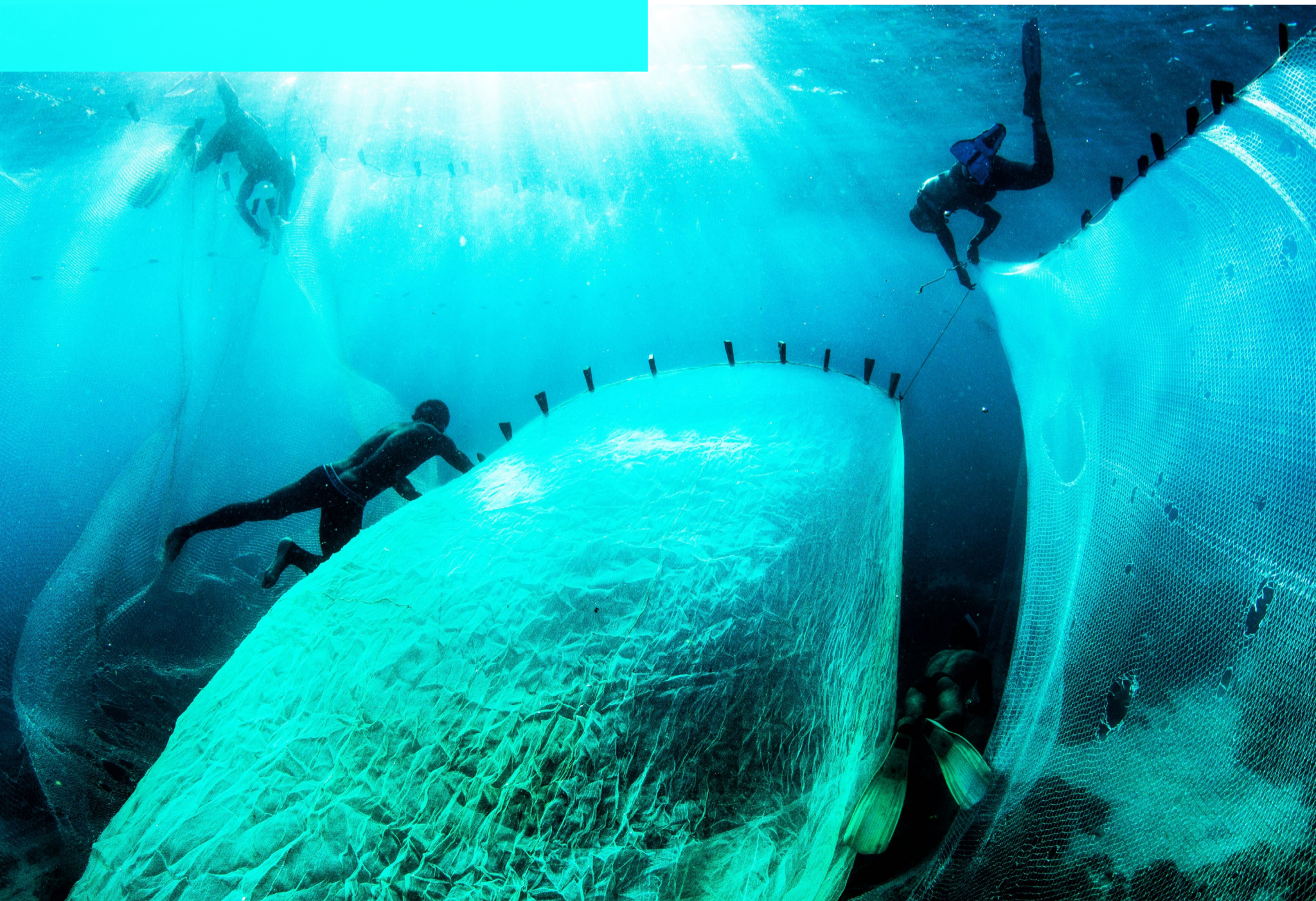
As a student in the United Kingdom some fifteen years ago, Alasdair Harris began taking research trips to Madagascar. A marine biologist by training, he witnessed with a scientist's eye the downward spiral of the region's ecosystem. The ocean, sprawling and healthy forty years earlier, had been reduced to a dead reef with a few fish or sea creatures.



he Vezo are among the most geographically isolated and economically marginalized people in the world. They live with few roads and little modern infrastructure. And they have contributed next to nothing to global warming. Climate change has brought vast changes to their way of life. The coastal reef, the foundation of their ecosystem, is dying. And global demand for seafood has brought European trawlers to their coastal waters, so that fish and other sea creatures, once plentiful, are dwindling badly. All the while their population steadily grows. Poverty is a daily struggle; half of their children are stunted by malnutrition.



