

## A Tale of Two C's

*This is a light-hearted story about two ladies, Cathy and Carla. Both seeking the same thing, and each receiving something very different. Sit back, read and use your imagination to picture these two lovely ladies...it might not be that hard, you might know someone just like them.*

**Catherine** (I like to call her Cathy), is intelligent and caring. Her life looks absolutely perfect. She has a beautiful home in the suburbs of a metropolitan city. It is a 2 story, with 6 bedrooms, a fire place and a 3 car garage. She owns her BMW. She works as an executive assistant, and has a Masters Degree in English Literature.

She has a husband who is an incredibly successful lawyer. They have 2 children, a son and a daughter. They also have a dog, Rufus, and 2 cats.

They go to church most Sunday's and participate in community events. Cathy is part of the PTA, and sits on the local Literary Board. She bakes cupcakes for school events and her kids take music lessons, art lessons and play a number of sports.

They live a really lovely life.

And yet, Cathy called me one day.

"I need to figure some things out. And you're exactly who I need to talk to. I've lost my life...I'm living someone else's."

"I need to ask you some questions first," I said.

"Should I get some paper?"

"Nope, these are best if answered straight from the heart. Whose life are you living?"

"I'm not exactly sure, but I know it's not mine. This is nothing like the image I had 10 or 20 years ago! I guess that I'm the image of the perfect housewife supplied by TV, my mother-in-law and my husband, oh and my sister and her perfect life, and the neighbors' don't help either. I'm stuck living up to expectations that aren't mine. And I'm too afraid to tell them all to go away. I don't want to be selfish."

“So why call me now? I’m assuming that you’ve felt this way for a long time. What has changed?”

“I woke up this morning and when I looked in the mirror, I didn’t recognize the woman looking back. I want to run away and never come back. If it weren’t for my kids, I would.”

The conversation continued like that for about 45 minutes. I learned a lot about Cathy. She felt unfulfilled, but her life was so busy she could barely breathe.

Every morning she got up at 5:45 am and looked over at her sleeping, snoring husband, hating him.

She got ready for work, made lunches, made coffee, let the dog out, fed the dog, fed the cats, got the kids up and ready for school and sent them off at 7:26 am. By 7:30 she was in her BMW and starting a hellish commute to a thankless job that she hated.

Every day she sat at her desk, scheduling appointments, getting coffee, answering phones, directing traffic and making sure the photocopier didn’t jam up. She was very friendly and always had a smile for everyone, but she felt empty and numb inside, like a big, fake phony. She didn’t like these people. *She didn’t care about their problem. What kind of monster was she?!* This lack of empathy scared her a little, and yet she couldn’t help it. But to show her true feelings would get her fired, not to mention scare the heck out of herself.

Not that she would mind that so much (the getting fired part). She hated her boss who was snotty, 10 year younger and 35 lbs skinnier...and didn’t have a dead relationship, kids or pets. She got to spend *her* time the way she wanted...going to the gym, meeting friends for dinner, going to art galleries and reading great books. Cathy was so jealous of the freedom of her boss! Cathy longed for that kind of freedom of choice. Freedom to say no to things, and not donate time to the church bake sale, and not pretend to be nice when she didn’t want to be, or suck up to people that made her feel yucky.

Cathy’s authentic self was crying out for help. She knew something needed to change (good!) but she was too afraid to do it (bad). She wanted support, but didn’t know where to turn. She said she wanted to change, but didn’t know how.

Talking to Cathy, she told me that she wanted to be able to pursue her interests and do what she wanted to do, without caring about what others thought of her. She said she was motivated to do what she needed to. She was going to be on time for our phone sessions, and read the books I suggested and try the exercises I wanted her to. She was going to journal, watch positive TV and spend time having fun. She said, **“I’m going to succeed no matter what because something has to change!”** That was her authentic self talking.

So I said, “Prove it.”

That freaked her out a bit. Yes, it’s challenging. But words are just words unless you have something to back them up. So I challenged Cathy to make the changes she needed (remember, it’s not like I was asking her to do it alone...just to do it!)

But I never heard from her again. I called to set the first coaching appointment. I emailed her the necessary forms. I emailed her one more time, and then called. Nothing.

What happened? My best guess is that her ego or “social self” took over. The ego wants to protect us. It wants to ensure that we never go too far outside the box and risk looking silly, failing greatly, or getting hurt.

The ego makes Cathy smile at her boss, when she wants to tell her to get her own coffee.

The ego makes Cathy stay at her job and watch everyone get promoted around her, rather than quit and risk a couple of pay checks while she finds something better.

The ego would rather have 6 bedrooms and a fire place (and BMW) than be happy.

So Cathy chose the car over happiness. She chose to stay with a husband who didn’t care about her and spent more time wining and dining clients than with his family. She chose to ignore her potential and the distressing thought that something better was out there and she could have it with a little bit of courage.

