

## **Karen K coaching Kathy (in the mentor coaching group setting)**

**Coach (00:01):** Hi, Kathy.

**Client (00:02):** Hi Karen, how you doing?

**Coach (00:05):** I am well, how are you this afternoon?

**Client (00:08):** Well, you know, it's a little mixed. It's a fantastically beautiful day, hopefully in Milwaukee also. So that's, I mean, it's just like, in Wisconsin, it's the day that you want to be outside, right?

**Coach (00:22):** Yeah, for sure.

**Client (00:23):** So, that's excellent. But as you also know, I had to cancel my summer session in my program today, so I'm a little down.

**Coach (00:29):** Yeah.

**Client (00:31):** And (crosstalk) my homework.

**Coach (00:34):** And what?

**Client (00:35):** I didn't do my homework.

**Coach (00:38):** Oh!

**Client (00:39):** I don't if you remember, but I remember I was supposed to have one conversation, I think it was, was it the other Karen who asked me to (Yeah) come up with the homework? So, and I did, I failed.

**Coach (00:52):** Yeah, well failed is a strong word. But, what do you think got in the way of you not being able to have that conversation with her?

**Client (01:01):** Well, a) I think I've just been super stressed. So, I'm not sure it's a good time for me to have, you know, a heart-to-heart with a friend who's also stressed, but b) she left town, so she was out of town for a week. So, I can use that as an excuse. But, but I had been having all sorts of different, difficult conversations with like my neighbor who I'm in a dispute with now because of where he's parking this giant van. Um, so, and then also a former colleague who, um, had some unresolved conflict with, who I didn't talk to today, so at least I'm dealing with conflict, but not with my friend Karen yet.

**Coach (01:45):** Okay. And in dealing with conflict, and you mentioned you've been sort of learning some things, what are, what are you learning?

**Client (01:55):** Well, it's interesting, you know, um, I'm a, I'm a pretty adept conflict avoider most times. And I've seemed to have just stumbled into a period of time where I can't avoid

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really any of it. Um, so, I'm in this contract negotiate, negotiation now with the State Medical Society, which, um, which is one form of conflict, right, is to, you know, in formal legal negotiation, all the way down to a neighbor who I think might be, like, emotionally unbalanced. Um, So, it's like this whole spectrum of rationality. And maybe I'm, maybe I'm supposed to be learning more about boundaries.

**Coach (02:45):** Hmm. What does that mean to you when you say boundaries?

**Client (02:54):** Well, um, so I have another project, um, which I think I have also talked to you a little bit about called Civic Consulting. And that's the part where I need to have a conversation I guess with Karen, um, my other Karen, coming up pretty soon in that. I think, um, I have a history, another friend, another friend pointed this out this week to me, I have a history of I start projects, and then I let other people take them over. Um, and part of that probably is I avoid conflict. So, if someone decides they're the boss, then I just let them be the boss. Um, but another piece of it might be also that I, um, maybe can't commit to some of these projects. And so the Civic Consulting project promises to have, now that we have a philanthropist, a corporate philanthropist involved promises to actually have a pretty high profile so maybe, you know, it's easier to hide behind things, if you let other people take over.

Um, so, you know, and then my neighbor is a really good mirror, right? So he, he thinks that what I say doesn't matter. So, he just does what he wants, even though the association documents forbid him from doing what he's been doing for six weeks. Um, and so, I guess it's just easier not to fight with him, except that then I have to sit with this giant van parked next to my building forever, like they're living in it, it's rusted out and purple. (Crosstalk) And so anyways, like on all levels, these mirrors of where are my boundaries, like, what's acceptable and what's not?

**Coach (04:44):** Yeah. So, is that something you'd like to explore in our session today?

**Client (04:49):** It seems to be all I can think about other than the weather.

**Coach (04:56):** [laughter] Okay, so it's all around you for some reason right now. So, if you were to, you know, walk away with our, from our session today with something that would be really helpful to you, what would that look like?

**Client (05:14):** Um, well, I guess I'm going to go back to maybe one of my first conversations with Susan, um, a few weeks ago, and that it would be, I really benefit from other people's perspectives about how they view maybe their own boundaries or, um, ways that they think about a frame standing up for themselves, because they don't want to think of what I'm doing as selfish. But I think there is some sort of boundary that you have to have, you know, my, my other friend Mary, who was telling me I have this history of letting other people just sort of take over after, you know, I do the background work and then I just let, I just hand things over. What she said to me, and I'm not sure I agree with her, but what she said is, you know, "Everybody has only their own best interests at heart. No one's looking out for you but you." And I don't know that I want to believe exactly that. But I think there is some truth in that.