That stark reality was deceptively complex. Fishermen, both the Vezo and the foreign trawlers, were taxing the ecosystem at an astonishing rate. But while the trawlers came and went, concerned only to maximize their catch, the Vezo fishermen knew the nuances of this complex environment, something that Harris – the western expert in marine ecosystems – was quick to recognize. After all, they had lived sustainably off the sea for generations. But now they were in a race to the bottom, a fight for survival where not fishing meant not eating. If a fisherman did not go for that last fish, his neighbor would. It was about feeding the children that night.





500 + million people worldwide depend on small scale fisheries for their livelihoods



250+ temporary octopus and crab fishery closures held in Madagascar to date



90% of global fish stocks are either overfished or fully fished



11% of Madagascar's seas are under local management

A NEW APPROACH TO CONSERVATION



If the Vezo were to survive, what was happening to their ecosystem would have to change, and so would they.

For Alasdair Harris, this meant conservation as a social enterprise: new tools, and new ways to engage people. Change would require a permanent presence on the ground – and money he did not have. “I was a reluctant social entrepreneur,” he says. But “I decided to hang up my diving fins and try to develop business-based solutions to the problems I was seeing.” All this led him to found Blue Ventures.

Choosing a social enterprise model was pivotal for Harris. For him, the innovation and sustainability principles that conservation lacked could be remedied by placing a business model at the core of his work.

“You have to have a means of covering your costs and paying your team and the bills,” Harris said during a recent interview with Adam Force, the founder of Change Creator. “While many ideas are incredibly important, without the fundamental means of keeping the lights on, they can’t evolve from being an interest, a club, or a society and to really gain traction and employ people. You have to have that business model.”

And evolve Blue Ventures did. A year later, it began experimenting with new conservation techniques by encouraging coastal Vezo to cordon off a small section of their octopus fishing area for a designated period of time. “There is no investment opportunity in the world that recovers as fast as fisheries can if we just give them time. We know this. We’re just stuck on how we get there.” Met with skepticism, at first he had a difficult time convincing fishermen not to do what seemed second nature to them. Indeed, how do you take less when the human need is increasing so much? How do you ask men not to fish when their families are hungry? But the results were surprising. Less was indeed more.

COVER STORY



“We did this trial, first in 2004, and the result was good, production was very significant,” said Felicia Fanomenta, a Vezo octopus gleaner and women’s advocate. **“As the production increased, all the other villages became interested in setting up reserves. They saw the benefits.”**

Blue Ventures found that with the closure model for octopuses in Madagascar, the stock would recover with a monthly internal rate of return of 92%, nearly doubling the money earned per month by fishermen. This trial, with the use of very fast reproducing species that are important for local markets, demonstrated to the community that recovering fisheries in this way just might be the best investment out there.

After this trial, Blue Ventures began to expand. It worked with communities to cordon off the habitats for fish and other sea creatures. It began facilitating the protection of mangrove forests and reefs. Importantly, everything Blue Ventures did was in collaboration with the local people and with their support and input.

From there, Blue Ventures expanded and replicated its model to other species in other regions of the world. The approach caught on fast, and the results were lasting. Today, models pioneered by Blue Ventures have enabled the creation of permanent protection zones for more than 10 percent of Madagascar’s inshore seabed. They have established five “innovation labs” in Madagascar and Belize, testing and demonstrating community-driven approaches, and have expanded to the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa, and West and Central Africa. They have also advised national fisheries authorities in several countries around the Indian Ocean on fishery closures, resulting in increases in yields of key stocks.



THE PATH TO A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MODEL



In 2003, during the early stages of Blue Ventures, something surprising happened. Harris and his team started to receive checks in the mail. Some months earlier, Harris had decided that he could best address conservation issues by using a sustainable business model rather than seeking funding from traditional sources. As it turned out, these checks were from his first customers, eager to take eco-tourism trips to Madagascar.

