



Seeing True to Break Through

Thoughts from Ron Chapman

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Hello!

For four years we've been exploring leadership and human development, while sharing insights I thought would be useful as I practiced them with my clients. In preparing for a new year, it has become apparent I have several important matters on which to focus, not the least of which is a book on leadership I have been moving toward for quite some time.

It will not surprise you to learn that you have been experimental subjects for some of that material and approach. So I want to thank you for questions you raised that pushed me to deepen my own understanding and practice, and also for the many stories that inspired me. I would like to share one of those tales that remains especially encouraging.

Donna was in a very difficult circumstance. Her manager was very critical of her, and apparently closed minded, unable to receive feedback. As is often the case, Donna had a long life history of difficulties in finding her voice. (As much as we would really like to compartmentalize our challenges, they tend to bleed into every area of our lives.) She did not feel safe enough to speak up about her concerns for her team and the organization's mission.

In a series of coaching sessions, we finally agreed Donna could say the bare minimum to her manager, "I have a number of thoughts, but I'm not sure it's safe enough to share any of them." That was it. I told her the first principle of problem solving between people was for someone to take the first step. She was willing.

A few days later I heard from Donna. Saying nothing more than what we agreed had been one of the hardest things she had ever done. She had to step into the silence that followed her comment, while trusting a way forward would emerge.

Donna told me that a two hour conversation with her manager followed. They addressed every concern. Her manager had been so affected by the honesty of Donna's approach that she was finally able to really listen. Everything changed.

If you happen to have studied The Course in Miracles, which is of course far afield from the usual leadership material we discuss, you would find a singular principle that is incredibly powerful. In the moment we see clearly, what I would

call "Seeing True," everything falls into perfect alignment. That is the nature of things. When we fully understand a problem or situation, solutions find us.

That has been the focus of all these writings, and my entire body of work for nearly twenty years. Over and over again I watch as the most remarkable solutions emerge from complex and convoluted challenges. On occasion I go so far as to promise clients resolution if they will only agree to delve for as long as it takes to get clarity.

Donna's story is a touchstone. The result of the approach was remarkable. She broke through a life long challenge. Her manager was able to finally hear. The mission they both prized was advanced. Their clientele were better served. That's a win, win, win, win ... with yet one more win ... for me ... because I was able to provide what I most desire for a client.

These are the tales that encourage me. They assure and reassure me, as I hope they do you. No doubt we sometimes face daunting difficulties. Yet sometimes the seemingly miraculous occurs. That is simply too good to miss, and cause enough to keep working outside ourselves while continuously probing inside.

For this new year I wish you more than all the best ... may you find your moment of breakthrough!

Ron

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