

Input sound file: Christine coaching Jenni

S1 00:01 And I believe we-- yes, we are recording. Hi, Jenni.

S2 00:06 Hello. How are you, Christine?

S1 00:07 I'm really good today. How are you?

S2 00:09 I'm doing well, too.

S1 00:10 Yeah. Well, thanks for letting me record this for my coach certification. I'm very grateful.

S2 00:19 I'm happy to do it. It's a milestone for me too, because it made me think that we did this just as I was coming to Colombia, and now three years later I'm leaving Colombia.

S1 00:30 Yeah. Oh, it is! It's like a bookmark. This is so cool [laughter]. So speaking of bookmarks, how shall we begin and end our session today?

S2 00:44 Well, I've been thinking so much about this final presentation to the client tomorrow. It would be cool to have a confidence boost about the presentation, about doing a good job without reading from my notes like a nervous school girl. And really gearing up to leave because I leave in ten days and all that entails.

S1 01:16 Okay, so it sounds like there's two things that you'd like to cover today.

S2 01:23 Yeah, tomorrow and next week.

S1 01:26 Tomorrow and next week, okay [chuckles]. Would it serve to refine specifically the two requests, so we know what we're working with?

S2 01:38 Sure.

S1 01:39 Which one do you want to refine first?

S2 01:45 Let's start with the presentation tomorrow, the confidence, and not reading from my notes.

S1 01:52 So there's a request to get this confidence boost, so that you're not like a nervous schoolgirl. If we addressed this successfully, what would you leave our call with?

S2 02:07 I guess more of a calm than what I'm feeling. My feelings have been snarky, because I want to show up this big client boss guy that is not very pleasant. But also, leave my good client, his underling, with a good feeling about having to work with me. That I really did what she needed, from our side too, to make her job in getting funding for projects better and easier. And just want to calm the hell down. I want to own it. I know this stuff backwards and forwards, I know that [?] it does, and I'm proud to show that. Just saying that makes me feel nervous [chuckles].

S1 03:02 So, if you could leave the call with the experience of owning the past three years-- is it the past three years, or just the last year and a half?

S2 03:15 This particular project, it was a year and a half, but it is a culmination of everything we've done here. And I don't know if you've heard, but they signed peace last night--

S1 03:26 Oh, no.

S2 03:27 --in Havana.

S1 03:29 Oh, my gosh.

S2 03:29 It's a peace accord. I know. From a friend who has contacts in the administration, sent me the peace accord. I just can't believe I'm looking at it. I was looking through it a little bit this morning. So this is a culmination, because when I arrived, they had just started talking.

S1 03:56 Is that what you're looking to get, your own peace accord, to walk in?

S2 04:03 Yeah [chuckles]. What a nice image, yeah. We're about putting the final touches on my time here. Making an agreement with USAID to do a better job in the future.

S1 04:30 Would it serve to-- is there anything else you need to say around this particular request?

S2 04:45 No, that was it.

S1 04:46 Would it serve to dive in, or would prefer to clarify the other one?

S2 04:53 I think clarify the other one. Let's see what it is I'm thinking about.

S1 04:56 Okay.

S2 05:00 I guess there's some sadness about moving with family and friends, and my life. I was thinking today as I walked to work, I took some pictures and I thought maybe I'll do a little blog series about my last week in Bogota. All the things that I do. My funny little simple life that I've enjoyed in lots of ways. That I found this. I guess there's a little-- or I'll get a little peace with that, too. Because - I think I might have told you this before - but I don't really have to go. I mean, I'm deciding on a particular purpose. But it's a really new, weird purpose. I'm going to go live with a guy [laughter]. That's really weird to me. So little trepidation about the future, and excitement, and sadness. It's really mixed. Every time I look at my little lady that comes to help me at the house - who I absolutely adore and who absolutely adores me - her eyes well up with tears and I think "Oh God, Elena." She's like the soul of Colombia.

