DO
THE
CLEARING

A Step-by-Step Guide to Living a Happy Life
and Getting What You Want
AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Clearing has two parts. Part 1 is Clearing your possessions. Part 2 is Clearing your residual thoughts. The parts follow a natural progression, so I recommend completing Part 1 before moving on to Part 2. You can read the entire book before you begin, or you can read Part 1 first, complete the steps for Clearing your possessions, and then read Part 2 and complete the steps for Clearing your residual thoughts. Whatever approach you use, the Clearing will be effective.
to Kara


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I WENT TO my first Weight Watchers meeting when I was five years old. I can still picture it perfectly. Back then the center was set up like a church, with two rows of folding chairs and an aisle down the middle leading to an enormous old-fashioned scale. I remember the other women would smile and wave at me as my mother and I made our way to the front so she could weigh in. I’d wave back like I was a celebrity walking the red carpet. They loved it, and I guess in some way I did too. By the time I was ten, I had logged more hours there than most people do in a lifetime.

At home it was Diet Central. My mother would organize meetings and invite her friends over. Everyone sat in the living room, talking about their struggles and discussing what worked and what didn’t. They went on different programs together, trying diet shakes and packaged meal plans. They bought books, watched videos, joined gyms, and attended seminars. Some would gain weight. Some would go up and down. Some would lose weight, go away for a while, and then come back twice as big as when they left.

It was always changing; the activities, the approaches, and the weight fluctuations never stopped. Outside of school, I was with my mother for much of the day, and for a good part of that time I was her sounding board, confidant, and partner during her daily pursuit of weight loss.
my new skills. By the end of the year I could hypnotize a room full of people in seconds. I could look at a sentence or two of handwriting and have a good idea of what was going on in someone’s life, and using the skills I had developed through my many hours of practice and studying the masters, I could figure out the best way to help someone before any mention was even made of what was wrong.

Before I finished the program, I opened my office. Not long after, the Clearing came to me, and my life changed forever.

More than twenty years have passed since the day I heard that voice, and when I look back now I can see how my life experiences all have led to this book. The voice was right about me. I did want to help. I think I’ve felt that way ever since I was a little kid going to those Weight Watchers meetings. I wanted an answer, and I knew that I would never feel like I had done what I was meant to do until I found it.

This book is about weight loss, but it’s also about something bigger. In the chapters that follow, you will see that the Clearing doesn’t affect just one thing; it affects everything. By helping to free you from the negative thoughts and feelings from your past that are hindering your life today, the Clearing can create changes in a very short period of time, not only with your weight, but in all areas of your life.

The realm of the Clearing is a wonderful world, and you are standing at its threshold. I believe in what it can do. I’ve seen it many times, and I’ve felt it for myself. You are about to discover what you’re truly capable of and just how powerful you actually are. Understand that the Clearing should not be entered into lightly. If you commit to this, you are going to have to accept some changes. You will have to accept being thinner and happier than you’ve ever been in your life. You will have to accept your relationships working out and getting promotions at work. You will have to accept the respect and love of your family and friends, feeling good about yourself, and having a truly wonderful life. If you devote yourself to the Clearing and make it a part of how you live each day, there will be no way around these changes.

I decided to call this book Do the Clearing because the Clearing is about taking action. It’s not about talking about changing or contemplating the idea of change. By doing the Clearing, you actually are changing. You have the choice to lie down and accept the things that are happening in your life that you wish were different or to recognize the power inside of you to have what you want and to move toward it. You have to do something different for your life to be different. Welcome to something different.
PART I

CLEARING YOUR POSSESSIONS
FROM THE START, people came to see me for help with a full range of issues, but no matter what those issues were, almost everyone wanted to lose weight. What I was doing at the time to help my clients shed their extra pounds was working, but it was harder and slower than I felt it had to be, and I was frustrated. I wanted more for my clients. I wanted bigger changes. I wanted them to feel confident and in full command of their bodies, and I was determined to find a way to make that happen.

I knew something was missing, and whatever it was, I started to think that I wasn’t going to find it in my office. There, I was taking people out of their lives and out of their normal environment. While this worked great for some issues, for weight loss it didn’t seem to fit. I knew I had to do something different. I got the idea to meet with my clients in their homes, and that’s when things really started to change.