Blue Ventures uses eco-tourism and philanthropic investment to fund its work.

“It’s incredibly hard not to be idealistic and say we’re just going to pursue the conservation goal and the money will follow,” Harris says on why he chose an enterprise model. “But it’s heartbreaking to see so many worthy initiatives that don’t have the means to move beyond the finite donor funding. I really believe that if we can anchor these initiatives in business, they can grow to the scale of the problem. We can’t run a global environmental movement that is reliant on donations because that is incredibly vulnerable to changing donor trends which could be the end of everything we’re trying to achieve.”

Early on, Blue Ventures scrambled to adjust from academic research expeditions to commercialized eco tours with the goal of conservation. “We sailed by the seat of our pants for a few years until we built up

enough knowledge and some complex systems to start scaling Blue Ventures.” As they grew, they realized that more needed to be done. The fact that they were a business allowed them to change their approach and expand their reach without the fear of losing funding from donors or because of a government mandate.

Soon it seemed that targeting fisheries would not be enough. Harris moved into aquaculture and maternal and child health, adopting them as core elements of Blue Ventures’ work. The move proved formative as it made clear that conservation is about a lot more than just environmental management. Conservation needs to be a foundational part of community initiatives that might include helping women diversify their income, giving children important medical treatments, or simply opening new markets for the seafood gathered by Vezo women.

Today, some of the most successful seaweed and sea cucumber farmers are members of women’s associations and Blue Ventures provides health services to nearly 40,000 people in Madagascar.



W

ith the success of Blue Ventures in Madagascar came the urge to replicate and expand.

Again, Harris decided to take a slightly different approach to bringing his conservation efforts to scale. Just as he did when he started his enterprise, he went into the community to spread his conservation model. Through learning exchanges where the details of the model are shared with local fishermen and community leaders, Harris' approach is disseminated. The model to scale has also involved engaging partner organizations and enabling others to use this approach to conservation. Today, Blue Ventures engages dozens of partners to broaden their work and increase impact.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE BLUE VENTURES STORY

Alasdair Harris turned a lifelong fascination with the sea into a sustainable, replicable conservation effort and business enterprise. **In the fourteen years since its founding, Blue Ventures has received many awards, including the Skoll Award, an Ashoka Fellowship, the WWF Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Award, and many others.** But this story is more than just the profile of a successful conservationist and his organization. There are lessons that can be taken from this experience, especially for those who have an idea about social change but have yet to figure out how to get started.

HERE ARE THREE THINGS THAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE BLUE VENTURES STORY:

ONE: MONEY STILL NEEDS TO BE MADE.

First, like it or not, we live in a world where money needs to be made. Harris knew this from the start. While his goal was to change how conservation is done, he made financial sustainability a priority early on, building up his model around the core idea of paying his team and the rent. Harris himself is mindful that Blue Ventures evolved as it did because at its center there is a business model. The revenue from the business gave them the breathing room to develop a sustainability model to target the conservation issues in Madagascar. To this day, they use eco-tourism as a lever for conservation. While your idea does not have to end up being a social enterprise (there are thoughtful arguments against that), it is essential to have a pathway to long-term, reliable financing.



TWO: DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT FOR LASTING CHANGE.

Second, in founding Blue Ventures, Harris chose to diverge from traditional conservation methods and opt for something a bit different. The fact that Blue Ventures is a business is itself a change from the norm. He also chose a conservation approach that prioritized revitalizing fisheries, not necessarily the entire marine ecosystem and the biodiversity that has been lost in Madagascar over the last 40 years. The point being that an idea for a social venture will likely be more successful if the core idea is somehow different from the norm. As with a conventional business, which must differentiate from the competition, social ventures need to approach a problem differently to gain the traction and resources to be successful. Take a new look at your idea and compare it to what is already being done. Does your idea approach a problem differently? Do you have an angle or a bit of expertise that will allow you to make a better impact than your competitors? What does success look like for you?

THREE: GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE AND THE PART OF THE WORLD YOU ARE TRYING TO IMPACT.