S1 06:34 Yeah. I wonder if there is... so, what's this conversation gearing up to leave, the excitement and trepidation, the recording of your funny little simple life? What's all that really about for you?

S2 07:13 That's funny. When you asked that, the first thing that came to my mind was that I'm getting older.

S1 07:19 That's interesting.

S2 07:22 Yeah. The chapter closing a single life and closing on Bogota life-- I guess, the bookmarks at the end of these chapters are a little starker now. I see the future as shorter than the past, or something? I get a little hypochondriac sometimes. Like, "I'm 48 almost, what does it mean? How close am I to dying? What was that twinge?" I really want to enjoy what time I have.

- S1 08:19 As a minor aside, it sounds like this area might also serve with a conversation with your therapist.
- S2 08:32 Yeah. Yeah, I'll be on the phone with him tomorrow at 7:00 AM.
- S1 08:40 Oh. That early, huh [laughter]?
- S2 08:44 It works well with work.
- S1 08:45 Okay. Cool. So if we were to address this from a coaching perspective, what might we address in the bookmark of getting older, that would support you?
- S2 09:05 Well, writing. I mean being a writer, and then coming up with this idea of a blog series strikes me as brilliant, frankly. I just think it rather than marking the important occasions in writing, and maybe in a couple of goofy photos of the street life around here, is a really apt way to say goodbye for me. Taking pictures of my colleagues and just stepping out, but with this mark of muck about it. About how important it [inaudible], about how hard it was to be here grieving, about how lovely, really, honestly, the weather is. How easy it is to live here because you never have to deal peeling muck off boots or sweating profusely like in so many of the places that I've worked. How glorious this place is, the mountains right next to you. I don't know, kind of acknowledging all the good things about it. Also, my other feelings about being here. I don't want that to be. Especially in this last run-up, I've been "Got to keep it together. Got to keep it together. Got to keep it together [chuckles]."
- S2 10:55 You know, just really short time I perceive in a very unproductive, weird way, and now, all of a sudden, I'm in ten days out and I'm like, "Holy crap. Look what I am leaving behind. Look what I rushed to leave behind. I raced. I fucking--" what a great metaphor for writing, too.
- S1 11:21 I'm curious of what you're getting in sharing this out live.
- S2 11:35 It's a little more peaceful about it. I feel proud that I came up with this idea of the little blog posts. For the series. My last week here. This is what it looks like. This is my bye-bye Bogota call. As a way to honor it. I really had what a good year at work. Made lots of friends, did lots of good work, and I'm proud of that. I'm proud of it kind of-- more mockingly on the way to work when I was dreaming it up, but more a pat on the back, feeling like winning. I don't want to get older [chuckles]. That is a little weird. I don't mentally fight it, I just don't quite acknowledge it, don't quite recognize it. My mom says, "Yeah, I'm just going to change when squash is the new tennis," because in that little room it's easier to have injuries and you're getting older. She has this rather matter-of-fact way about it. And "I like squash!" or whatever, whatever the thing is. "Are you serious? We're not old, look at us. Prime of life." If I can quit smoking, it'll be prime of life. That's my goal when I get to Madrid.
- S1 13:35 Okay [chuckles].
- S2 13:38 Because I think that's the number one thing that will help me in the next however many years. Number one, tied with writing [chuckles].
- S1 13:49 Well, it sounds like you've moved a little bit away from the honoring an acknowledgment of your time into the question or concern around getting older.

