

A Journey Through the Psyche of Success

CELIA SOONETS

Unveiling Entrepreneurial Fears

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Celia Soonets, a seasoned entrepreneur and a certified EMP Practitioner, has delved into the intricate world of entrepreneurial fears with her groundbreaking book, “The Wheel of 8 Fears of Entrepreneurs.” With over three decades of experience in market research, marketing, and consulting, Soonets brings a wealth of expertise to the table, making her insights invaluable for both aspiring and established entrepreneurs alike.

In her book, Soonets challenges the conventional perception of fear as a weakness, arguing instead that it serves as a crucial alert system for entrepreneurs navigating the unknown terrain of business ventures. Drawing from her extensive research and empirical studies conducted among Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs, she presents a conceptual model that dissects the

Since its publication, “The Wheel of 8 Fears of Entrepreneurs” has garnered praise from readers and professionals in the business community alike. Many have lauded its accessible writing style, relatable examples, and, most importantly, its actionable insights. Whether you’re a novice entrepreneur grappling with the uncertainties of starting a business or a seasoned veteran looking to refine your approach, Soonets’ book promises to revolutionize your perspective on entrepreneurship and empower you to thrive in the face of fear.

What qualifications do you hold and what is your professional background?

I have a degree in Arts and another one in Social Psychology from the Universidad Central de Venezuela and an MBA from the UQAM (Université du Québec à Montréal).

Most of my professional life has been dedicated to Market Research. I started at Corporate Level, in an advertising agency in Venezuela, where I began as a Research Supervisor and by the time I moved to my own company, after 7 years, I was working as Consumer Insights and Market Research Director.

I joined my husband to work together in our own marketing research company that started in Venezuela and then expanded to Dominican Republic, Jamaica and Trinidad. We developed that com-

pany for 30 years and then retired as consultants in 2017.

While working in marketing research, I started a side business on jewellery designing. What started as a hobby developed into another entrepreneurship that lasted 11 years.

Once I retired from both my companies, in 2019, I started to write a blog in Spanish for entrepreneurs, where I write about topics related to psychology of entrepreneurship: values, attitudes, mindset and behaviours conducive to success.

Since 2022, I’m a certified EMP Practitioner (Entrepreneurial Mindset Profile), a tool developed by Eckerd College (FL, USA) and, besides blogging, I dedicate my time to consulting entrepreneurs and writing. The Wheel of 8 fears of Entrepreneurs is my first book, initially published in Spanish (September 2023) and then in English (December 2023).

Can you provide an overview of your book “The Wheel of 8 Fears of Entrepreneurs” and its main focus?

Fear is a universal emotion with an undeserved bad reputation. Historically and culturally, we have been taught that feeling fear is a sign of weakness. This is a mistake, because feeling fear is beneficial and can even ensure survival since it serves as an alert signal, preventing us from making wrong and risky decisions that

could endanger us. The problem starts when that fear paralyzes us and becomes an impediment to moving forward.

With this book, I want to offer tools to help understand fears faced as an entrepreneur. I want to help entrepreneurs develop strategies to overcome them and advance in their business, despite fear.

In the book, I present a conceptual model that I developed to explain the fears that entrepreneurs face during their journey. This model is based on exploratory empirical research conducted in 2023 among Spanish Speaking entrepreneurs.

Besides explaining the different fears that are presented in my conceptual model, in the book I offer a toolbox to use as a practical resource: A set of 6 guided self-reflection exercises that will allow readers to identify the fears they are confronting at any moment, and also work on a plan to overcome them.

What inspired you to write a book specifically addressing the fears faced by entrepreneurs?

I was motivated to take an interest in the topic of entrepreneurial fears by an article I wrote for my blog in Spanish: Eslabones de Negocio (eslabonesdenegocio.com). At that time, it was just another article. I never thought that the topic would interest me so much that I would continue to research, conduct a study, and write a book.

When I write for my blog, I always conduct a preliminary research routine on the article’s topic. At that moment, my search focused on finding and listing the main fears that entrepreneurs face. To my surprise, I found numerous

‘The Wheel of 8 Fears of Entrepreneurs’ by Celia Soonets offers practical strategies and insights to conquer fears and thrive in entrepreneurship.