Lastly, Harris did something critical when he began Blue Ventures: he spent a lot of time in Madagascar with the communities he wanted to help. He lived with the people, learned one of their languages (badly, he confesses), listened to them, and took the time to understand the complexities of their reality. Harris was able to effect change in Madagascar because he understood both the local context, the reasons for overfishing and the nuances of how marine life can bounce back if

the right conditions are re-established. Being a marine biologist and a person who understood the local context, Harris positioned himself to be successful. For aspiring social entrepreneurs, the lesson here is that success comes from knowing your target group and providing the means for effecting change. Too often, aid organizations have tried to make an impact but have failed because they lacked the understanding on the ground – the common example being aid planes dropping bags of flour where locals eat cornmeal.



CONSERVATION MOVING FORWARD

COVER STORY

Today, Alasdair Harris and Blue Ventures continue their conservation work, which has impacted over a quarter of million people. But Harris is still looking to the future. Blue Ventures now has staff in six countries, from the Caribbean to east Africa, the Indian Ocean and southeast Asia, and is supporting over 20 partners involved in replicating its models for conservation worldwide.





Having proved his approach to reviving fisheries, he is now turning to the west to build more accountability for the seafood we consume. Foreign trawlers, most of which have a devastating impact on the fragile and globally important marine ecosystems which underpin the livelihoods of some of the world's most vulnerable coastal communities, operate with little transparency and are driven by soaring global demand for seafood. "It's enormously important that we know more about what we're eating when it comes to seafood. It's no longer acceptable to just say it's tuna as tuna is a dozen species that could come from any one of three of four oceans." Increased awareness and accountability, Harris is convinced, will improve the lives of many people who every day rely on the sea for sustenance.

Lawrence Makana Eyre is a writer and consultant for organizations working in the social enterprise and development space. He has worked for Microsoft in Brussels, Ashoka in Cairo, and has consulted for NGOs and social enterprises in the Netherlands, Belgium, Poland and the U.S.

Exclusive Interview | Internet Connection Required



Change Creator

EP27: How Dr. Alasdair Harris is Rebuilding Communities with Tropical Fisheries



35:53

SUBSCRIBE

SUBSCRIBE NOW AND GET THE
FIRST MONTH 100% FREE.

SUBSCRIBE

ITUNES

GOOGLE

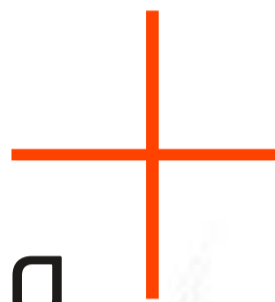


CHANGE CREATOR

NEEDLE



Building
Businesses
& Dreams



A full-body portrait of Neil Patel, a man with a shaved head and a light beard, smiling at the camera. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a white button-down shirt. The background is a solid dark color.

INTERVIEW: WITH
NEIL PATEL

Building Businesses and Dreams

with **Neil Patel**

by Frances Lacuesta Daley



T

here are more than one hundred fifty million blogs in the world. A new blog is created in every half second: This means a whopping 172, 800 blogs are made every day. As an aspiring blogger or entrepreneur, how can you position yourself in the blogosphere and get your voice out there?

While it may all sound overwhelming especially for a newbie, making people notice you in the virtual world is not entirely rocket science, just ask Internet marketing guru, Neil Patel.

For the seasoned folks in the digital sphere, Neil Patel is a respected name, revered by many as a top influencer and expert in online marketing.

If you want to learn how to bring traffic to your website and earn income, he's your go-to guy.

Do you want to understand SEO and site analytics? Neil can help with that too. What about using content marketing and social media marketing to generate traffic and sales? Well, Neil has them all figured out.

But before he became one of Forbes top 10 online marketers and founded Crazy Egg and KISSmetrics, among others; he was just a kid making a few bucks selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door and picking up trash at Knott's Berry Farm.

The only difference was he used all that he learned from his past experiences and went on to build several multi-million dollar software companies, all before he turned 30.

Starting **Young**

So how did Neil end up as one of the Internet's most successful entrepreneurs?

Simple. He started young.

He was born with a fire in his belly, knowing that he had to work smart to get ahead in life. It also helped that he grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. He learned how to see opportunities in everything and started to dabble in business even while he was still in high school.

Most of the time he was curious on how a business works, which eventually led him to start an online job site called Advice Monkey for \$5,000. But it wasn't all hunky-dory for this gutsy kid.

As someone who was just starting and with little knowledge of Internet marketing, he lost all the money he had to Internet marketing firms he hired to help him market his site.

