

The Essence of Leadership

My work is about essence: the essence of a person, their spirit, their core, the self often hidden from view. In my executive coaching practice, I coach leaders who say they want to be more effective at what they do, have more meaning in their work, who want to be present with their family, and intentional in their lives as a whole.

When I share with my clients that I am going off into the wilderness to do a solo, they say “why?” I say “so that I can be here and show up with clarity for you, for all of my clients. So ‘my own stuff’ doesn’t blur my vision when I look at you. So I can be fully present to do this work with you.”

When I did a 28-day solo in Crestone, Colorado, I experienced slowing down enough to actually hear my thoughts (some helpful, others not!) Though I had done many solo’s prior to this, for the first time I understood the phrase “connection to the land.” During my time in Crestone I had responsibility only to myself (inner nature) and to the land and animals (outer nature). Life became so simple.

There were moments that I made choices about feeling fearful or taking action in the face of it. There were moments when I froze in terror, certain that I heard a bear only to see a squirrel dashing from one tree to the next. Keeping a sense of humor and not taking oneself too seriously is a potential side effect in this work. It can be humbling! Truly practice for my life.

Upon returning to San Francisco I felt like I was moving at half-speed for a few days. It wasn’t long before I found myself among “the important and the urgent”...and into that I brought enhanced clarity, patience, compassion and good humor. My clients, colleagues, friends and family have shared with me their noticing of an increase in my calm and focused presence. For me, I came back with a relaxed and open sense of life. Within one week, my vision for the Center for World Leadership became completely clear and ready to be launched. Gone was the uncertainty I had carried into my solo about the shape of the work, the offer and the promise the Center would be. I hadn’t spent my days on solo in deep anguish or pleading with myself to figure it out. Rather I set my intention to hold it in my consciousness. Then my time on solo was simply about being present to what was right in front of me at any given moment.

To feel one’s essence, the unchanging constant of who we are one must quiet the being; let the distractions of the outer world fall away for a while. With that, clarity happened for me. The Center for World Leadership was born. Be the center. That is where the power comes from. Namaste.

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