- S2 14:04 Yeah. You don't get a million opportunities in life to do the things that you do in your journey, and this was one, and I really got to do it and we're doing that right. I guess closing that chapters bound to be a little-- catching your throat. But who's more fortunate than me. Charmed life for a long time. I'll make the little blog post. I keep saying little because I want to make them little enough that they are not an obstacle to the day when I have so much to do, to leave. Just a little something every day. A picture or two, and 500 words of what it is.
- S1 15:12 I like how 500 words is little for you [laughter].
- S2 15:16 Oh, my God. A thousand words is little. 2,000, I can write in 15 minutes. No, I'm exaggerating, but-- I don't know. yeah. Oh, I got words, sister.
- S1 15:28 I know you got words. Well, it sounds like-- may I offer you an assertion?
- S2 15:42 Sure.
- S1 15:43 Okay. It sounds like there was the need to acknowledge and honor your time may have been addressed by simply sharing the idea and talking it through. Is that your experience?
- S2 16:02 Yeah. I feel like I'm on the right track. I figured that one out.
- S1 16:09 Cool. Is there anything else that you see or need to say?
- S2 16:18 No, that's about it.
- S1 16:20 Okay. Cool. All right. Would you like to move over into the peace accord [laughter]?
- S2 16:30 Yes. That sounds perfect.
- S1 16:32 Okay. So, where do you see a good place to start? Start negotiations, or whatever it is[chuckles].
- S2 16:43 Maybe trying to think of him not as the enemy. Recognize that his position is valid in some ways, too. A good evaluator is not just good at evaluating something that's put in front of her to be evaluated and thinking about that, particularly. But also about the things that make up her own-- like, mental framework. The lenses, eye wear going into the meeting. Going into any encounter with the client. The ones with the dough. Kind of being able to look at how I built him up into a monster. That's not really fair, either.
- S1 17:47 Are you distinguished about the lenses you have?
- S2 17:51 Not entirely. Because evaluation-- I mean, how could he even not want to have his stuff evaluated? How could he not want to know what's going right and what's going wrong from an external perspective? Somebody looking independently. Though I do my personals and maybe got burned by some evaluator sometime ago and-- check with his careers, and that's why he looks at us with this distrust.
- S1 18:22 Well, that sounds like a different thing from the conversation around the lens that you wear, why you have made him out to be a monster.
- S2 18:35 Well, I don't want to get blamed.
You don't want to-- I'm sorry, what did you say?

- S1 18:46 I don't want to get blamed for anything he doesn't like about the evaluation. Not just any-- my real client size, the one I work with all the time who I like so much, but in my boss's eyes and the people that are there-- I've had this fear that someone will invite to the presentation the man who - I don't know how much I told you about this, but I know I told you something - who pretty much abandoned me to this project because he was-- didn't want to work with me anymore. I'm afraid someone will know him and bring him to the meeting, and he'll be there, and I'll be presenting to him as well. Like, feeling concern that there was something that he need. Like, is that a kind of nutrition. So he knows stats ways better than I do, and what if I say something that he disagrees with. The mission director wouldn't know a statistic if it bit him in the ass, so I'm not worried about that with him, but he may be pushing for a different interpretation so that he and his team look better. There's all those ways that evaluation kind of gets under people's skin, and I don't want any of their flack. From any of them. I've worked so fucking hard. I've been here every night, every weekend day. 10, 11, 12-hour days for months, other than that trip to New York and Madrid, and I just feel like I'm on the edge of a knife. I want to be-- I want them to respect the work that's gone into it to make it good, and I don't to get bucked at. I don't want to be defensive. I don't want to-- I'd really rather just not go [laughter]. If somebody else could just do this presentation, that would be really cool [chuckles].
- S1 21:19 Wow, it sounds really-- I can hear the-- you had described yourself as a nervous schoolgirl. I can hear the nervous schoolgirl.
- S2 21:36 That sure doesn't sound like lenses though. I do sometimes see the clients like enemies, in a way, because the defensiveness I can show in these kinds of presentations. So, maybe that's part of my lenses. Like I don't know if I'm just doing it for [?] in the need.
- S1 22:16 Yeah. I wonder if I might-- I wonder if one of the lenses might relate to-- I don't know exactly how to say this. There's a flavor of-- what I heard you say is you're walking on the edge of a knife and you want respect, because of all of the hard work: the nights and the weekends and the no vacations, and all of the blood, sweat, and tears essentially that you put in to this evaluation. I wonder if one of the lenses has to do with the recognition of that.
- [silence]
- S2 23:43 Yeah, it's sort of like an impossibility. Why would he, at this late date, change his perspective to one of accommodating my emotional needs around everything I've put in to this? It's not even his job.
- S1 24:13 So, is that one of the lenses? Impossible?
- S2 24:19 Yeah, it's antagonistic because of that. It's like I know I'm going to go in there, and then all I'm going to get are rough questions and defensiveness. And the one thing that they probably owe me is recognition and I'll never get that.
- S1 24:41 Well, certainly, because you've already got the lens of, "It's impossible." What does this reveal to you that you were not aware of before?
- S2 25:04 Sort of a vanity about it and something that I have known is about the conflict of it, the confrontation of it. I mean if I were taking off