But in true Neil Patel fashion, he used that experience to inspire him to learn Internet marketing that he became so good at it. And the rest, as they say, is history.

SEO, What?

Neil's disappointment with the online marketing firms he hired led him to learn Search Engine Optimization or SEO.

He defines it as the process of optimizing your online content so that a search engine likes to show it as a top result for searches of a particular keyword.

Of course, there is more to it than that, but Neil chose this as a starting point for his online marketing journey, simply because it was the most affordable marketing channel available for him that time.



Ways To Succeed With SEO



SEO, for him, is the magic sauce to make Google notice you and give you a prime spot (read: top 5) on the search results page whenever someone searches for your keyword.

If you're only getting started in SEO, Neil offers these 5 tips:

1

Content is King.

We all heard this before, and there's a reason why producing quality content is that important. Search engines like Google look at user metrics and how long people stay on your site.

If Google notices that people click on a result but click the back button a few seconds after that, it will give the impression that people are not as interested in your site.

This can result to your website dropping in Google's rankings. It is therefore important to have a hook on user experience -- you have to make sure you give people what they need. In this case, great content is key.

2

Focus on building links.

Part of his off-page SEO tactic, backlinks are a good way to drive traffic to your site. What is a backlink you might ask? Webopedia defines it as a hyperlink that links from a web page, back to your site.

When reading blogs, you will see some highlighted, clickable words referred to as anchor text. They are used to link one web page to another. Having several websites link back to you can help boost your traffic and increase your search engine rankings.

In link building, however, Neil has this to add. Be the first to reach out to big, popular websites and other online influencers. Send them a note asking to check out your content and link back to your site if they like it. You can use a tool like ahrefs.com to show you who links to your competitors so you can reach out to them too.

3

Optimize Your HTML.

Nope, you don't have to be a professional coder to figure this out. With sites like Wordpress and plugins like Yoast SEO, you can easily optimize your title tags or simply put, headline or title. Next, add meta-descriptions or a short excerpt of your content. Subheads are also helpful since they support your headline or title.

A great search engine experience.

When navigating a website, you want your users to stay and enjoy being on your site. How do you achieve this?

First, consider the loading time. These days, most people don't have the patience to stay on your site if it doesn't load in less than 20 seconds. I mean, seriously, who wants to stay on your site if it takes forever to load? Second, it has to be mobile-friendly. With millions of users staring at their phones every day, you will be far behind if your site is not mobile responsive. Another thing to consider is the site's security. If you have an e-commerce store, you want your customers to shop securely, right?

Shares matter.

While it's every marketer's dream to have a viral hit, it's not always the key to getting more traffic to your site. The quality of social shares you get matters as well. The key to having a viral post also depends on how well you promote your blog and the quality of the content you make.