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So, so I would just, you know, I like to, if you had, if you had to deal with some of these same sorts of boundary-setting issues, or, um, ways to sort of stand up for yourself without diminishing someone else, I mean, I would, I would like to hear that. But if I have to self-generate everything, I think I might be a problem for you to take Karen.

**Coach (06:47):** Oh, I don't think you're a problem at all. And certainly, you know, getting others' perspectives might be something that could be very helpful to you, as a takeaway from the session perhaps. But I think, um, one of the things that, you know, coaching is designed to do is to, you know, maybe shine a flashlight in some of those areas of you, your mind, your thoughts that, that maybe aren't, as, you know, clear to you at the moment. And so, I absolutely believe that you have things within you that are going to lead you in the right direction and, you know, solving sort of some of the challenges that you might be having, and, you know, coaching is just designed to bring that out. Now, like I said, there may be some follow-up actions that you want to take to get some other perspective. But, you know, if you wouldn't mind, just kind of starting to focus on what might be really going on with you and how we can uncover some of that today.

**Client (07:56):** Okay. So, I'm sorry. So, you're going to have to lead me a little bit more maybe than normal.

**Coach (08:07):** Okay, okay, that's absolutely fine. So, you know, wanting to really again, just make this a useful session for you. So, there's this idea of, um, boundaries and sort of exploring, you know, how do you stand up for yourself without diminishing others? Is that what I'm hearing?

**Client (08:31):** I remember that, yes.

**Coach (08:34):** Okay. And if you were to walk away today, um, having a clearer understanding or maybe some strategies or what have you of being able to feel like, okay, I can stand for myself and not diminish others, would that be time well spent?

**Client (08:55):** Yes, thank you. That would be good.

**Coach (08:58):** Okay. All right. Perfect. So where would you kind of like to start with all of that? You've mentioned a few different places where this seems to be showing up. Um, is there one in particular that's more important to you or, or more prevalent?

**Client (09:21):** Well, I guess they're all important to me. Like if I didn't care about the stupid van I can see out of my window right now, I would, I would just leave that be, because, you, know the, the guy is the kind of guy that might have a gun and just go sort of crazy, so (crosstalk) care enough that I'm going to try not to be bullied by him. But I mean, in terms of larger life issues, the contract negotiation with the medical society is much more important than the van. So honestly, Karen, any level is fine with me. They're all important to me, which is probably why I'm tired. Maybe I shouldn't make them less important to me somehow. Maybe I'd be, maybe if I weren't so emotionally attached to all of this, it would be easier.

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**Coach (10:15):** Okay. And so, as you say that out loud, what is that kind of bring up for you as you think of all of those circumstances?

**Client (10:27):** Well, one of the things that I was, I was on the phone with, um, a physician working on the continuing medical education credit for my program. Um, and so that's for fall. So, so that that felt good, like, "oh, something is moving forward," right? And the other thing I was thinking is maybe these, these conflicts, um, it seems like sometimes you can't resolve everything when you want to, um, like I can't make them the contract negotiation go any faster than it's going. Um, I can't make my neighbor move his van even though the neighborhood association is now telling him to do it. Um, but what I could do is focus on the next big project and just try to set those other things aside. Um, maybe that's part of why I just feel so tired. I just keep focusing on, on these things I can't control. I mean, I'm participating, but I can't resolve them myself.

**Coach (11:33):** Hmm. Yeah.

**Client (11:36):** I could write a proposal in the sunshine this afternoon as opposed to thinking about all of this stuff.

**Coach (11:44):** Yeah. And I heard the energy in your voice just kind of changed there for a minute. Like (crosstalk). . .

**Client (11:49):** Well, and it would be nice if can avoid the conflict with my friend Karen, I guess I sure would like to. [client laughed] (Crosstalk) Go ahead.

**Coach (12:05):** Well, I was just going to say, but I think you drew a distinction there for yourself around things that you can control, right, and things that you can't.

**Client (12:17):** Oh, that's, that's good. Thank you for that.

**Coach (12:21):** Yeah. And so, as it relates to your friend Karen, what can you control there?

**Client (12:31):** Well, I still haven't had a conversation with her. She just got back into town yesterday. And, um, I think she's, it sounds like she's super busy this week trying to catch up. And she's not available for the group phone call on Monday with the folks from New York. So, so quite honestly, that's just as well because if she were to be on that call, I would have to try to talk to her first, um, and now I can at least, I can have a little breathing space and try to talk to her next week about it. So, and maybe I can't handle all of these things at once. Maybe there's just so much conflict resolution I'm able to physically handle.

**Coach (13:15):** Sure. Sure, absolutely. And so, I think that comes back to, you know, that idea of what can you control?

**Client (13:25):** I suppose timing. Yeah. Sometimes, I mean, I can't control what the neighbor's doing. But if I have the neighbor and the Medical Society, maybe that's enough for now.