So even though she was driven to succeed and wanted happiness, she couldn’t bring herself to go out and get it.

Unfortunately, there are many Cathy’s out there. You probably know some. They say that they want to do something big! They know

they're destined for greatness, and yet if you were to say, "Prove it," they would hurriedly change the subject and then walk very fast in the opposite direction. (*Don't be offended, it happens to me all the time* 😊). Some people want to act, to actually change their life. And other want to just talk about it and hope someone does it for them! ***I know that if I were to say, "Prove it," to you, you'd be more of a Carla, than a Cathy...***

The other "C" is Carla, and she lives a very different life.

***Carla*** is recently divorced and has a daughter. They live in a 2 bedroom apartment, not in the suburbs, but not in the trendy downtown area either. It's just an apartment. She drives a used Chev car. She is a nurse and wants to be a writer, so she writes in her free time. Just before she separated from her husband she contacted me.

"I am not happy in my marriage. I'm not happy in my life. I need some guidance, please help me."

So we went through the discovery process together. I asked her all the same questioned I asked Cathy (and every new client) and at the end I said, "If you really want to change your life, prove it."

She was taken back, and yet understood.

At the time, her life looked a lot like Cathy's. Carla wanted freedom, success and happiness. She imagined herself as a writer, living in a house on the water somewhere, with her daughter and a man who really cared about her.

She pictured herself laughing and smiling a lot, with a lot of friends and doing a lot of activities. She said she wanted time to volunteer at her daughter's school, she wanted money to donate to charity, and she wanted to travel.

She wanted to be free of people who killed her dreams, and made negative comments...she had a lot of toxic people in her life.

She wanted to be free of her husband who drank too much, and traveled even more.

She decided she deserved better and wanted to *prove to herself that she did have the courage to find her authentic self*. So she called me for the support and nerve that she needed.

**Now, 8 months later:**

She is divorced. She lives in a plain apartment. She is a single parent. She drives a used car.

Guess who is happier?

Carla.

Why? Because in the last 8 months, instead of staying quiet in silent desperation, instead of following her obligations, and doing things she should, and continuing toxic relationships, Carla is free!

She is free from a marriage that was killing her spirit. Yes, she is happily single, getting to know herself again before she chooses to date.

She is free from the financial responsibilities that went with having to “keep up with the Jones’”. This also has affected her job in a wonderful way. She went from simply doing it to pay for her lifestyle, to enjoying it.

She no longer has to drag her butt out of bed because she doesn’t think of her patients as whining victims who annoy her all day (*she said it, not me*). Now she is excited to get to work because she saves lives, and gives people hope and health. What is better than that?

While she is not rich by any means, she spends more time and money on life; that is having experiences and getting involved rather than just working to buy things. She feels “full” so she doesn’t need to spend to fill a hole.

Her best friend comments on how Carla glows with happiness now, and how annoying it is that she can’t stop smiling!

This from a woman who 8 months ago was curled up in a ball and wanted to run or die.

She is free from the snooty neighbors’ who made her feel like crap because she didn’t want to host dinner parties and didn’t have time to bake cupcakes for the PTA. She was sick of living her life according to someone else’s rules.

Now she loves herself. Carla doesn’t criticize herself (or others!) and she quit comparing long ago. She also doesn’t analyze every action, word or feeling to death, but focuses on each moment as it comes. This is also great because she can say “No” and not feel guilty.

She also used to really worry. About money, and debt, health and her daughter. She doesn't any more. She has this trust in herself and in her spirit to bring her through the tough times.

She has a very clear vision for her life. She knows exactly what she wants now. She doesn't tolerate anything on her "non-negotiable" list and she has her priorities straight, "Health and happiness above all."

All of this is easy for her because she has a step-by-step plan to accomplish everything. She journals, meditates and has taken up exercising again. (Her favorites are Yoga and Kickboxing).

She is free to write her book, and go out with friends if she pleases. She is free to raise her daughter as she see's fit. She is free to travel, move, change jobs and go back to school. She volunteers often, and feels really good about it, rather than resentful.

She is someone I'm immensely proud of.

How did she do it?

This kind of success in all of us. There is no secret personality trait that separates Carla from Cathy. When Carla called me, I said "prove it." And she did.

There are **3 Bare-Bones Necessities to success:**

1. The right process
2. The right systems
3. The right people

Actually there is even a short-cut to that, with the right people in your life, they will take care of the process and the systems for you. (It's really that easy).

So get the "right" people (those who know what they're doing, support you, and are the "have-been-there-and-still-succeeded-but-will-also-call-you-on-your-excuses" kind of people!)

Yes. I just happen to be one of those people (it's your lucky day!). Get more info on an *easy, non-scary, budget AND schedule friendly* way to do it at: <http://tinyurl.com/ye5w4ag>

Or [contact me](#) to start a private coaching program so you can end up like Carla (I mean, happy, successful and free...not divorced, living in an apartment and driving a used Chevy).