

PROFESSIONAL  
**TROUBLEMAKER**



with **LUVVIE AJAYI JONES**

## Professional Troublemaker with Luvvie Ajayi Jones

Fight Your Fear - Episode 09

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Welcome to the Professional Troublemaker Podcast! This is the place where we help you cultivate the courage, authenticity and audacity you need to use your voice, take up space and live a life that is so bold, even your wildest dreams say #goals. I'm your host, Luvvie Ajayi Jones, New York Times bestselling author, sought after speaker and side-eye sorceress bringing you thought-provoking conversations with amazing people taken action, done scary things and rocked the boat to an audacious life. Like the late, great John Lewis said, these are the kind of people who are "Never, ever afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

Today is the day!

**Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual** is officially out in the world. Turn up! 🐻🐻🐻

Here's why you need to read this book.

You want to start speaking up and using your voice to make a room better. You have big dreams that you are almost too shy to speak out loud. You want to dropkick impostor syndrome in the face because you spend too much time worried about whether or not you belong in the rooms you find yourself in. You want to not let fear make you do less.

But you're afraid. You're afraid of consequences. You're afraid of failure. Or even success. It makes you so uncomfortable to think about having to be someone who rocks the boat in a room. You regret not applying for that job. Or challenging that trash idea your coworker had. Or having that tough conversation with a friend. Fear is a whole ass liar and a cheat and there have been so many times when you've let it stop you from doing or saying what you are purposed to do, and then you look back and regret your inaction.

I say all this because I understand. It took me 9 years after I had started blogging and writing and making impact with my words before I called myself a "writer" because I was afraid of what came with that title. How was I going to make money when I wasn't a journalist or a novelist? I was afraid of the fact that there was no manual to being a writer (hey, maybe I write that next)? I was afraid because I didn't have a map to success. I was afraid because I didn't see the example of a writer like me. And I didn't realize I had to become that example to myself. It meant I could be disappointed if this putting words on paper thing couldn't work. I was afraid to fail.

So I half-assed the work, and got half-assed results. This was in 2011.

But even with my own half-assery, I kept finding myself in major rooms with people who worked for outlets like CNN, BBC, Forbes, and here I was as Awesomely Luvvie. I was in those rooms because of my words, so who was I not to call myself a writer? My fears shouldn't have been so big when the fact was that I was a writer. I was doing the work for all these years!

I finally realized that even though the title felt big, I needed to own it. I was out of excuses to not call myself a writer, so in spite of the fear I had with it, I did it anyway. When I got press and people asked me what my title was, "What do you do?" I started saying WRITER. This was in about 2012

And lemme tell you what happened. I started being taken seriously as a writer! I got offered 2 magazine columns. Brands started approaching me to partner with them. And that money I wasn't sure how I would make started finding me. It was like God and the universe were waiting on me to own my gifts, before handing me what was mine.

That situation taught me that on the other side of fear is courage, and next to that was what I really wanted. It taught me that FEAR will have us doubting our gifts, because we think the thing that comes too easy for us is to be questioned. We think if we don't struggle for it, it isn't ours. But that's not true. Our gifts are what they are because we didn't have to EARN them. So we FEAR it instead, and that doubt stops us from honoring it and giving it the energy it deserves. So it's like a self-fulfilling prophecy!

Fear is a liar and a cheat. And we must tackle it.

That's why I wrote Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual. That's why I was convicted to put these words on paper.

In #ProfessionalTroublemaker, I talk about all these things, and how my life has transformed as a result of committing to doing the things that feel bigger than me, doing the things that feel scary as shit and things that make me lose my breath sometimes.

If you've ever struggled with speaking up, speaking out, telling the truth, moving through your fear - this book is for you. If you're a woman who's ever been told that you're not good enough and that you need to apologize for yourself, this book is for you. If you've ever been told you're too much, too aggressive, too thoughtful, too sensitive, too quiet, too Black - this book is for you.

The book is split into 3 sections: BE, SAY, DO. And I walk you through the importance of mindset, your words and your actions.

Let me tell you, I wrote this book for me. I did. I wrote this book for me, and I'm just letting everyone read it. This is the book I needed when I was afraid to call myself that writer.

This is the book I needed when I turned down my TED talk twice. You know the TED talk that now has 5 million views? Yes, that one. Because I didn't think I was ready, and I tell that story in there too.

This is the book I need the next time I'm presented with a chance to go big. So big that it makes me nervous. I need this book, and because I needed it, you might need it too.

Because a professional troublemaker is someone who knows that they must be disruptors for the greater good, both in their own lives and as they move through the world.

This book is called Professional Troublemaker, so what is a Professional Troublemaker? Y'all already know, because you listen to this podcast. A Professional Troublemaker is someone who knows that to truly fight your fear, you have to take action. You have to DO scary shit. It's not enough to talk a good game. You've got to put some action behind it. You've got to fire yourself from the silly, unnecessary things that don't require your gift so you can show up bigger in the world. You've got to build a squad of people who can step in and remind you to take action when things feel too big. And for me, that TED talk? My friend Eunique was the one who reminded me that I could do this. And most of all, you've got to actively give the middle finger to fear and move forward anyway. Because I think to be fearless means not to do less because of their fear.

