

September 2022

[\[138\] Tuesday, Sept 06 2022 \[announcement\]](#) ✓✓🎤

[\[139\] Tuesday, Sept 13 2022 \[thank you note\]](#) ✓✓🎤

[\[140\] Tuesday, Sept 20 2022 \[off this week\]](#) ✓✓🎤

[\[141\] Tuesday, Sept 27 2022 \[explanation\]](#) ✓🎤

[\[Monthly Recap\] Wednesday, Oct 5th 2022](#)

- **Regular Newsletter Email:** Tuesdays
 - **Weekly Newsletter Email:** Friday
 - **Monthly Recap Email:** First Wednesday of following month
 - Resend to Unopened: If doing, ensure there is a blurb written explaining why they are receiving it again and tag
 - [SOP GDOC // Scheduling an Email/Newsletter Campaign](#)
 - [SOP VIDEO // Scheduling an Email/Newsletter Campaign](#)
-

Ideas to write about:

- [Google Doc with all newsletter ideas](#)
 - Vox with Kate - the pressure to produce - and past self who took good care of me
-

[138] Tuesday, Sept 06 2022 [announcement]



NOTE: Write promo for Led By Stories

SUBJECT LINE: another big decision (yes, again)

Preheader text: why I'm stepping back for a bit

It's been two weeks since my last email, and I hardly ever miss a weekly email.

I have written thousands of emails in the last seven years. Only a cataclysm of events such as the last two weeks could possibly keep me from your inbox.

Someone should probably write a country song about it, so I can play it backwards.

First I let go of my Land Rover LR3 after two mechanics declared it scrap metal. I was grateful to get \$2000 from a friend who says she'll use it for parts.

Next I let go of a wonderful man I love so dearly that being without him feels like being murdered in slow motion. I didn't know it was even possible to feel this heartbroken. And as a divorcing person, that's really saying something.

A few days later I went to a lawyer's office and signed over my house to my soon-to-be ex-husband. I took my kids to Swiss Chalet after and spilled a full glass of Shirley Temple all over my dress, my kid, and the booth we were eating in. Its worn-out fabric was full of awful-looking holes that the soda just kind of seeped into. I walked out with a sticky leg, feeling grosser than gross.

Finally, on Tuesday, I let go of all of my employees.

I have been carrying so much for so long. It was time to put something down.

Letting go of my team is the most difficult decision I've ever made in my business. Building it is one of the things I'm most proud of. We supported and cared for each other like no job I've ever been at. They had my back, always. Our systems were tight and they worked. Everyone loved their jobs and told me so often.

I wanted it to be forever. I wanted us to ride off into the sunset together with duffel bags full of money. I wanted a lot of things I don't get to have.

"You won't always have to row the boat alone," my bestie told me while we sat together in the faded plastic Adirondack chairs in my backyard. I was still in the middle of it. I'd made the decision but I'd only just said it out loud for the first time.

There we were in the eye of the hurricane, my face all splotchy and red, feeling like I'd just lost everything I'd ever loved.

The truth is that I have been rowing the boat alone for a long time. It's time to put the oars down for a little while, so that I can take care of Tarzan.

I'm teaching myself how to camp.
I'm learning sprint canoe.
I'm giving myself time to become whole again.

Not for my children, not for my employees, not for my customers, not for anyone but me.

I'm doing it for Tarzan.

What does that mean for you, as my subscribers and customers? I'm not sure yet. It might not look that different. Whatever comes next, email is one hundred percent my *thing*.

What I know for sure is that I'll be here continuing to show up in your inbox, because writing is how I get through the sticky parts of life.

This chapter happens to be stickier than pine sap, so there's a lot to write about. (Right here, and also on [Substack](#) where my stories are more personal.)

It means a lot to me to have you here as a subscriber, reading my work. Many of you will hit "reply" and offer me a warm hug this week, that I know for sure.

Thank you for that, btw. I really need those.

The best way you can support me is by continuing to read my work, by forwarding it with a friend who might like to read it, or - and this would be my absolute dream - reading it aloud in bed to someone you love.

I have done so much letting go I wonder what little of me will be left when this is all over.

But I will not be letting go of you, NAME. (Or at least, not your email address. Not unless you unsubscribe.)