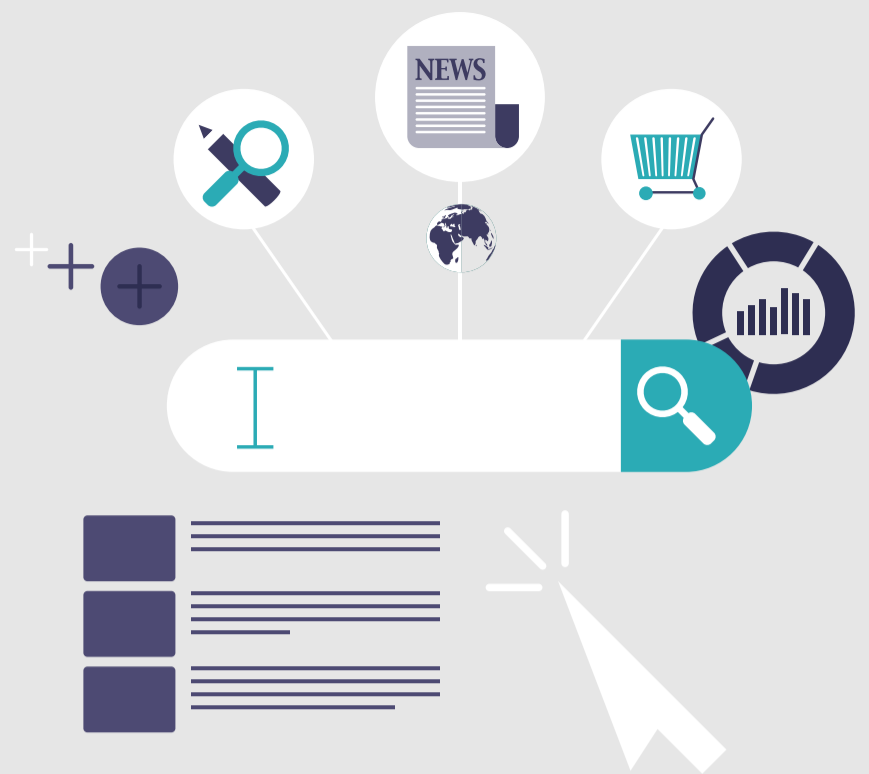
SEO Need Not Be Stressful

This might all sound tedious and complicated for those who are new to SEO and Internet marketing in general.

Before you start making any excuses on why you can't bother on SEO and other online marketing gobbledygook, you'll be surprised that Neil doesn't spend his days stressing out on SEO for his sites. He does it only whenever he likes and still end up number 1 and number 2 on Google rankings for online marketing. Savvy, right?

The good thing about SEO is once you have set it up correctly; you will only need to update it once in awhile. The only thing that you need to be consistent about is producing great content.

Neil doesn't think much about SEO when he writes. He's more concerned about churning out great content; that SEO takes a backseat. He



believes that if you produce good content, people will eventually share it and link back to your site.

Focusing too much on SEO for your articles can sometimes be detrimental to the outcome. You might use too many keywords, and it can lose its authenticity. People know the difference between bad content and good content, so give it all you've got when writing.

Spend Time On Social Outreach

Neil does a lot of social outreach in Twitter and Facebook. He stresses that everything is data-driven in marketing and should be looked at in a quantitative and qualitative perspective.

Quantitative means knowing the actual numbers and qualitative examples are surveys, reviews, and information. Both will help you understand your audience and what they want. Social platforms like Twitter and

Facebook can be a great place to get people to visit your site. Once you capture the audience, you lead them to a landing page where you can invite them to a webinar and eventually convert them to customers.

Regarding conversion, there's no single tip on it. You can use the quantitative and qualitative data you collected to solve customer issues and improve their user experience through that. Understanding the behavior and psychographics of your readers can help you increase your conversion rates.

Keep Learning

For those who are just starting out, Neil says to learn as much as you can. You don't have to spend thousands of dollars to know your basic SEO. There is a lot of free information out there. His site, www.neilpatel.com, has a ton of quality content you can start with.

If you have money, however, spend it on educating yourself or hire someone who knows what he's doing and get results faster.



INTERVIEW: WITH NEIL PATEL

Own Your Dreams

While Neil is known more for his expertise in online marketing, he is also passionate about helping people own their dreams. In the book, *Hustle: The Power to Charge Your Life With Money, Meaning and Momentum*, Neil and his co-authors, Patrick Vlaskovits, and Jonas Koffler reveal their secrets to living a successful life.

Neil mentions that most people find it hard to succeed in life, thinking that you need to be rich, and you must have a lot of connections to get what you want. The book seeks to break that assumption and challenge the readers to stop renting their dreams and start owning them.

With Neil's long line of accomplishments, he has proven that one needs a lot of determination and persistence to succeed in life. No matter how difficult, you just have to keep moving forward and never give up.



WORDS OF

WISDOM

FROM NEIL PATEL

SHARE THE INSPIRATION!

1 "SEO is a race, not a sprint"

2 "Create content that teaches. You can't give up. You need to be consistently awesome."

3 "It's not about the amount of time you devote, but rather what you devote that time to that counts."

4 "Don't look back and ask, why? Look ahead and ask, why not."

5 "Often times in order to capture your dreams, it will require you to chase your fears."

6 "Someday is a dangerous word."

7 "Don't make excuses, make improvements."

8 "If your friends don't motivate and inspire you, you're choosing them all wrong."