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**Coach (13:40):** Mm-hmm. Yeah. And when you say that, how do you feel?

**Client (13:52):** Well, it'd be nice to just think about something else. It'd be nice to think about something more positive and hopeful. So, actually writing a proposal, um, for this other group, which would be a relief, and that's usually how I gauge if I'm moving in a good direction, I just feel a sense of relief.

**Coach (14:17):** Hmm. Mm-hmm. What kind of relief do you want with Karen?

**Client (14:29):** Well, um, you know, she's, she's more important to me than the van or the contract. So, um, I just want to be sure that whenever I do talk to her about this, that I'm in a good space and I'm not projecting a lot of my angst from other areas onto her. Um, because, you know, we, we do better I think with conflict when we feel less stressed. Um, and so, when you don't have a lot of emotional reserves, feeling on edge in general, I think that's not a good time to be having really important conversations, if you don't have to. So, yeah, I just want to feel more loving when I'm, and calm when I talk to her.

**Coach (15:22):** Yeah. Oh, and that's just a fabulous perspective to come from obviously, um, because you do care about her. Um, how can you be more loving and calm with yourself?

**Client (15:42):** I've got to go outside. I've got to go, after this phone call, I'm going outside. And oh, and my lawyer, this is hilarious, so my lawyer checked with me about the Medical Society contract just now. She said, you know, in email, she's like, "Did you hear anything?" I'm like "no, no response. And, you know, but fingers crossed." And then she wrote back and she says, "Do you want to go to a barbecue or bluegrass barbecue with us this Thursday? It'll be a table of lawyers, but we have an extra ticket." And I'm like, "Yes, I'll go drink beer with a bunch of lawyers." That's (INAUDIBLE:16:20) thing ever.

**Coach (16:24):** Yeah, yeah. Well that sounds like it would be a hoot sure. (Crosstalk)

**Client (16:27):** I think, the answer to your question. I just was very excited about this bluegrass beer brewery thing and I thought I have to have more fun, you know, if I was having more fun, I think the van would bother me less.

**Coach (16:42):** Ah, okay. So, putting a little bit more fun into your life right now is going to help Kathy.

**Client (16:51):** Yeah, you know, the being reflective only works so much, after a while you have to just have a drink and dance for a while, I think.

**Coach (17:01):** Yes.

**Client (17:02):** That's against the Buddhists or whatever, but you know, that only works for so long. It's kind of grim if you do it just that.

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**Coach (17:10):** Yeah, yeah. So, as you think about all of that, and sort of what we started this conversation around, which is, you know, thinking about a way of, without diminishing others what, what sort of comes up for you now?

**Client (17:34):** Well, yeah, not sure. I think I'm just too tired to be in a super reflective space, um, for very long. I think, um, I think it may be just a little distance from it all would be helpful. So, that's the fun, that's the, you know, the music and the being outside, just not, it's just like when you're create, you're working on a creative project, you know, you just can't sit and focus on it all the time. You got to get up and walk around and think about other things. So, um, I think maybe that's part of what's missing. There's been too much heaviness. Not enough sunshine.

**Coach (18:23):** Right. And certainly, as you said, living in Wisconsin, we don't get all that much sunshine. So, taking advantage of it. So, it sounds like, you're sort of prioritizing what's really important to you.

**Client (18:45):** Well, um, I suppose that would be, yeah, that would be, I asked you for a bigger framework, and I think that's a nice one. Um, because having these boundaries is just an expression of what's important to you, right? So, the contract negotiation has everything to do with my own intellectual property and my own freedom to collaborate with whomever I want. Um, and so that's what's important to me. My lawyer spent weeks redrafting that contract to make it so it's palatable. Um, and I'm trying to be mindful about how to have that conversation with my friend because she's important to me. Um, and the van guy, you know, it's, it's really not that important. That's why I just turned it over to the neighborhood association and just let them do whatever it is they're going to do. So, that's good, like what's really important to me, that would be a more positive way to think about, um, to think about all of this conflict, right?

**Coach (20:03):** Yeah. Yeah.

**Client (20:06):** That's helpful, thank you Karen.

**Coach (20:09):** Of course, of course. So, just to kind of check in, you know, how did this go for you? Is there anything else that you wanted to bring up or talk about?

**Client (20:29):** If I were, um, maybe more rested, I'd feel more creative about how to use our time, but I'm just feeling that we've got sort to a peaceful place now, and I guess I'd like to stay there, I don't want to stir up a whole bunch more stuff.

**Coach (20:46):** Absolutely. No, no, that's good. Peacefulness is, is a great place to be sometimes and it sounds like you need that right now.