A Professional Troublemaker is someone who speaks the truth and speaks their truth. They SAY who they are. They SAY the things that need to be said. We are often afraid to say necessary things, because we're afraid of rocking the boat, but we've got to speak up and speak out even when it is hard. It's when it's hard, it's when it's most necessary. Even when those declarations take us to new places we might be scared to go. When we're willing to speak out, even if it means failing loudly, when we speak up for ourselves by drawing our boundaries clearly and when we're willing to ask for more, we move one step closer to living a more abundant life.

And honestly, one of the things I'm most excited about when it comes to this book is for you to have the chance to meet the woman to whom this book is dedicated.

My grandmother, Funmilayo Faloyin.

My grandmother was the person I looked at growing up who taught me what it was like to take up space without apology. Her life was a testimony to powerful womanhood - fierce yet soft. And that amazing Nigerian elder stateswoman taught me how to be a professional troublemaker.

Her life and how she showed up for it gave me the permission to be who I am today. She taught me by example that my gifts, my blessings are there to serve others, lift others up and make the kind of impact in the world that will leave a gap when I'm gone. And this book and hopefully, my life, honor her memory.

You'll meet my grandmother in the pages of my book through the lessons she taught me. Because even though I've been a shady Nigerian for my whole life, she gave me space and permission to be my full self. So if you don't have a Nigerian grandmother to teach you to be too much, meeting her in this book will do that for you. Because no matter what you're feeling now, standing in your truth and fighting your fear is something that can be learned, and I'm hoping this book teaches that.

If you've ever struggled with speaking up, and being in a room and feeling imposter syndrome and you've had to sometimes apologize for your very being - this book is for you.

The lessons from this book that I've learned from my grandmother's example and from my own experiences have been my life manual. These actions I've taken to fight my fear and show up as my full self, have allowed me to live life on my own terms. It hasn't been an easy road to walk - I fail constantly. But if I, a Black woman from Nigeria, am able to show up as my full self and create this life that is almost too big for my own dreams to have dreamed up, I am proof that you can do it too. You can do for yourself what I've done for myself by being a professional troublemaker, a truth teller, you can have a life that shocks you because it's so

This book is a manual. THE fear-fighting manual. A set of instructions that I've pulled together from my experiences and what I've learned in this world, and the same thing I want for me, I want for you. That you know that you belong in this world. You are enough. You have everything you need to succeed. And the times that people tell you are not enough, they are lying. Don't you take it in.

I hope that these pages inspire you to find the courage to dream audaciously, ask for more, and grow wildly.

I hope this book loans you power in the times when you're about to move scared. And I hope you use your limitless imagination to stop thinking about what could go wrong, but instead think about how amazing your life could be when you have the audacity to live boldly.

This book is my best work yet.

How do I know this? Because it has already changed the life of one person: my book editor, Meg Leder.

Meg works for Penguin Random House, my publisher, and when Meg read the first draft of my book back in May 2020 and edited it, in the comments of my "Ask for More" chapter, she noted that the chapter compelled her to ask her boss for a raise.

In December 2020, several months later, at the end of a team meeting, Meg was like, "Hey, y'all, I have some news for you." She told us that she got promoted to Editorial Director of Viking Books and Penguin Life, the imprint that my book is under. And my jaw dropped. She said my book gave her so many light bulb moments that gave her the courage to ASK. Not only did she get that raise, she got a promotion, and her assistant became an editor. She got a promotion too!

Me and Meg did an IG Live on this, that you can watch. Link in show notes. But THAT makes me happy because THAT is what I want as a result of people reading this book. I want you to find some courage in these pages that makes you do something that might be scary but that could lead to elevation for you, personally or professionally. I want this for everybody.

That's why I am GEEKED that Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual is out today, everywhere books are sold. The audiobook and eBook are also out now. Yes, I narrated the audiobook, because y'all might have cussed me and my team out if anybody else's voice was on it. So you can grab it from Bookshop, Amazon, Target, Barnes and Nobles, an independent bookstore in your area. It's truly, everywhere. And for those of you who are in the United Kingdom, the UK or in Europe, go to the Amazon store in your country. In the UK and Internationally, the book is called, *The Fear-Fighter Manual: Lessons from a Professional Troublemaker*. So search for that. They tweaked the title because they thought it would do better with that title switch internationally. So again, if you are in Europe, search the Amazon of your choice and you will find the book. And I really want this book to be in different languages and all of that stuff. So we go if that - when that happens, because we claiming that - when that happens, I'll let y'all know.

All right. And the other thing about this book is I am going on an epic virtual book tour. Virtual, which means you can attend from anywhere in the world, in your robe on your couch. I will be in conversation with seven people who I have deep respect for because they're truly trailblazers and disruptors.

They're people who embody what it means to be a professional troublemaker. And they said yes when I asked them. There's a writer, there's a comedian, a therapist, an activist, an actress, a CEO and a fashion icon. I am in conversation over seven stops with Glennon Doyle, KevOnStage, Esther Perel, Brittany Packnett Cunningham, Gabrielle Union, Myleik Teele, Kahlana Barfield Brown. I wanted y'all to have a tough time deciding which one to come to. Okay?

