

MARKETING FOR GROWTH



NUBIA DUVALL WILSON is an author, poet, journalist and the owner of Cielo Consulting, a boutique public relations & marketing agency with clients worldwide. Based in South Orange, NJ, Nubia recently published a novella, *The Survivors Club*, inspired by her journey to heal as a survivor of childhood sexual abuse. Nubia is using her supernatural thriller to donate to charities protecting children from abuse, to expand awareness for PTSD and to bring a voice to those who have none.

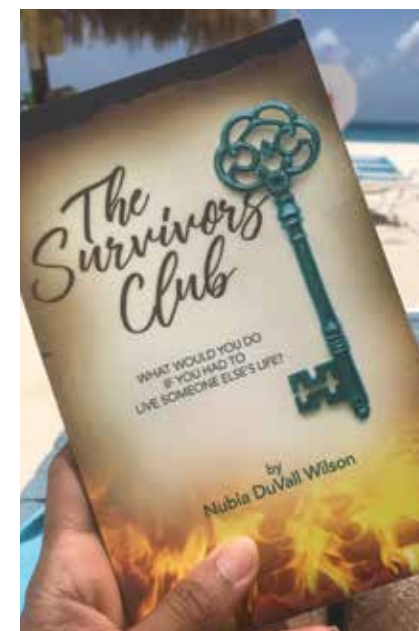
The start of my entrepreneur journey is not unlike many other moms whose children made them realize their life needed more balance, and it was time to quit their regular 9-to-5. One major difference—it was really a dentist appointment that was the start of a new life for me. When Ella was six months old in January 2014, I was sitting in a dentist chair of a pretty swanky dental spa, looking for a new public relations job in New Jersey on MediaBistro.com. My commute to Manhattan was challenging, with a child in daycare and my travel public relations agency life taking its toll on my family (despite the fact that I truly loved my job and the work that I did).

My new dentist looked at my intake chart, which said my career title, and then asked me if I wanted a full-time marketing and communications position at his practice. I almost blurted, “Hell yes,” but instead calmly agreed to discuss the position over lunch later that week. Of course, my husband was suspicious when I came home from teeth cleaning with a job offer—but then again, wild things like this often happened to me, and you can read about them in my first published work, *Encounters with Strangers*.

Fast forward a year-and-a-half later in September 2015, and I had finally found the confidence to quit my full-time gig and start my own public relations firm: Cielo Consulting. I was armed with ten plus years of communications and marketing experience, as well as a strong network of peers who believed in me and wanted to help me succeed. I had to

do something I wasn’t used to doing because I never wanted to seem weak or imperfect—ask for and accept help. In doing so, three months later, I was able to quit my job with two clients already, and the dentist turned into a client for project work. I had to take a pay cut, but it didn’t matter because I saw my little ones more hours every day, and I was finally building something of my own. While working out of my co-working space in South Orange, Work and Play, Cielo Consulting’s success continued over the next six months, but then a roadblock appeared. Being a mother of two children suddenly made me conscious of my sexual abuse as a child, and I thought my world was crashing around me at a time when life seemed so perfect. I couldn’t believe this was happening. I was crushed, and I was worried my business would suffer during a terribly challenging time.

While managing a household with two toddlers fifteen months apart, dealing with PTSD, and running a growing business, I decided to seek therapy and write to help me heal. I have always written poetry and short stories, first publishing a collection of humorous vignettes, *Encounters with Strangers*, literally, a week before having my first-born Ella, in June 2013. The person who had spent decades creating this tough, “perfect” exterior was now going to let her family, friends, and husband see that she needed support, a shoulder to cry on and advice. The more I told people in confidence what I was going through (and the more I learned they wouldn’t judge me for something that wasn’t my fault), the stronger I became and more comfortable I felt in my own skin.



“HIDING BEHIND MY EMOTIONS WAS FAR EASIER FOR ME THAN FACING THEM HEAD ON, BUT I KNEW THAT I COULDN'T CONTINUE TO SHROUD WHAT I HAD BURIED FOR MORE THAN THIRTY YEARS.”



