



Welcome to the November 2017 edition of A C.I.E.A.R. Path™ Forward. This newsletter is written for the friends and clients of Kathy Hart who are navigating transformative changes in their life. Each month you are provided with a monthly question, personal actions for clearing the fog, and a recommended book. Read below for all of Kathy's October Blog postings. Note the Irish theme woven throughout.

How Do You Honor Closures in Your Life?

As I write this newsletter I am on the plane traveling from Ireland to the US. We've been living in Ireland for the past 2+ months; meeting the locals, participating in community activities, and exploring the countryside. As we fly home the act of closure is uppermost in my mind.

Any change you embark upon requires some type of closure or ending. It's the first step in my change process, a C.I.E.A.R. Path Forward™ (see inset), for moving from one life phase to another. Change can also be for small adventures, like leaving a place you've become attached to and starting the next stage of a longer life journey.

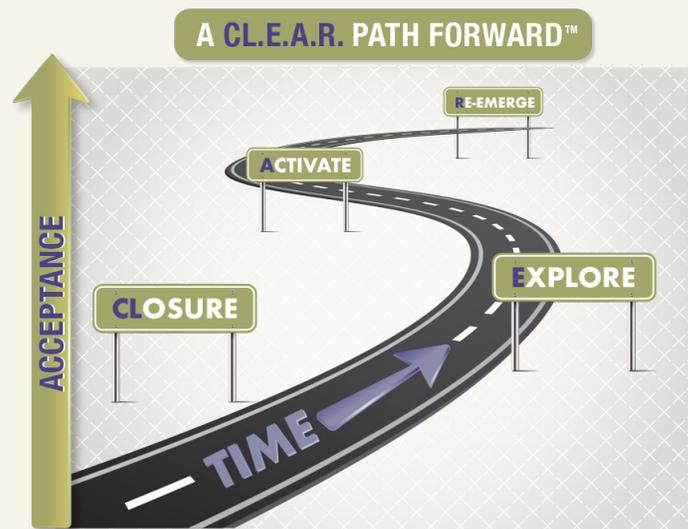
Closures can be quite painful, involving emotional upheaval, sadness, and a longing for a past that will or has ended. But they can also represent a time of hope and renewal for the new opportunities yet unknown or clearly defined. My family experienced this yin-and-yang of closure this past week in preparing for our return journey. The steps to honor our closure unfolded in the following ways:

- **Reflect on the past - people met, experiences shared, and lessons learned.** Our family reviewed pictures taken, talked about what we liked (Irish people, food, and the countryside), what we learned from our trip (knowledge that we want to include more long-term travel stays and spend even more time in Ireland), and how to integrate our insights going forward (start buying Kerrigold butter when we get home).
- **Determine what to carry with you into the future, and what to release.** We agreed that more "fresh" and natural ingredients could be pursued, brought a can of mushy peas to share with others, and agreed to release our fears about long-distance friendships. We can maintain our friends, albeit differently, it just takes time to follow up, schedule time to talk, and find more ways of sharing our adventures so people feel they're a part of them.
- **Celebrate and thank those on the journey with you.** With so many new friends met, we held a good-bye party at our local pub. Many of our new found friends came and drank a toast of *Sláinte* to us, wished us luck on the trip home, and prayers for our quick return. For special kindnesses we outreached with gift certificates to local

restaurants. We exchanged contact information, but were realistic in ways to stay connected going forward.

- **Determine next steps, even if a bit vague, to share with others.** We knew in advance we would be returning to Ireland in 2018, so shared our plans, albeit a little vague. The sharing made real the next journey, and something to work towards. For one couple we met, who have experienced joy in longer term traveling (three months in Ireland and three months in Spain for this trip), we planned a get-together, which will need some pruning and shaping to make a reality.
- **Allow time and space for emotional shifts.** Everyone in our family, including the cat, was on edge with the packing, saying good-bye, and preparing to leave. Taking longer walks in the crisp air and giving each other the space to share our sadness and hope for the future was incorporated into daily tasks.

Action: Share with me at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com what rituals or actions you incorporate to honor closures in your life.



Clearing the Fog - Personal actions for honoring closures:

- **Closing Preconceived Frames to Make Way for New Ones:** Whether it's navigating midlife or returning from time abroad, honoring closure requires examining the stories you tell yourself about who you are and how you want to live. Taking the time to reflect on these roles determines how you want to shape your experiences. For example, some people approach travel as a vacation, a time for hedonism and freedom from work. Wanting to shift the mode, I had to bring closure on the belief that travel means only holiday. This closure allowed me to reframe my time in Ireland as simply living in a different locale for an extended period time.
- **Celebrate with the End in Sight:** Build in celebrations at the beginning, so they can occur at the end. If you wait to celebrate or plan for the celebration until the last moment, they will invariably never happen. If you begin with the understanding of celebrating at the end, you have much more time to ascertain what that celebration will look like, how it can honor the ending, along with providing a bridge to the future.
- **Ask for Help/Support:** Regardless of how you approach them, closures are akin to an emotional roller coaster. Be kind to yourself, and ask for help or support as needed. Most people want to be supportive. The difficulty is that they don't know exactly how or what to offer. For instance, during my trip I really wanted to learn what the secret ingredient in Irish sandwiches are. They are so much more delicious. Several new friends offered to make sandwiches when I announced we wanted to hold a going away party. My ask, could I help and learn the Irish secret to sandwich making? What a glorious afternoon. And the secret - Kerrygold butter on the bread,

regardless of the sandwich type.

Recommended Reading

Life Reimagined: The Science, Art and Opportunity of Midlife by Barbara Bradley Haggerty.

A terrific read, though a little slow in parts. Ms. Haggerty travels the whole gamut of midlife transition, from conversations with many different people from various walks of life, uncovering some latent myths, common patterns, to brain-science research. I enjoyed her neverending stories and examples, especially from her own life, with the triumphs, tragedies, and everything inbetween. For the most part the research was interesting, though certain sections went too in-depth for me. Attribution and the latest research is helpful, but at times I felt like I had to relieve Ms. Haggerty's thought process, which was rather circuitous and meandering. I found myself saying, "So what?" and "Get to the point!" Taking that into consideration, you may want to just skim read where needed; you're sure to find some helpful nuggets, or maybe even a vein of pure gold!

Kathy's Blog Posts from October:

- [Excavating Your Dreams and Talents](#)
- [Are You Staying Relevant -- Changing and Adapting to the World Around You?](#)
- [Finding Your Voice - If not now, When?](#)
- [Are You Experiencing Tunnel Vision?](#)
- [Living into the Future](#)
- [Tie a Ribbon at the Wishing Tree](#)
- [The Beckoning of Change](#)
- [Are You Evolving to Fit the Times?](#)

New Arrival - Be sure to check out Kathy's updated website at www.clearvisionconsult.com

Kathy Hart, Ed.D. has a driving passion for human change and transformation. Her goal is to provide women in midlife transition with the support and resources needed to reimagine and lead even more abundant, joy-filled and purpose-driven lives. If you are a woman wanting to reclaim your voice, realize a long-held dream, or just live your life to the fullest, take concrete action by contacting Kathy at kathy@clearvisionconsult.com. The choice is yours!

Services that Kathy offers:

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