



A Cl.E.A.R. Path Forward™

Welcome to the May 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 personal or professional change in their life. Each month you are provided with a monthly question, personal actions for clearing the fog, and a recommended book.

Self Care - Are You Putting Your Care Ahead of Others?

Before your plane takes off the runway, the flight attendant reviews the emergency information. You know, this is when you focus on the book in your lap, sending that last text, or closing that needed phone conversation. There is one phrase they use, "Be sure to put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others." Self care is like that, you need to focus on your own self care before you reach out to help others.

I personally thought I was rather skilled at this, but the last few weeks have been a rude awakening for me. What I have discovered is that I have an ingrained habit of saying "Yes" and thinking that, well of course, I can handle just one more activity on my plate. When in reality that plate is already overflowing, and one additional activity may be the tipping point.

Self care is a multi-layered topic. I think you can break it down into these various categories:

- Busyness factor - being overbooked and over stretched. See below for some tips and tricks.
- Healthy habits - such as getting enough sleep, taking personal time, being at your physical and mental best
- Supportive network of family and friends
- Special support networks for various aspects of your life
- Practices for Daily Living - which involve personal practices to keep you spiritually centered and focused

During the next few weeks of May I will be sharing about each of these categories in blog and video posts, as well as posting resources and supplies on my website. Please feel free to keep checking back for more information.

ACTION: Share with me an action, daily practice or something you have learned and would like to contribute to the community on self care. Email me at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com with the information. I will share everything I receive in June's newsletter.

Clearing the Fog - Personal Actions for Self Care:

- *Prioritize Including "Me Time" in Your Life:* I used to always say the priorities in my life were my relationships with my God, family, clients and business, and giving back to others. The difficulty is that I was forgetting about me in the listing of priorities. Do you find yourself doing the same thing? Burying what's important to you or actions to care for yourself secondary to everything else? Here's what you do: re-prioritize. Put the "Me Time" right up at the front, and then everything else will fall into place. It's not easy, but oh so fundamental to helping and supporting everyone else you interact with.
- *Set Boundaries by Saying "No" More Often:* Saying "No" can be the hardest thing to say when someone asks you to take on just one more activity. And yet, it may be best for both you and the organization. Think about whether there is someone else just as qualified as

you and consider that this may be an opportunity for them. Get comfortable with saying, "Give me 24 hours to think about this." Then really ponder if this is something you can take on. And by the way, this is very hard for me to do, but just keep working on it. Saying "No" does get easier the more you practice.

- **Determine Your Healthy Habits:** For everyone these will be different. I am sure if you take a few minutes you can identify what these are. For me, it includes: getting seven or eight hours of sleep a night, drinking 32 ounces of water a day (yes, it could be more), journaling, exercising 3x/week, and no after-dinner eating. Can you have more healthy habits? Absolutely, but caution, instead of being perfect, pare it down to the sacrosanct few that you can make a habit. Once ingrained, then you can add more. For assistance, check out [The Power of Habit](#) by Charles Duhigg.

Recommended reading - Fierce Conversations by Susan Scott

There is an unending listing of books on how to have more productive conversations. When asked to read this book as part of a book club I belong to, I will share I was not looking forward to it. Having read Crucial Conversations by Kerry Patterson et al, I thought it would be a bit of a re-hash. And, while there are certainly some overlapping insights, I like the way Ms. Scott provides seven principles for having a fierce conversation. One of her principles is coming out from behind yourself into the conversation to make it real. What I took away is that sometimes we as humans get so focused on saying the right things that we fail to talk about the "real" issues at hand. Instead of talking around the subject, get quickly to the heart of what needs to be discussed. I love the sentence she shares, "The conversation is not about the relationship; the conversation is the relationship." Happy reading!

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

Services I offer include:

- 1:1 coaching in support of significant work or personal changes you are navigating
- Small group work or team development for changes that are happening in your company
- Trusted advisory work for leaders who are navigating work changes and need an expert guide