FULL INTERVIEW WITH **NEIL PATEL**

Internet connection required



Change Creator

EP19: How To Drive Traffic to Your Website Successfully

#Business



Frances Lacuesta Daley, writer and entrepreneur. She blogs about social entrepreneurship and personal development at [Women of Change Collective](#). Follow her on [Twitter @woccollect](#)

Get the Change Creator Podcast

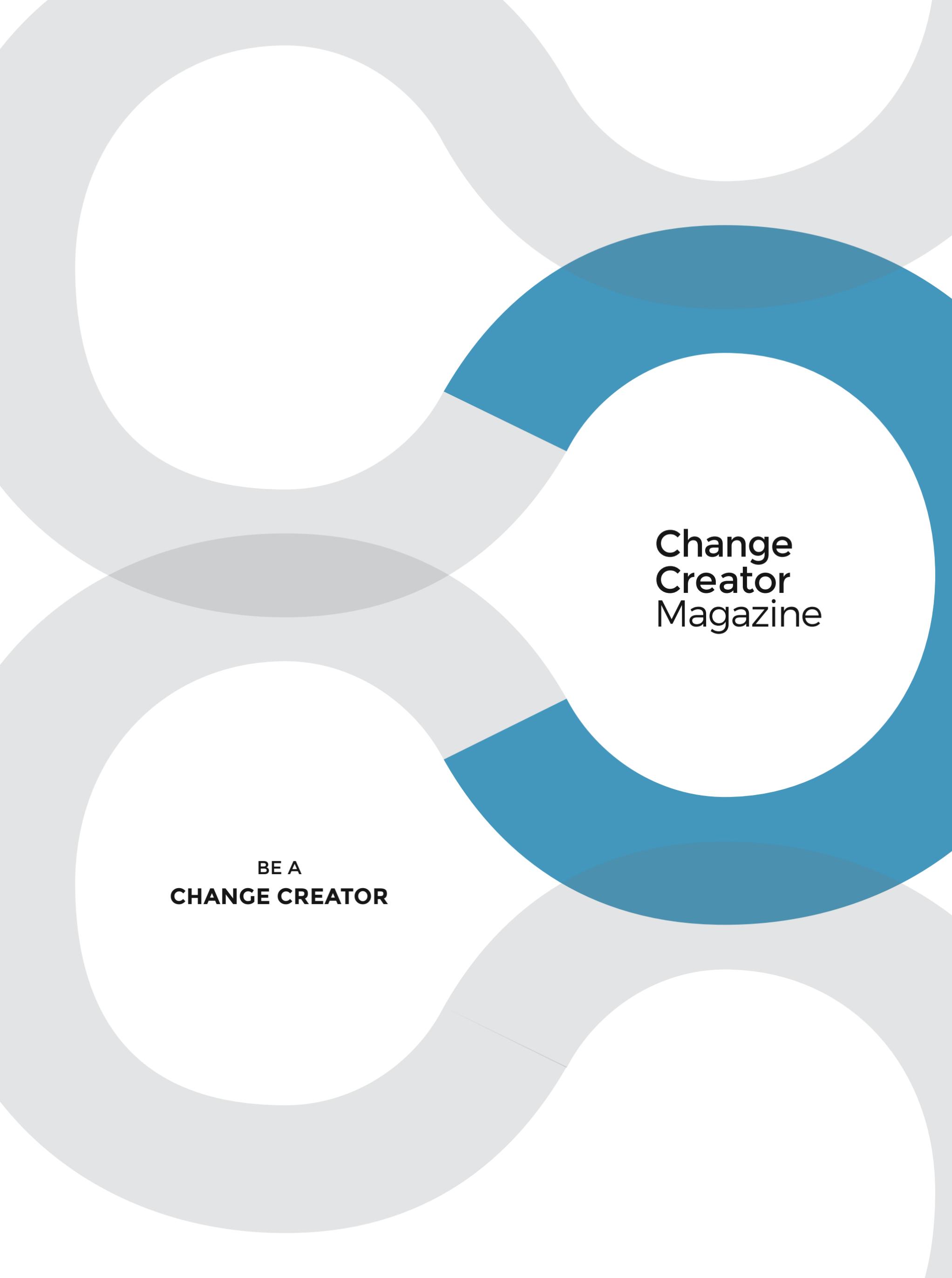


Subscribe to our Podcast to hear all the exclusive interviews with key social and business entrepreneurs who share their “how-to” tips and inspiring insights.

The Podcast perfectly complements the magazine, offering you a chance to hear from experts first hand.

If you find this of value, please let us know by sharing a comment on iTunes for support! We truly appreciate it as it goes a very long way to making us better!





Change
Creator
Magazine

BE A
CHANGE CREATOR