There's one thing I really, like, *really really* want to do right now, and that's write. Knowing there will be eyes waiting to read those words, to grow with me, to learn from my mistakes, to bear the weight of it all with me, and honestly, just to *witness* me...

It means everything to me.

Thank you again and as always 🙏

Tarzan

P.S.

We'd been planning to open a writing group for anyone who's ever said, "I wish I wrote more." Many subscribers were excited about that.

That's on hold for now.

In the meantime a fellow copywriter, Zafira Rajan, sent me a sneak peek of an offer that's just a baby, but which she apparently birthed fully formed. I can't even believe how beautiful it is.

It's called [the tide pool](#) and honestly, it's just what I would've *wished* for my people. Her sales page took my breath away. I told Zafira, "It pulses like the beat of my heart. May I share it?"

This is not an affiliate offer. It's just a beautiful something I thought you might want to see.

Because beautiful writing is meant to be shared. Yours included.

[139] Tuesday, Sept 13 2022 [thank you note]



SUBJECT LINE: wow, thank you 🙏

SUBJECT LINE: this really surprised me (in a good way)

Preheader text: what happened after last week's email

I'm still digesting the inbox full of replies to [last week's email](#). My subscribers sent me over a hundred of them within hours of sending it.

Wow. I can't even respond to them all without making it my full-time job, but I will certainly try.

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you

Thank you times infinity and beyond

A lot of you shared your own stories of personal struggle and spoiler: everyone is going through a lot. People who'd been

through divorce, let employees go or dismantled their lives and businesses in some way all assured me that I would be okay, no matter how lost I feel in my grief.

“The seeds that were sown there are at the heart of all the best things in my life today,” one subscriber said of leaving her husband and her church. That made me cry hot tears all over my keyboard.

One subscriber sent me her phone number, in case I needed to talk. Another offered to make me a Shirley Temple. Another subscriber ended her email saying, “I’ll row the boat with you.”

A SAAS business owner who lives near me (and took [Email Stars](#) this summer) offered to make me dinner. “My hubs is an amazing cook!” she said.

I said yes.

Those emails got me thinking...

Are we ever **really** rowing the boat alone, or does it only **feel** that way sometimes?

→ My bestie has been sitting in the bow of my boat this whole time, bailing out water and making sure I don’t drown.

She is the reason my body did not disappear completely from lack of nourishment. She chased me down when I ignored her texts and calls, usually with a plate of something. She is the reason I signed up to learn sprint canoe.



→ My OBM Sandra has not taken her hand off the wheel since the day I told her “I’m leaving my husband and P.S. I need four weeks off.” (I guess rowboats don’t have steering wheels, but you get it.)

She kept my team on track with our promotional plans, program updates and delivery, listened to dozens of my bad ideas and gently kept us headed toward our company goals while monitoring *every single transaction* that went through our many bank accounts.

→ My assistant ran defense on my inbox like it was the fourth quarter of the Superbowl (aaaand we’ve officially crossed into mixed-metaphor territory now.) She even got mad at my husband for me on the days when I didn’t have any energy left for anger.

This isn’t true for everyone, but I wonder how many of us just need to lift our heads from the muck for a second and observe the love and support that is available to us. That turned out to be true for me, anyway.

Thank you for your emails, with all my heart. 🙏

I read them at my desk.

I read them in bed.

I read them in the bathtub.

I saved a few to read to my bestie.

I flicked through them on my porch smoking a hand-rolled herbal blend with a pinch of tobacco. (P.S. I still smoke.)

I want you to know that I am still in this with you.

As a person who has been successful in business and benefited enormously from the fruits of capitalism, I believe it is my obligation to work toward healing the underlying systemic issues and social inequalities that allow people like me to easily become successful, while others have to work ten times harder (or more).

WE NEED ALL HANDS ON DECK FOR THIS WORK.

We need online business owners, course creators and coaches to stop making promises they can't keep, and figure out which ones they can. We need corporate leaders to examine their HR practices to ensure that their non-male, non-white employees (including those who've given birth) are rising in the ranks at the same rate as their white male counterparts. We need transgendered and non-binary folks to show us what it means to live in integrity with our bodies, to model what inclusion really looks like, starting with our own exiled parts.

I could go on, and I will.