I also scaled my business by bringing on larger clients that enabled me to hire part-time help through independent contractors. At a time when I was experiencing some of the biggest hardships in my personal life, my business doubled in revenue. One of the things that helped me during my healing process—and continues to do so today—was taking Meg Berry’s Tantra Core classes. Tantra is a 5,000-year-old philosophy of empowering health and wellness from India that birthed all of ‘Yoga,’ the chakras, and pranaic healing (not many know this fact). Meg’s Tantra-infused Pilates workout balances strength and flexibility, boosts mental clarity, reduces cortisol and increases the release of serotonin and dopamine. The breath work and choreography in these classes freed emotions that I had hidden, as well as empowered me to reconnect with my mind and body. There were times when I cried and there were times when I needed a little extra TLC after class (breath work), and Meg was there to support throughout.

It was at this time, in the summer

of 2017, that I had decided to work on my first novella, *The Survivors Club*, which is based on a short story I had written before I had children. It is about five people brought together mysteriously to travel back and forth in time to take over the life of an unknown boy named Quentin—they have no idea why they are trapped together in a 1920s room, and they fear what will happen if they cannot keep Quentin alive. When I looked back at the story, after I remembered my abuse, I realized my subconscious was trying to tell me something. My mission was to publish the novella to raise awareness for surviving sexual abuse and the long-term effects of surviving abuse, such as PTSD.

Now available on Amazon, the book donates 20% of each sale to two non-profits: the New York Center for Children ([www.newyorkcenterforchildren.org](http://www.newyorkcenterforchildren.org)), which offers free therapy to children survivors and their families, as well as group therapy; and Stop Child Predators ([www.stopchildpredators.org](http://www.stopchildpredators.org)), which launches state and federal campaigns

to inform lawmakers and the public about policy changes that will protect America’s children from sexual predators. In addition, I have started a private Facebook group called “The Survivors Club” where people who have suffered any kind of trauma and want to connect can do so with fellow survivors. Learn more about the group by going to [www.thesurvivorsclub.us](http://www.thesurvivorsclub.us).

I definitely mourned for the innocent childhood that was taken away from me, but after that mourning period, which took a year, I began to celebrate my life. I started wearing lipstick, something I forgot I enjoyed doing when I played dress up as a pre-teen. I found happiness in spending quality time with my children again. I was more “present” in my marriage. I also started working on forgiving myself more—if things didn’t always go the way my control-freak-nature wanted them to, I told myself I had to let it go. Was I totally healed? No, but I was improving and understanding what the journey and courage to heal looked like—that journey continues today.

## BUSINESS TIPS

**CLIENTS CAN SEE YOUR HUMAN SIDE:** None of my clients knew what I was going through, and I wanted to keep it that way, but when I was hired by a Tantra Expert, Meg Berry, trained by the late Tantra Master Psalm Isadora, that changed. During my first class, we performed 5,000-year-old breathing techniques and body movements that caused me to be on the verge of tears as I felt myself “opening up.” I had to tell her about my abuse in order for her to understand what was going on with me. I was scared to do so, because even though I knew she would understand my pain, I was worried she would find me too weak to support her PR efforts. Quite the contrary, and through her insistence that I continued helping her, I continued to heal through her. It was a very special client-publicist relationship.

**FLEXIBILITY ISN’T A SIGN OF WEAKNESS:** I have had clients ask for Cielo’s scope of work to change, guidance on ventures that were not my expertise and even budgets to shift temporarily—in each scenario, I negotiated or advised on how I could help within the boundaries of what my company was capable. In doing so clients have praised Cielo for being dedicated to their clients’ success and they often refer us to their peers.

**DON’T BE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP:** My book trailer was created by one of the most innovative video producers, Elspeth Brown of Iron Rose Productions. I found licensed therapists who were experts in trauma, PTSD, and abuse to contribute to my book. These women didn’t know me, yet I told them my story, and they volunteered their time to help me because they too believed in my vision after reading *The Survivors Club*. Shari Botwin, LCSW, wrote an insightful epilogue on the long-term effects of sexual abuse. Silvia Dutchevici, founder of Critical Therapy Center, and Sheri-Ann Best, founder of Broadhollow Psychotherapy, both wrote beautiful endorsements as well.

## WISE WORDS

“It matters not how strait the gate, How charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul.”

—*Invictus*, William Ernest Henley

—MORE ON NUBIA  
[nubiaduvall.com/](http://nubiaduvall.com/)