At first, my plan was to talk in the kitchen. I thought that if we spoke where they prepared their food, my clients would remember the things we talked about when it came time to eat. That was the idea at least, but as it turns out many times during these sessions we never actually made it to the kitchen. In fact, things ended up going in a very different direction.

When I arrived for these appointments, my clients usually offered to show me around. As we stopped off in various rooms, they
would tell me about their homes, their families, their lives, and they would also tell me about their possessions: a crystal vase from a favorite aunt, a Persian rug bought at an estate sale in Santa Barbara, a bureau from the in-laws, a porcelain weenie dog from a neighbor who was transferred to Colorado.

As they spoke about their things, I started to notice some of my clients were having strong emotional reactions. I remember one client bursting into tears when I asked about a jewelry box she had on her nightstand. Another appeared shaken after I complimented a sculpture that stood on top of her fireplace mantel. Some showed genuine anger when they recalled the memories their possessions inspired. Even items as innocuous and mundane as a coffee mug or an old blanket seemed to hold tremendous emotional weight.

I followed my instincts to hold back on my plans to talk about food in the kitchen, and as I walked through my clients’ homes, I took my time, I began asking more questions, and when I did, I started to realize that not only were my clients keeping possessions in their homes that were making them feel bad, but that these possessions all called to mind situations where like with their weight, they felt powerless.

A book from a business associate reminded one client of a missed financial opportunity. An old jacket brought on feelings of regret and sadness over a recent divorce. A family photo triggered memories of a close relative who had died of diabetes. As my clients spoke about their things, I noticed that their facial expressions mirrored those they had back at my office when they told me about the issues they were having in their lives. I started to wonder: Could my clients’ possessions be influencing them to feel powerless? Could the things they kept in their homes be contributing to an image they had of themselves that was holding them back? Is this why my clients thought they couldn’t do what others with half their skills and experience could? Were they coming up short because of who their possessions were telling them they were?

From what I saw, it made sense. The emotions matched up. Incredible as it seemed, the feelings my clients were experiencing while talking to me about their possessions were the same feelings they had come to see me about, the same feelings they wanted my help removing from their lives.

The more homes I went into, the more I saw that it was true. Whether it was experiences from childhood, events that took place in high school or at work, my clients were surrounding themselves with reminders of the past that were keeping them from having what they wanted and being happy. Not all of their possessions were causing them problems. Some possessions helped them and made them feel good. But others reinforced feelings of powerlessness that were holding them back. My clients felt powerless to make more money, to get better jobs, to lose weight, to move on from bad relationships, or to simply be happy. Inside their homes, I found they had possessions that were influencing them to feel this way. This wasn’t something I noticed every once in a while — this was something I saw happening in every home I went into.
THE SEVEN STEPS TO CLEARING YOUR POSSESSIONS

I’m there when it happens. I walk my clients through the process, and we talk about it afterward. I’ve seen the boxes get hauled away, and I’ve watched the Clearing turn a wasteland of a life and turn it into a continually blooming garden. I’ve witnessed what works and what doesn’t, and these experiences have created a path that the Seven Steps will help you follow.

Step 1: Realize you can do this, and tell yourself you can.
Step 2: List the places you will Clear.
Step 3: Gather your supplies and prepare.
Step 4: Make your Power Question sign.
Step 5: Write your commitment statement.
Step 6: Begin, and go until you’re finished.
Step 7: Complete your closing ceremony.

Set time aside to do steps 1–5 all on the same day, one after the other. Then begin completing steps 6 and 7 either the next day or within a few days after. Once you commit, it’s time to Clear. Focus and let nothing stand in your way.
STEP 4: MAKE YOUR POWER QUESTION SIGN

Find a piece of paper or cardboard and make a sign with the Power Question on it. You can use, “Does this make me feel powerful?” or you can modify the question any way you like:

“Do the feelings I get from this possession make me feel powerful?”
“Do the memories attached to this make me feel powerful?”
“Does what this object makes me think of make me feel powerful?”
“When I think of this possession, what stands out in my mind the most, and does it make me feel powerful?”

You can even ask:

“Does this make me feel good?”
“Does this inspire me?”

If a possession isn’t doing one of these things, then it isn’t making you feel powerful.

You could also turn the Power Question into a statement like “This possession is powerful because ________.” or, “This makes me feel powerful because ________.” If you can fill in the second half of the sentence and it feels right, you have your answer. Go ahead and make adjustments until you find a version that works for you.