I am not done with this industry. I am not done with sales funnels. (I mapped one in Funnelytics for a client today and remembered how much I love it.) I still believe that online business holds tremendous possibility for traditionally underserved and marginalized communities for whom it would be infinitely more out-of-reach to open, say, a franchise or brick-and-mortar shop.

There is still a lot of work to do.

I am watching with my mouth agape as my peers, clients, and customers begin to speak out (often quite loudly) about predatory business practices that they are no longer willing to tolerate.

If that's you, please know that you have my support.

Right now I have the enormous privilege of being able to rest for a moment, so I'm exercising that privilege. But there is a sea change coming and we will all need to row the boat together if we are going to create real and lasting change.

Ready the oars, FIRST NAME. There's work to be done.

With love,
Tarzan

P.S.

Rest in power, Baxter. Your dog-mama misses you.

P.P.S.

I wrote this email mostly in my head while smoking an herbal blend on my porch and sipping a can of Niagara Cider, which is the best cider there is, btw.

If you live locally, I recommend you [buy some](#). My commission will be the smile on your face when you take your first sip.

[140] Tuesday, Sept 20 2022 [off this week]



SUBJECT LINE: what I'm doing for healing

SUBJECT LINE: a non-exhaustive list of solutions for tender hearts

Preheader text: P.S. I'm off this week

Waving from Bear Country aka Stan and Jan Country 🙌😂

I'm off this week, [teaching myself how to camp](#) on a small island in Northern Ontario called Beausoleil. Apparently the sunsets are glorious. The bears too.

Assuming I don't get eaten by one, I will let you know.



Photo by [Joel Smith Photography](#), 2022

I am still combing through your replies to [the email I sent about letting my employees go](#). If I didn't reply to yours it's not for lack of gratitude—I needed every spare moment to learn about bear

deterrents. I will follow this up shortly with another email about why I made this difficult choice.

I also wanted to share some of the things I'm doing for my own healing. For people like me whose nervous systems are too dysregulated for meditation, you might find this comforting.

- ☐ *Eat ramen but with protein now*
- ☐ *Work on my book*
- ☐ *Swim in freshwater 3x/week ([some call this "canoeing"](#))*
- ☐ *Learn about backcountry camping from [Camper Christina](#)*
- ☐ *Listen to Le temps est bon on repeat*
- ☐ *Smoke hand-rolled tobacco*
- ☐ *Play games on my iPhone*
- ☐ *Unfollow accounts that feature pictures of my friends at dinners, backyard hangouts and camping trips I'm no longer invited to because breakups are confusing and no one knows what to do and sometimes ppl forget to be kind*
- ☐ *Run*
- ☐ *Read novels in bed—two I'll never forget are All The Light We Cannot See and American Dirt*
- ☐ *Not do drugs ([I'm on sabbatical](#))*
- ☐ *Take my kids to Swiss Chalet*
- ☐ *Do puzzles from the library*
- ☐ *Recognize that washing your hair is self-care*
- ☐ *Go to my bestie's house for dinner (also 3x/week)*
- ☐ *Shop for boats on the internet*
- ☐ *Plan a trip to South Africa*
- ☐ *Work on giving myself grace*

Back next week and back to business. Thanks for being here. I'm so fckn grateful.

Tarzan "Bear Drama" Kay

[141] Tuesday, Sept 27 2022 [explanation]



SUBJECT LINE: this was not smart 🤔

SUBJECT LINE: why I let my team go

Preheader text: the email you've been asking for

Cascades of angry-looking waves push up against my kayak, threatening to tip me into the cold black water of Lake Huron. They are frothy and white at the edges, coming at me with a force that I was not prepared for.



I'm recounting the many mistakes I made to get to this point.

I didn't check the wind speed before I left.

No one has my itinerary or knows where I am.

My phone has 8% battery left and all I have for backup navigation is a shitty tourist map that's disintegrating inside a dry bag somewhere in the bowels of my kayak.

I am lost.

“Georgian Bay Islands is the largest freshwater archipelago in the world, comprising more than 30,000 islands,” I remember reading on some placard yesterday.

Thirty. Fucking. Thousand.

Why did I not learn how to read a goddamn compass? I am such an asshole. And now I am a lost asshole, surrounded by islands I do not recognize.

Every vein in my body is pulsing with adrenaline as I watch the waves from the sandy shore of some unknown island. Only by sheer force of will do I talk myself back into my boat, where I beat back the waves toward the shore of what my best guess tells me is the island I’m looking for.