Celia Soonets, seasoned entrepreneur and author, shares her insights on overcoming fears and achieving success in the world of business.

and very diverse approaches and versions. Some authors mentioned three fears, others five, others ten, others twenty, and even twenty-eight. Faced with such a profusion of variety, the exercise I decided to undertake to write the article was to list all the different fears, group them, eliminate duplicates, unify semantically equivalent terms, and then try to classify them according to larger factors or dimensions.

Based on that preliminary exercise of organizing the information that other authors had discussed and proposed, I developed the initial foundation for the conceptual model I share in this book.

How do you believe your book can benefit aspiring entrepreneurs and those already in the business world?

Fear is triggered by the unknown. When we are entrepreneurs, the unknown and uncertainty accompany us all the time.

That’s why fear arises. The fears of an entrepreneur are part of an alert system that compels us to stop and think because we are constantly dealing with changing environments, uncertain futures, and little certainty about the real consequences of the actions we can or should take.

As entrepreneurs, we must change our focus. Instead of

basing decisions from a point of fear, we can do so from an angle to maximize opportunity. When we make decisions from fear, we focus on trying to circumvent a negative situation or one involving risks. Instead of seeking opportunities, we focus on minimizing risks and potential negative consequences. On the contrary, when we make decisions from opportunity, we focus on taking advantage of a situation to gain a benefit.

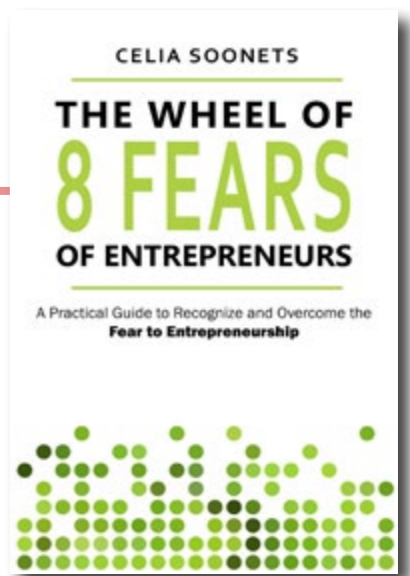
To properly identify the fears that affect our ability to undertake a successful venture, we must follow three steps: 1) Recognize that we have some fear, 2) Identify the causes of our fears and 3) Classify the fears we feel to address them properly. Then, we can move on to finding solutions and devising a plan.

Any entrepreneur, new or experienced, can benefit from learning to clearly identify their fears. It’s the only way they can properly make decisions that will lead them to overcome fears and use them as motivation to grow and success.

What key insights or strategies do you offer in your book to help entrepreneurs overcome their fears?

Each one of the 8 fears considered in the conceptual model of The Wheel of 8 Fears of Entrepreneurs and described in detail in the book, requires specific and different strategies.

That being said, once we analyze the strategies for all 8 different fears, we see that some global, common strategies are expressed in a particular way, but ultimately share the same foundation. Those general strategies are intensive planning, intensive use of information, constant study, work on Self-Confidence and Self-Compassion, take small and progressive steps and seek help



whenever necessary.

But above all, entrepreneurs must start by recognizing their fears and learn to accept them so that they can moderate and manoeuvre them.

How have readers and professionals in the business community responded to your book, and what impact has it had on their perspectives on entrepreneurship?

So far, I have received very positive feedback. Readers have said that they find the book easy to read, written in words and tone that feel close, and containing examples and situations they can identify with. They value, in particular, the practical dimension of the book, with the tools offered to work on their own fears, more than just learning theoretically about the conceptual model.

Some of them have said that the book has really helped them realize that they feel fears, even some fears that they never considered. It seems to be even more useful for aspiring entrepreneurs, or those that are in early steps in their entrepreneurial journey, since due to their lack of experience they feel their fears with higher intensity and have less clues on how to work on them. More experienced business owners would also benefit from the reading, but they have probably implemented during their journey many of the strategies that the book suggests.