I’ve created a four-question sequence to help you ask yourself the Power Question with your possessions. For your sign, you can use your own version, you can use the original Power Question, or you can write out the four questions I have below.

1. What does this possession make me think of?
2. How do I feel when I think these thoughts?
3. Is this the way I want to feel?
4. Does this make me feel powerful?

If you like, make your sign big. If you are crafty and want to put some extra effort into the design, go for it. When you begin Clearing your home, prominently display your Power Question sign in each room you are working in.

Once your sign is ready, continue to Step 5.
1. I have gifts from my wedding, birthdays, and anniversaries that I want to Clear, but I feel conflicted about letting them go. Can I really Clear a gift?

Some gifts make you feel great, some fill you with pressure and anxiety, and some are more about the person giving the gift than who’s receiving it. The only thing that matters is what you decide after you’ve asked the Power Question.

My client Karen and her husband Greg had moved into a new house and were in the process of decorating it. On weekends they would go to local shops and auctions looking for antiques. They were having fun picking out new pieces and looking at websites and magazines for ideas. One day, Betty, Greg’s mother, showed up unannounced at their home with two deliverymen and a sofa.

Karen was in another part of the house when the truck arrived, and as she walked toward her front door, she overheard her mother-in-law saying to Greg, “Well, Karen’s taste could use some help. I’m just happy to do my part.” Karen pretended she hadn’t heard what Betty said and then spent the next six weeks looking at the sofa and feeling inadequate and angry.

During her Clearing, Karen told me that she didn’t like the color of the sofa, but “the fabric was very good quality.” I asked her what came into her mind when she thought about the sofa and if the emotions she felt when she thought about it made her feel powerful.
She took a few moments before answering and then said, “Do you know what is coming into my mind? My mother-in-law invited herself along when I went to pick out my wedding dress and talked me into getting one I didn’t even like. I think I spent half the wedding thinking about it, and now I keep thinking about this sofa.”

Not only were Betty’s comments about Karen’s taste attached to the sofa, so was what happened with her wedding dress. Karen hated the way she felt about both of these situations, and we ended up spending some time talking about them. Toward the end of our conversation, Karen said, “I think what you are telling me is that I’m giving up my happiness and telling myself it’s worth it for a sofa I don’t even like.” She was smiling as she said it. Karen is smart, funny, and capable. Instead of doing the same thing she had done with her wedding dress all over again, she needed to access her abilities and find a different approach.

Karen wanted to be “nice” and “polite” so people would like her, but then she would secretly resent them when they walked all over her. The sofa was telling her that she didn’t set boundaries and that she was the kind of person who always let people get their way. Being “nice” and “polite” had become the crutch Karen used to stay where she was in her life and avoid doing anything different, like standing up for herself and the happiness of her family.

The Clearing peeled away the excuses for Karen because it forced her to look at the sofa in terms of one thing only—her power. Did the sofa make her feel powerful? The answer was either yes or no, and when it came to her sofa, Karen found the answer was no. When she saw the sofa, she didn’t think to herself, “Betty is so sweet. I’m the luckiest daughter-in-law in the world. I think I’ll go bake her some brownies.” Just the opposite: Karen resented Betty and couldn’t walk past the sofa without feeling like she was getting taken down a few notches.

Not doing anything with her wedding dress hadn’t worked, so this time Karen decided to take action. To honor her commitment to the Clearing, she knew she had to listen to the answer she received from the Power Question and face her feelings. Karen knew she couldn’t keep the sofa. She decided the truth was her best option. She called the furniture store and had them pick up the sofa, and they took it over to her mother-in-law’s home.

Karen: I knew that if I called Betty, it might have dragged on and I would lose my nerve. I know myself, and I would have started making excuses because I just didn’t want to face it. I knew my choice was either doing something to change the way I felt or keeping the sofa. I didn’t want to chance having the sofa in the house any longer and having this become a bigger deal than it had to be or another thing I ended up getting used to instead of doing something about. I had to get it out of my house. In the past I wasn’t direct. I would let things build and just get sad and frustrated, and I would usually end up making a bad decision. This time I wanted to be different.

When I got to her home, Betty came to the door. She was definitely confused by the sight of the truck. I think it was the last thing she expected to see. I hugged her and thanked her again for the sofa. I explained that even though it was a well-made piece and very nice, it didn’t fit in with the rest of the furniture in my home, which was the truth.