I will save the details of this story for another day (or [Substack](#), more likely), but, after much frantic consulting of my near-dead phone and soggy map, I eventually found Beausoleil Island, where I abandoned my kayak on a narrow inlet and hike-ran back to the safety of my campsite.

There is a time for muscling through a patch of rough weather, but an experienced paddler knows when it’s time to call it.

A lot of subscribers have asked to hear more about why I chose to dial my business back so suddenly and unexpectedly, especially as a profitable company with a wonderful team in place.

There’s something few people talk about in conversations about growing your team so that you can “stay inside your zone of genius.”

With every person you add to your team, the pressure to produce is increased. And for a personal brand like mine, that means more live calls, more free trainings, a variety of offers at different price

points, showing up in the right places, doing more publicity, publishing more content, more more more.

The relentless pressure to produce the amount of output required to create enough revenue to keep everyone employed?

It's a lot.

It felt a lot like sitting in that kayak, paddling frantically against those frothy waves, hoping hoping hoping to make it around the next bend, and that there will be shelter there.

The truth is I have felt profoundly dysregulated for some time, in business and in life.

About a month ago Sandra and I sat down to plan our next offer, a small-group mastermind, which we needed to promote almost immediately in order to hit our baseline revenue. I got off that call and a *knowing* in me woke up all at once.

I realized that I would not be able to lead from this adrenaline-fueled, highly-activated state. Not in the way my customers need me to. Being in leadership requires presence and clear-headedness, and I was short on both.

When I spoke about putting some things down for a while in [this email](#), what I mean is that I'm taking time to rest, reflect and regulate. Not an easy task.

One of the great travesties of capitalism is that it teaches us we must be in a state of constant productivity, since our worth is determined by what and how much we are able to produce.

This is a lie.

It keeps us caught in a cycle of never-enoughness, leaving little time for reflection and integration, the very things we need in order to have meaningful, joyous and FULL lives.

So that is what I am now doing. Camping, paddling, writing, listening for what's next. There will be another season of hustle and hard work around the corner. There always is.

In the meantime, I'm working with just two clients on projects I'm actually really excited about. I have a business coach ([Sonia Simone](#)) and a writing coach ([Sofia Apostol](#)) that I'm working with, both of whom show up on our calls in that calm, regulated place as the sort of leader I aspire to be myself.

It all feels very right.

Even though it's not the shiny 7-figure affair I had going, I am prouder of myself than I have ever been. My subscribers (i.e. you) are more supportive and responsive than they've ever been in my seven years of email marketing, so I know I'm doing something right.

And SRSLY, [you should see me paddle](#).

Watch out, Dartmouth 2023. I'm coming for my medal.

xo,
Tarzan

[Monthly Recap] Wednesday, Oct 5th 2022  

SUBJECT LINE: dropped promo, fired employees, and survived bears

SUBJECT LINE: Most action packed months of the year? Hope so.

Preheader text: what you missed that last two months

Oh, heyyyy! 🙌

It's been a minute, and I can explain.

I missed last month's recap because frankly, I was too busy putting out fires and making big decisions. I hope you still remember who I am.

Just in case, this should refresh you:

As part of the runway for our September promo, I shared [two uncomfortable truths that no one talks about](#) concerning what it takes to build one online business.

People appreciated that a LOT.

Subscribers were pretty shocked (and excited and relieved and curious) when I announced that [we canceled our promotion of Digital Course Academy](#), and why.

Just a few weeks later, totally unexpectedly, I shared that [I let all of my employees go](#). That was the hardest 27 minutes of my entire career.

Hundreds of subscribers replied to that email, and I'm still working my way through all those replies. I was so blown away by the response that [I wrote an email about it](#). Because so many subscribers asked, I finally shared [why I made this seemingly sudden decision](#), given that I have/had a great team and a profitable business.

That about catches you up, [FIRST NAME].

I'm also super proud of the writing I'm doing on Substack, which is a totally different email list and is 100% story based. No business there. This month I wrote a ton about [learning to camp by myself](#). Spoiler: it's mostly just about bear spray. I'd love it if you joined that list too—it's my favorite thing right now! But you can also [read those stories on the web](#) without signing up.

Till next month then!

Tarzan