**Client (21:00):** Yeah, a lot of stuff's been stirred up. So, maybe that's what I'll do, I'll sit in the sunshine and make a list of my priorities, that might help me with my proposal writing also, because, um, a friend of mine was saying, well, Massara, whom you also know, was saying that sometimes, you know, life's plan for us is bigger than, than we see. And so, I'm hopeful that just

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because this summer session of the program didn't go forward, maybe something that means, you know, the space is open for something bigger to come. So, that would be a nice way to think about it.

**Coach (21:42):** That's a lovely way to think about it. And I really just want to acknowledge you for, for having that perspective on it, because a lot of times people don't, but yeah, that's a great way to think about it.

**Client (21:58):** Well, I can't take credit for that. That was her trying to give me a pep talk, and it's, I think it's working. So, I got good friends (crosstalk) who are, you know, think of unique ways to frame what's going on. So that's, you know, that's another thing I could do is just make a little list of what I'm grateful for too.

**Coach (22:21):** Hmm, mm-hmm. That's great, too, because sometimes we do forget all of those things that we have to be grateful for.

**Coach (22:34):** So, what's something that you learned about yourself today in our session that you could use and take forward?

**Client (22:46):** Well, I think, I think the thing about priorities is really important. I think there's, um, I think that might be a major theme of what's happening right now for me is that essentially a bunch of people are, um, presenting me with either opportunities or just their own behaviors where I have to decide if I'm okay with that, um, or if I need to negotiate something different with them. And so, it would be good for me to be clear on what my priorities actually are, like my freedom is a Number 1 priority and not be bullied is a, is also apparently really important to me. It makes me, makes me really upset to feel like someone's trying to intimidate me so. Um, so, I guess it'd be good to just have a better understanding of what my own value set is at this point in my life. I'm, you know, I'm going to turn 50 at the end of the year, so (crosstalk) that might be a good time to know who, more of who you are.

**Coach (23:56):** Yeah, yeah, values are, are really important, and it's interesting that it sort of changed for you in that moment of priorities to values and using that word.

**Client (24:12):** Well, are they different?

**Coach (24:15):** I'm not sure, they're just two different words. Are they different to you?

**Client (24:21):** I guess. Um, I'm not sure how you know what your priorities are, if you don't know what your values are. But, but again, I'm tired. So, I might be overthinking this. I was trying to help one of my program participants, she was telling me she wants to do this retreat with her group. Um, and she wants to do a work-flow analysis with her group, you know, and, and work-flow analysis is something engineers do and it's pretty hard and in-depth and precise. So, I'm like, trying to figure out what, she's like, "Can you help me?" and I'm thinking, "I don't know how to teach you how to be an engineer," but I was overthinking it totally, all she really wanted were ideas for retreats. So, I just loaned her a book. It was so much easier than I was

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making. I got, I got really stuck when she said that phrase, I thought she meant something specific, but she didn't. So, again maybe, you know, I'm making too much out of all of this. Maybe it's just a van. You know? That's all it is.

**Coach (25:30):** Sure. Sure. Okay. So, sitting in the sunshine this afternoon, making a list of your priorities, those values that drive those priorities. Um, anything else that, that you want to do to move forward from here as it relates to, you know, the bigger goals you set for yourself? Uhm.

**Client (25:58):** Well, I think, I think you reminded me, I can't remember if it was, um, which of the former conversations it was, um, I thought we talked a little bit about mutuality in relationships. Like, I think that's part of this too, so, um, and my habit of like giving up what I'm working on to someone just because they want me to. Um, and I guess part of me has wanted to also so. So, so whatever that is, um, it's something I need to spend more time thinking about too, what is it in me that I keep, um, repeating these patterns. I create something and then I let other people or invite other people to take it over. Um, so, so I think that's part of the values too or the priorities is somewhere in there. I have to, I have to create a new pattern for myself.

**Coach (26:52):** Yeah.

**Client (26:53):** So, that'll be good to think about and that leads into the, you know, the new, the new proposals, like what do I really want to spend my time on? Um, contract negotiations aren't much fun and they're pretty darn expensive. So, less of that would be good.

**Coach (27:08):** Sure. Sure. No, I think that's great. I think that's a really fabulous insight to have to say, you know, what are those patterns and as you think about these values, and weaving that all together for yourself.

**Client (27:26):** Yeah, I can figure that out this afternoon, right? No problem there. Yeah. But thank you, Karen. I appreciate it. It was good to hear your voice today.

**Coach (27:38):** Oh, yeah, of course. It was good to hear yours as a well. So, it sounds like I will let you run off to the sunshine.

**Client (27:48):** Yeah, I'm going to go sit outside, I think it's time.

**Coach (27:50):** Yeah, do, do. Vitamin D (crosstalk) is always helpful.

**Client (27:55):** Okay, well, and everybody, thank you.