I told her what I had overheard her say about my taste and that it hurt me and I was embarrassed by it. I told her that I should have said something earlier but I felt uncomfortable because she is my husband’s mother and I want to have a good relationship with her. That’s when she did something I never expected: She looked at me kind of funny and then burst into tears. She told me that it was her fault. She said that she was upset because she felt like she was losing her son, and she knew it was silly, but that’s why she was pushing her way into our lives. She apologized and promised she’d never do anything like this again. We stood there hugging each other and crying. The poor delivery guys were there with the couch in their hands watching us the whole time. We must have looked ridiculous.

Because she stepped up and went in a different direction from what she usually would, Karen felt better about herself, and Betty was given the choice to accept her daughter-in-law as her own person, with her own will and desires, and she did. Karen and Betty went
little about. What helps your partner helps you. Look out for each other during the process, and you will both benefit.

Let your partner know how you feel when it comes to your shared items. Be direct with the people you live with, while being kind and tactful. No one wants to hear that their things aren’t powerful or are causing unhappiness. Make your decisions and keep moving forward. Getting caught up in lengthy discussions over your old things could slow you down, drain your enthusiasm, and invite disharmony. Stick with the simplicity of the Power Question. Remember that you love this person and what that means, and move on.

8. I mentioned I was doing the Clearing to my family and a few of my friends. Now everyone keeps coming by my place to help me, but it’s more like they’re telling me what to do. I’m getting confused. What should I do?

If your family members or friends are telling you what you should do and you’re obeying them whether you like their ideas or not, you can begin regaining your self-esteem and reclaiming your living space by going through the Seven Steps on your own. These are your possessions, your past, and your life. You are discovering the way you feel. If you include other people in your Clearing or let them push you around, your chances of Clearing what you need to will be in jeopardy.

Maybe in the past you let the people around you manipulate you into paying attention to their life and their problems instead of your life and what you wanted to accomplish. Maybe a few of your dreams died because of this. Take the necessary actions that allow you to focus on your Clearing and break this pattern. Making a list of the places you will Clear, creating your Power Question sign, gathering your supplies, writing your commitment statement, setting aside time so you can be on your own and focus, moving quickly — these actions are all part of the Seven Steps because they work. Don’t fight their wisdom; embrace it and they will help you make the most of your Clearing and your life.

9. I tried the Clearing for a couple of weeks and did a few of the techniques, but I’m not sure it’s working for me. What am I doing wrong?

“It didn’t work for me.”

“It just wasn’t my thing.”

“I gave it a try, but...”

Are you setting yourself up for failure and regret by not truly committing because failure and regret are what you’re used to feeling when it comes to changing your life? Is the old you steering you toward quitting, reinforcing an identity that has you trapped in a lifestyle that isn’t making you happy? Is the old you throwing doubt and fear into your focus and doing everything possible to make you say, “I knew this wouldn’t work,” just so you can feel like you’re right about something and that you have control?

Trying is one thing, doing is altogether different. You’re not going to get what you are looking for by trying the Clearing; you have to do it. You can’t stick your toe in the water and say you went swimming. If you are going at this halfway, choosing from the process only what suits you and discarding the rest, you are not going to get the same results you would if you actually followed the Seven Steps.

It’s time to forget the depressing routine of setting yourself up for failure, time to skip the tried and not-so-true “good reasons” you’ve used in the past for backing out of the things you know you

Change your identity from someone who lets other people run the show to someone who is in charge and strong. Never use the people around you as an excuse for not doing the things you want with your life. It’s your home, and it’s your life. If someone is coming over and interfering with your Clearing, you can ask them to leave. You will find a way. Why be who your family or friends think you are and have the life they want you to have when you can be the magnificent person you are and have the fulfilling life you want to have? The people you know have their own lives to live. Don’t waste another day letting them live yours as well.
the good things you want in your life. Talk to yourself about your new destinations, and begin seeing them in your mind. Enjoy imagining a future where things work out. It doesn’t matter if you only have a few ideas and haven’t completely thought things through yet. Allow yourself to enjoy exploring and dreaming about the possibilities. Smile and feel good.

Once you’ve indulged in these visions of the future, it’s time to use what you’ve learned and continue creating the next part of your life. Decide it’s going to be awesome. Combine what you have here with what you have inside you, and make it so.

