



August 24, 2023

No matter what area in the world you live, you likely have or know at least one child who is already back to school. (And if you live in the Northeast US like I do, you may be like me, counting down the days until your kids go back to school. My child still has two whole weeks left of summer vacation!).

When I think back to this time of year in my childhood, here's what I remember vividly:

1. Poring over the pages of the ultra thick August "Back to School" issue of *Seventeen* magazine, enamored with the fashions I saw before me, dreaming of how I'd show up looking the coming school year - and inevitably failing at this #neverafashionista 🕶️
2. Scrambling to finish my summer reading lists, which I invariably waited on until the last minute (I was an 8-week sleepaway summer camp kid - like I'd waste Rest Hour reading books! I was reading *Seventeen*, duh.)
3. Nerves and excitement, wondering who my teachers would be, and which of my friends - and crushes - would be in my classes.

And learning?

In all honesty, this was not really at the top of my list. But as years have passed, I have a deep appreciation for not only what I learned back then, but what I continue to learn now as an adult.

And perhaps even more so, I realize that there are also concepts and behaviors I've had to unlearn.

Any of these ring a 🔔 with you?

😞 **Past belief:** If I say no, I'll never be successful.

🧑 **What I've unlearned that led to personal growth:** Pleasing everyone is almost always impossible. And by trying to please everyone, I said yes. All. The. Time. I was stressing myself the \$%&! out! Working too hard, too late, too much. I said yes to all requests that came across my desk; to events after work that I really had no energy for; to back up opinions even if I had something nagging at me to disagree. I was putting everyone else first, and I came in a very distant 2nd. It took me years to learn - and some of you have heard me say this so many times before - that saying no to one thing means saying yes to something else. Maybe one "no" leads to getting time back. Maybe it leads to renewed energy. Maybe it leads to deeper self-respect. Whatever the case may be, the next time your default answer is "yes," my challenge to you is to take a beat before you give that answer. Is yes what you really mean?

😞 **Past belief:** If I have this difficult conversation, I won't be liked.

🧑 **What I've unlearned that led to personal growth:** Oh, the wasted time I could get back, if I'd just confronted difficult situations with others head on! What I had to unlearn here ties into what I just discussed above, and it all comes down to people pleasing. By avoiding difficult conversations, I **thought** whatever was feeling problematic or frustrating would be outweighed by the other party still liking me. And of course, instead what this led to was undue stress and sleepless nights, wishing I had the courage to use my voice and get to the heart of the matter with others. It's taken me a long time to realize that the consequences of avoiding difficult conversations are more often than not so much heavier than the actual conversations themselves. These conversations, when held productively and collaboratively, can be game changers for the better. With little to no time wasted!

😞 **Past belief:** Vulnerability is a weakness.

🧑 **What I've unlearned that led to personal growth:** I've never been one to constantly wear my heart on my sleeve. In fact, some may even call me slightly guarded.

However, both as a leader and a leadership coach, I have adapted. What I've learned over the years is, by being vulnerable, I have created more self-awareness while building truly meaningful connections with others. I no longer have as strong an urge to have an answer for everything. In fact, admitting I don't know and leaning into others for solutions has made me more resilient. It's also allowed me to create environments both in the workplace and with my clients that are built on trust. And I wouldn't trade any of that for the world. (Note: I realize now as I type this, this newsletter is pretty darn vulnerable! Go me!)

What is an area of your life that you have unlearned, or that you'd like to unlearn? Drop me a note and let me know!

With gratitude, Tracy

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 Exciting news! 

I will be a Keynote Speaker at this year's **Digital Analytics Association's OneConference**, the premier educational and networking event for analytics professionals. Held in Chicago Oct 10-12, this year's event's theme is "Back to the Future" - for early-careerists to experienced executives, this year's conference is one you won't want to miss.

I will be talking about the challenges of - and how to be successful at - keeping up in an ever-changing industry, something about which I am intimately familiar.

More information can be found [here](#) - if you are interested in attending, let me know and I'll give you a discount code. Hope to see you there!

Are you an emerging or established leader looking for support? Do you long to show up as your most confident self? Do you dream of the day when leadership feels effortless? If any of this describes you, [schedule a FREE 30 minute clarity call with me here](#), and make your struggles a thing of the past!

I offer 1:1 coaching, group coaching, and team facilitation, and tailor offerings to the specific needs of you/your workplace. [Contact me to learn more](#).

Looking for a way to make delegation feel less stressful and more effortless? Download my [Free Delegation Cheat Sheet](#) today!