lenses, if I were really being this neutral, independent broker of information, I could step back but there's this charity in it, this ego in it, that wants to hear that I did a good job. Thanks for being here.

S1 25:53

That's interesting. I wonder if our previous conversation about needing to honor your experience here has any relevance to--

S2 26:03

Yeah. I heard it, too.

S1 26:05

Okay [chuckles]. What did you hear?

S2 26:10

Does it matter that I was here? They're the ones who brought me here, you know? They're turning up the money to have me, since I'm evaluating, and I don't think they appreciate it. It's more like they had to, so they did it, but it's not because they wanted to. And I thought I was snarky about my time, about the traffic patterns and the jackasses who clog up the city streets with-- selling underwear [laughter] and [?]. This guy is out there every day with his big mat full of girdles and ankle wraps. I've seen him every weekday since I've been here. I walk down the street, and he goes, in Spanish of course, "Girdles. Anklewraps."

S1 27:04

We will have to have another conversation because I don't even know what an ankle wrap is [laughter].

S2 27:09

You know, like a little stretchy thing when you have a hurt ankle. He's got these little package things there, that it's just going to cover your ankle I guess. And one of the things that I don't like about [chuckles] is everywhere you go downtown here, where I live, people are crowding the sidewalks selling stuff. And so, there's this tiny little tunnel of people sieving through, trying to make it to the bank or whatever before it closes.

S1 27:41

Well, I'm curious. How did you bring peace to the sieving through?

S2 27:50

More [chuckles]--

S1 27:51

Does it?

S2 27:52

On my way home, almost to my turn where I go up my street, there's a guy who sells candy. And not every day, but a lot of days, I buy candy from him. So first of all, I'm using the services of the people selling crap on the street. He's got an enormous cart. It's like you could put refrigerators on it, and it's full of candy bars. And when I pass by, I stop and chat with him, and pick out candy bars or something, M&Ms or something local or whatever. And I guess that's my prize for going through the gauntlet.

S1 28:34

Does that have any relevance to the conversation you're going to have tomorrow?

S2 28:42

Candy [chuckles], I need a prize at the end. "We're going out for ice cream after," that's what I'm going to tell the team [laughter]. I don't care what else we do the rest of the day, but we're going to go for ice cream after [chuckles]. They'll understand. They'll probably say, "Why didn't we think of that [chuckles]?"

S1 29:08

What is having the prize? What's that providing you?

S2 29:16

Well, it's funny, but that seems happier knowing that I get a prize even if they don't tell me anything nice there.

S1 29:27

Yeah. Does that--?