SURE, I’VE TOLD you what you need to do to create your new endings, but how do you do it? The next section of the book deals with how to confront, apologize, and forgive in the way that will create the best endings possible. Read “Doing The Seven Steps: Taking Action,” the “Do’s,” the “Don’ts,” and the Q&A before you begin to Clear your events and as often as you need as you move through the process.

CONFRONTING

Many people have negative connotations when it comes to confronting, but it doesn’t have to be this way. Instead of being a prelude to an argument or increased tensions, when done correctly, confrontation can be a source of good feelings, and it can free you from the weight of misunderstandings and hurt. When you confront, you’re simply telling someone what you like or what you don’t like. Most of the time, a few simple sentences are all it takes. That being said, what those sentences end up being, the manner in which they are conveyed, and the effect they end up having can vary greatly depending upon what you do before you create them.

Nancy: When John and I were discussing Clearing residual thoughts, an event popped into my mind. Three years earlier I had lied to my
sister, and I knew I had to apologize to her and to confront my brother-in-law. One Christmas, the three of us decided that to make the family gathering a little more fun, we would drink a little during the day. My sister and I almost never drank, and my brother-in-law was an alcoholic, so deciding to drink was probably not the wisest decision. My sister and I were able to get one drink down and enjoyed the effects, but my brother-in-law kept drinking throughout the day. At one point he got a little too close to me and looked like he was about to kiss me. Hours later, as I was getting ready to leave my parents’ house, he grabbed a basket to take to my car, as if he was helping me. He loaded it in the trunk and then asked me if that had earned him a kiss. My body kind of seized up for a second. I ignored what he said and quickly went back into the house.

A few days later my mom and I went to my sister’s house for a visit. My brother-in-law came out and met us on the front porch and said that my sister didn’t want to see anyone because she was upset about Christmas and had accused him of hitting on me. This is where I really screwed up and instead of telling the truth, I lied. In front of my mother, and with my sister probably listening inside, I said, “Well, that didn’t happen.” I shrank away from the confrontation and the truth, and my mother and I left. I was so uncomfortable about the whole thing that I didn’t know how to handle it, or at least that’s what I thought at the time. Of course I could handle it. I know that now. All I had to do was tell the truth. This wasn’t my problem; it was my brother-in-law’s, but my lies and excuses made it mine, and I was holding on to it.

Two years later, my mother had a birthday lunch for me. My father, my sister, and my sister’s husband were there. I was in a really great mood because I had just spent most of the previous day reading a Harry Potter book. I was telling my mother about the book when my brother-in-law made a joke about the whole Harry Potter series being Satanic. I felt anger fill my entire body in a flash. I simmered silently for a few minutes, and then I let it loose. I loudly told him that I didn’t appreciate his joke or him ruining my birthday that I hadn’t even invited him to anyway. Everyone at the table was silent. My brother-in-law got up and left. No one knew how to respond because what I did was so out of proportion to what my brother-in-law had said.

The fallout from that outburst was that my sister said that she felt like she couldn’t be around me anymore, and my brother-in-law informed us that he wasn’t going to come to any family events. I called my sister, and she said she felt like she was having to choose between us. I completely ignored what I was really upset about and apologized for blowing up at him, and she decided we could still hang out.

As John and I talked about all these events, I told him I didn’t want to Clear this one because I didn’t want to have to tell my sister that her husband kept trying to kiss me at Christmas, even though she obviously knew something had happened. I also told him that whenever I had confronted my family in the past it hadn’t gone well. He asked for an example and I told him the “Harry Potter incident” was a pretty good example. John pointed out that my passive-aggressive response must have only confused my family, who had no idea what I was really angry about.

When I wrote out the event and the details of what happened, I uncovered residual thoughts that I didn’t realize were there. I knew what they were. It was obvious. I don’t stand up for myself. I lie rather than confront, and I don’t protect the people I love. I didn’t speak up during this event or after. I didn’t speak up in many events before. I was being passive-aggressive, and the things I wanted to say were coming out of me in ways I didn’t like. I hated how I felt. I was putting off doing anything about it because it was uncomfortable and I didn’t want to think about it, so instead I let my relationships with my family and the way I felt about myself suffer.

I started creating visualizations of myself confronting successfully; then I focused on the future and some of the things I’d be doing. I felt wonderful as I watched myself giving speeches, standing up to people, being confident, going to the places I wanted to go, and doing the things I wanted to do. I saw people smiling at me and going out of their way to help me out and be nice.