



A Cl.E.A.R. Path Forward™

Welcome to the July 2017 edition of A Cl.E.A.R. Path Forward™. This newsletter is written for the friends and clients of Kathy Hart who are navigating transformative changes in their lives. Each month you are provided with a monthly question, personal actions for clearing the fog, and a recommended book.

Thank you to several of you who shared your insights on self-care. See the information below.

Shifting Your Focus - Are You Taking Actionable Steps to Make Your Dreams Come True?

Ever since my husband and I started dating we have been dreaming about living abroad. When I completed my doctoral degree in 2004 and was asked to stay on to teach at Lao American College, I remember the urge to jump the tracks and say "Yes." Yet the reality was I had obligations back home, and the timing was off. This past year, with my husband retiring, we've talked more frequently about our dream, while also putting forward every excuse we could muster. Isn't this what we do to delay taking action? We think of all the reasons it won't work, those who will be impacted, and the sacrifices we'll have to make. It's just not the right time we say, and then go back to dreaming.

Everything changed the night of June 14. Perhaps it was the heart-to-heart talk with my business coach or maybe the quip from our financial advisor about renting our home. Whatever, as my nephew says. I awoke in the middle of the night and realized we'd been looking at this all wrong. We didn't have to immediately live abroad for a year. We could take a gap year to live in different areas of the world for short periods of time, coming home in-between to take care of family needs. And while it took some convincing, both my coach and husband came on-board. Within a week I had booked our long term rental for a 2-month visit (Sept - Oct 2017) in Ireland. If you want to read more about this journey, check out my [blog describing the journey ahead](#).

What dream do you have building inside of you? Maybe it's to start your own business or take your business to the next level. Perhaps it's leaving your work and joining the Peace Corps or some other volunteer organization. My question - what are the first steps to make it a reality? Just as I learned, don't think about going all in. Perhaps you take a first step, like joining a group on a mission trip to another part of the US or the world. My cousin is an anesthesiologist and loves traveling. Each year he joins a medical team to provide services for one month in the Philippines. What are you waiting for? Now is the time to begin making your future dreams a reality TODAY!

ACTION: Share with me at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com your future dream that you haven't yet started pursuing. If you know your next step or action to take, share that too. If you don't, let's talk!! I will share insights received in August's newsletter.

Clearing the Fog - Personal Actions for Shifting Your Focus:

- *Change the Environment:* A change of environment literally gets you thinking differently. Maybe it's traveling to a different location, being on vacation, or just taking a walk in a different town. New surroundings allow you to reframe what you're thinking about in unusual ways because you are not in familiar surroundings. Get out of the norm and let your imagination run wild.
- *Talk with Others to Get Perspective:* For most of the people we interact with, we do so

with a specific purpose in mind. For example, if you are part of an organization, you ask questions pertaining to that organization's mission, your specific activity, or future plans. Most of us don't think to ask our dentist, for example, what he thinks about living abroad. Yet talking with people, especially those we don't normally converse with on a specific topic, can give us ideas and insights we hadn't considered.

- *Reframe from "All or Nothing" Thinking to Testing the Waters:* It's so easy to get caught up in "all or nothing" thinking. It's the big, grand plan of how your life is going to look and be when everything is all ready. I've heard more than once, "I'm going to start my business when I'm financially set to quit my job." When in fact you could have a business on the side to get a taste for what it's like. Or maybe you take an even smaller step by volunteering a few hours with someone that already has a business, giving you a chance to experience what it'd like to own your own business. Is there an action for testing the waters that you can take for your dream to come alive?

Recommended reading - Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking by Susan Cain. What a terrific book for anyone looking to better understand the differences between introverts and extroverts. Ms. Cain is quite passionate about this topic, and provides an exhaustive list of examples to illustrate her points. I read this book as part of a book group, and one person commented, "I feel so normal now. I always just thought I was different from everyone, and now I know there are lots of us out there." A key part of this book is recognizing how much of our society is focused on converting introverts into extroverts, even starting at a very young age in elementary school. It's a bit sad to realize the pain some people experience when attempting to fit in with social norms that don't work for them. For me, it certainly offered a new perspective on what introverts experience, and opportunities I can take to be more inclusive. If you don't have time to read Susan's book, then check out her [TedTalks: "The Power of Introverts"](#)

Tips from the Community on Caring for Others:

- Asking directly what someone needs helps you to know what to do.
- Sometimes you think you are helping, but later you learn your actions were not helpful. That hurts, and you just have to know that you took the time to care.
- People often just say, "Whatever you do is fine." This makes it harder, not easier, to want to help them.
- I'm so busy that I realize I don't reach out and ask what others need from me. Getting specific would help me realize I do have time to help others.

Kathy Hart, Ed.D. has a driving passion for human change and transformation. She has witnessed too many women silenced and leading lives of quiet despair. Her goal is to provide women in transition with the support and resources needed to re-imagine and lead more abundant, joy-filled and purpose-driven lives. If you are a woman wanting to reclaim your voice and live your life to the fullest, take a concrete action by contacting Kathy at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com. The choice is yours!

Services that Kathy offers:

- 1:1 coaching to support your transition into the next life phase, whether work or personal
- Small group work and team development to boost the group's performance
- Trusted advisor for leaders navigating work changes and searching for an expert guide
- Speaking and workshops on human change and women in transition