And it is kicking off on March 2. And you can join me in these dope conversations with these amazing, amazing people. I'm telling you, your toughest decision is going to be which staff to come get some extra gems, okay, and check it - anybody who comes to my book tour, it gets a signed copy of my book shipped to them by the bookstores. We partnered with independent bookstores for this tour. So when you buy a ticket to the tour, you're supporting two small businesses. Me and a small independent bookstore.

How do you buy tickets? [professionaltroublemakerbook.com](http://professionaltroublemakerbook.com). Only one of the stores ships internationally, which is Vromans, which is dealing with KevOnStage. So if you are international and you want to come to the tour, they can't ship to you have to donate the book. But you can still attend the actual tour itself, the virtual tour, y'all, you don't want to miss this.

Again, you come on the tour by going to [professionaltroublemakerbook.com](http://professionaltroublemakerbook.com). Pick your stop or stops because people are coming to multiple ones, buy a ticket, and you will have a signed copy of my book shipped to you by the bookstore. We have 1000s of people come to this book tour y'all. I'm so excited for it. I'm so geeked. We doing it! Panorama or not we're doing this young tour! Socially distance in your house, come listen to some amazing conversations from people who are constantly doing things that scare them. I'm excited for it.

What I know is that like, if I had this book 10 years ago, I might have saved myself a lot of time that imposter syndrome tried to take. I might have been further ahead. That's why I want it to be in your hands right now.

My goal is that my path exists to make somebody else's easier. Think about it. How would our lives be different if we were given permission to be disruptors for the greater good? How far will we have gone if we already knew that our jobs aren't to shy away from big things, but to run towards them? How dope would our legacy be if we knew that fear is natural, and we're actually supposed to do the things that scare us?

Because here's the thing is you cannot have courage without fear. You already got the first step to being courageous, you're afraid. Don't stop there. The action that you take that is not informed by your fear becomes courage. So you need to be afraid first. Don't beat yourself up. Don't put no shame around, being afraid. It's natural, but move forward anyway.

So I am on a mission to help a million people fight their fear and live audaciously. A million people. I want them to do something scary, to ask for that raise, ask for that promotion, start that college degree, start that company, have that tough conversation with a family member. I want a million people who are out there standing on the edge of something great, and need that little push of encouragement to find it in my book. To say that hard thing. I want to create a million professional troublemakers to move to this world and make it a better place. The domino effect of a million people deciding not to let fear stop them can transform society.

Professional troublemakers are not to be silenced, but to be celebrated. And if you are listening to this and you are one, I see you. If you're listening to this and you wish you were one, it's never too late. Pick up this book! It's the guide to becoming a professional troublemaker. Join us!

The world needs troublemakers, the world needs people who are insisting on elevating the room. That's why I want to create a million more or affirm a million troublemakers or stop the silencing of a million troublemakers. So that's what this book will do. That's what I am committed for this book to do. It's an audacious goal. But I gotta say I am who I am right who I say I am in private got to be who I am also in public and vice versa. So I have set this really audacious goal to help a million people live a life that is so big that their wildest dreams say goals.

So here is to us winning. Here is to pub day. And thank you for the support and the encouragement that you've already sent out about Professional Troublemaker: The Fear-Fighter Manual I am so touched the way people have rose up and showed up for me, because they believe so deeply in my message, in my work, and in my voice. I am so glad that this book will be landing in your hands today. And I'm so excited to see what will be unleashed as a result of this.

That freedom that I want for me and that I want for you is the freedom to show up as your full self without apology, is the freedom to dream massively in ways that will blow your mind. And it's the freedom to never have to apologize for yourself.

So grab the manual, and let's fight our fear and go make some good trouble. Like the late, great John Lewis said we're doing it together. You're not by yourself. So think about the fact that there's a community of people now all over the world who will join you in being more audacious and I'm so excited to hear what you think about this book, please feel free to tag me on social media as you have the book in your hands. Tell me what parts of the book resonated with you, you know, quote it. Let your friends know!

Follow me on social media @Luvvie because I'd be dropping some prompts for you to continue to fight your fear doesn't the book is just a starter. Okay, we're just getting started and we're just getting started.

So yeah, thank you for tuning in to another episode of the Professional Troublemaker podcast. If you love what you heard, please subscribe and review it and share this podcast with people tell them it blesses you, all right? I love when y'all tell me that so I know what's working. And follow Professional Troublemaker on Instagram ads @ProfessionalTroublemaker follow our account. We'd be out here dropping resources on you dropping amazing quotes on you dropping amazing episode. So follow us on Instagram.

And shout out to the Chicago Recording Company bringing y'all the radio voice, you know. I've been recording this from home but they made sure it sounds semi-decent, you know, bless it. But they have been an amazing partner for this podcast since I started it three years ago.

So yeah, we'd be out here y'all! So follow me everywhere @Luvvie. And until next time, have the courage to speak your truth and show up as yourself. I got you! You got backup in me and all the other troublemakers around the world. And let's continue to make good trouble. See you on the next episode.