- S2 29:30 It really helps, I don't know why. I feel much lighter than I did even five minutes ago.
- S1 29:38 So, that would support you in bringing calm and peace to the meeting tomorrow?
- S2 29:47 Yeah. Maybe I should draw a sundae on my hand, so I can look down at it, instead of having notes[chuckles].
- S1 29:55 Perfect, yeah [laughter]. That's great. A visual reminder and also letting the team know that this prize is waiting for them.
- S2 30:08 I often look at my Great Dane of publishing picture on the wall or the window of my office, and think. there's something that can take you out of the stuff you're in, if you'll let it. It'll take you out of the worry and the being too intense and deep. And the great speckled-- the speckled Great Dane of publishing, I think we called it way back when, did it for me. For a longtime.
- S1 30:45 So what I'm hearing is that there are visual reminders that direct you to a-- that bring you out of the blame, and the shame, and the ego to-- and present you to something different?
- S2 31:09 Yeah.
- S1 31:11 What are you being present to here?
- S2 31:17 Well, at the pole of having a peace accord there, the other visual that I thought of was a waving Colombian flag. I don't know where it just came from in my head, but thinking about how much bigger that is, how much work went into that, how hard it's still going to be for them to implement it. It's-- I don't know. I was just about crying about it this morning when I got the news. So, that's another thing that I think could put our little work in perspective. We're just a little fraction in what they've been doing, what they still have yet to do in the government [?]. I feel like they're really Colombian.
- S1 32:09 How are we doing moving you towards your peace accord?
- S2 32:20 I like it. I like it. I feel good. I feel, like I said, lighter. And it did really put it in perspective with this real peace accord happened today, happened last night. You lay the two things next to each other, because part of the ego thing is really like expanding something that so fills the room. And when it's been my whole life, other than the gym for the past few months, it does feel it's eating up everything in the room including me. It's nice to put a little lid on it, and say, "End of tomorrow's presentation, we're going to go get some ice cream." I'm going to get the big one with the chocolate fudge [laughter]. I usually just get a cone, but this time we're going big.
- S1 33:15 Cool. So, where do you see the conversation now?
- S2 33:31 Let's see, how do I feel about tomorrow? I feel better, confident. What about the notes? How do I let myself just speak about what I know instead of reading from the notes? That one is my little nervous schoolgirl bugaboo. That off the bit big thing as well, that I get tongue-tied. Do you have any clients who had to do public speaking that they were nervous about?
- S1 34:06 I think it's a human thing [laughter]. I don't know that it's just a client thing. Well, I'm curious if we related the nervous schoolgirl here, and he brought her into the peace accord conversation, what that might make available to you?

S2 34:56 She's just so prone to go right for the ice cream.

S1 34:59 Okay [laughter], what does that mean [laughter]?

S2 35:02 She wants to skip over the hard part. It doesn't seem like we were more ego back then and with some ed thrown in. Less about responsibility and more about-- and that [?] when you say, "blame and shame." I was just tortured when I was the nervous schoolgirl, ranging all the time about everything. And I was a good student, and I was a good girl, and I was nice to my parents, and there wasn't anything so awful about me. I just felt like I should be much more the one that solved problems, and did things, and had answers, and fixed and did better somehow than what I was doing.

S1 36:02 Jenni, may I offer you an assertion?

S2 36:04 Yeah.

S1 36:06 I noticed in our conversation, one of the things that you really seem to-- that lights you up, you get a little sparkle in your voice, it's when you talk about the things going on things like little snippets. The little blog posts, the little picture on your hand, the prize at the end - they're little things. What of these has any meaning for you, or could have any meaning for you here?

S2 37:00 Well, it doesn't sound like I need to be named Queen of Colombia to be happy. Those little things can sit into you a life that has responsibilities, and purpose, and dreams that I work hard to fulfill. Little things aren't going to take up so much space. The bad, or overwhelming, which should be normal. A tube of Certs, just a little tube of Certs candies. You know Certs?

S1 37:44 Sure. Yeah. There's a brightness to your voice, or I notice a brightness to your voice. What's happening over there?

S2 38:00 Maybe another perspective setting, you know? They're little things. They're not taking away from what I've done, just because I happen to have a little [Van der Ryn Eco?] and won a prize. That doesn't abjure-- is that the right word?

S1 38:25 Mm-hmm.

S2 38:26 What's come before. It doesn't wipe it out just because I am human, too. That's nice.

S1 38:40 What difference may this be making for your nervous little schoolgirl?

S2 38:48 My nervous little schoolgirl is probably nervous because she feels guilty that she didn't do more somehow. And it's funny, you can hold two things in your thoughts and heart at the same time, but as much as I know how many hours I've put in and how much time I've spent heads down in the weeds doing the thing. I also know about the times I'm [?] off and blah, blah, blah. So it's funny to kind of get up in arms for a second about how I'll never get thanks from them for all I've done, and the very next second think, "God, I wish I could have done more. I wish I'd done more [chuckles]." That's confusing, isn't it?

S1 39:36 Yeah.

S2 39:39 How can those two things live together? They seem like they're so pushed apart. I had metric with polls. But maybe they're not

somehow. Maybe they feed on each other, maybe they need each other to live.

- S1 40:08 Well, that's interesting.
- S2 40:09 Yeah, that's like a whole other call [laughter].
- S1 40:15 We have time darling. But how is this awareness useful to you, as it pertains to calm in the face of the nervous little schoolgirl?
- S2 40:32 I don't know but I feel a lightening in my chest, an unleashing, an untightening, a sort of relaxing in between my breast bones.
- S1 40:42 I can hear it. Your voice went up several octaves [laughter].
- S2 40:45 High! High! Yeah, I don't know what it was, but I could sure feel it. Like, the girl's all right. Some issues now, but she'll make it. When she's big enough. I think that means I can take the rest of the day off, to draw sundaes and Colombian flags on the pages of my notes. That I won't be looking at because I won't need it. I'll be thinking about the sundae anyway [chuckles].
- S1 41:23 Yeah. Is there anything more specific that you might need to support your nervous little girl?
- S2 41:39 Well, love sounds like a good thing.
- S1 41:41 Okay, what do you mean?
- S2 41:44 Just kind of love the little girl. Instead of wanting to push her away from me. She's me. She's just a reality part of me as the kickass, mouth-sphincter making jokes [laughter]--
- S1 42:11 Right.
- S2 42:13 No, I mean she's there, too.
- S1 42:16 That's so funny. You brought up the sphincter from our last call.
- S2 42:19 Of course.
- S1 42:20 I wonder if she would help the little-- the nervous girl. This sphincter image?
- S2 42:27 I'm sphinctering right now [chuckles]. I think a big, puckered kiss on her forehead would probably help her. A shameless one. Like, with a smacking sound [chuckles]. In Spain, they spell that sound, M-U-A-K, and they sign an email with muak.
- S1 42:56 Would it be valuable to put muak on the pages, too [laughter]?
- S2 43:01 I like it. I like it. And she's, the little schoolgirl, a little bit shy about that at first, like, "What the hell's going on?" And then she kind of smiles, and giggles, and realizes that sundae's coming. Like, she's going to be all right. Muak [chuckles].
- S1 43:20 So, it feels like we're coming to a natural close. Does it feel that way to you?
- S2 43:28 Yeah.
- S1 43:29 Cool. Is there anything else, before we complete the call?
- S2 43:37 No, I think that I got there. I feel good. I feel good! Yay [laughter]!
- S1 43:45 So, is there anything like-- would it support you to sort of recap for yourself what you wanted, and then what you're actually walking away with?
- S1 43:55 That sounds smart, yeah. So, on the first-- on the second one, which was something I was saying goodbye meaningfully and hopefully and

positively to Colombia, going ahead with my idea of the little mini-blogs, or daily blog posts until I go. About what I'll miss, and what I love, and how I've grown, and things I've learned. The people, the candy guy at the end of the gauntlet. And for the scared little girl afraid to go on stage, giving her some credit for what she's accomplished without detracting from it. Too much like, "Could have done more, could have done more, could have done more." And getting a big kiss on the forehead with puckered lips, and letting her giggle, because an hour after that kiss comes the ice cream [chuckles].

S1 45:12

Cool. All right. Is there anything else still left to say, before we complete?

S2 45:19

Viva Columbia.

S1 45:20

Viva Columbia. All right, hold on, let me shut off the recording.

S2 45:25

All right.