

# 44.-Difficult-Decisions--How-to-Make-the-Right-One-Using-the-clean-space-framework

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Welcome to coaching for Latina leaders, the only podcast dedicated to the advancement of Latinas at every level of life. With your host, Dr. Vanessa Calderon, a Latina with over 20 years of leadership experience, Harvard grad physician and mother of two.

Hey, mujeres, before we jump into this week's podcast, I want to let you know about my course that's coming up. So the first week of April, I am launching my life leadership course, the leadership accelerator. So this is going to be a 12 week course and the content is off the hook. So in the 12 weeks, we cover everything you need to execute at a really high level with a ton of self compassion, you learn how to have an unshakable level of confidence. So even in those spaces that in the past have made you feel insecure, you show up with self confidence, you learn how to be a brain ninja, so that you're hyper aware of your thoughts and your emotions. And you're no longer paralyzed by guilt, by shame, by anxiety or fear of disappointing other people.

And I'm going to teach you how to live a life of attention. So that the choices you're making every day really reflect your values, and you're thriving in those everyday life stressors. And I'm going to teach you the nuts and bolts of transformational leadership, we're going to cover those big three things that you need to be an effective leader, including public speaking. So I'm going to teach you how to speak to influence in any setting, whether you're giving a keynote address, you're leading a workshop, or you're just running a meeting, you're going to learn how to show up like you're on a TED stage.

Number two, I'm going to teach you the art of transformational negotiations. So you walk away from every negotiation feeling really good about the outcome. And I'm going to teach you how to manage people, I'm going to teach you how to be the best boss that the people that work with you have ever had. Okay, so I deliver the content in a way to make sure that you just don't learn it, but you actually start to use it and you retain it. So a year from the last day of the course, you're still using the content that you've learned.

So the way the course is delivered is you get weekly modules. And these are super high yield. They're short, and they're easily digestible, because I know you are all incredibly busy women, and I am not about to waste your time. And you also get weekly coaching and teaching sessions. So every week we come together, and we review some concepts that you've learned over the week, and we do ton of group coaching. And you also get individual one on one coaching sessions with me. And on top of that, and probably the best thing about this entire thing is that you get to join an incredible community. When you join the course you're joining a community of other really amazing and compassionate female leaders.

Now imagine being in a community with other really amazing women that care about your success just as much as you do. That's what the leadership accelerator gives you. Okay, so the program launches April first, the waitlist will be open on my website, the second week of February [VanessaCalderonMD.com](http://VanessaCalderonMD.com), and you want to make sure you get your name on the waitlist right away, because you want to be the first to hear about any course updates. And you want to get first dibs at registration because it's going to be limited to only 20 women and I want you to be one of them. Okay, now on to this week's podcast.

Hey cuties, welcome back to the podcast. I am recording this at the end of March. And it is absolutely beautiful outside because it is the beginning of spring over here. And the flowers are blooming and the trees are green again. And it is so beautiful. And I didn't realize how much I loved the sun until I left California. I went to medical school at UCLA and I had this amazing rent controlled studio apartment on the beach in Venice. And it was awesome. And I left to go to a master's degree and I moved to Boston and you know, it snows and rains a lot there. It was really cold. And I didn't realize how much I loved it and how much I missed the sun in the beach. And so here we are back in California. So I'm recording this at a time where it's beautiful outside. And also at a time where you know, I'm sitting with a lot of feelings. If you guys have been following this podcast, you know my mom has advanced-stage cancer and you know every day for me is a total gift hearing her voice and talking to her and when I'm with her, holding her hands and helping her with whatever she needs feels just like a total gift. And so I you know, I'm holding space for me right now to feel these feelings of sadness and a lot of emotions that are coming up for me with grace. Just have a lot of compassion for myself, as I'm also celebrating the spring, because the life is meaning good and bad. There's beauty and there's sadness and that's all part of the human experience.

Okay, so let's shift gears a little bit because we are talking today about making decisions using the framework of having a clean space. Okay, so the way I want to do this today is I'm going to share an example for you when this recently came up for me, and then we'll go into the details of what it means to come from a clean space. So, to start this example, I want to share with you the number of hats that I wear. So I currently wear four hats. I'm a mom and a wife, I consider that one hat. I'm the wellness and resiliency director for this large national organization. I'm an ER physician. So I'm a practicing ER doctor. And I love that job so much, because I love clinical medicine. And I'm also the founder and CEO of my coaching business and my program the leadership accelerator. So a few months ago, I was in the middle of launching my guru program. So if you are at all in this online entrepreneurial space, you know that a launch requires a lot of your time, your effort and your mind. And it feels very busy, it can feel very busy. So I was doing a lot and I was starting to have feelings of overwhelm. And the way I was trying to solve my thought error and the thought I was having as I have so much to do, I was feeling overwhelmed. And the way I was trying to solve that is by doing more work, then we just work harder, work more, work longer to solve this problem.

And again, if you've been listening to this podcast, you also know that trying to self-solve, overwhelmed with overworking will never work. Because the underlying thought error is, I have too much to do. And when you have too much to do, you will just perpetuate more doing, and you will never be able to do enough. So when I was in that space, having that thought error, and in that space of overwhelm, overworking feeling stressed, I had another thought, which was this is crazy. And so I asked myself,

How can I simplify my life? Alright, so that question, how can I simplify my life? That's a great question. I love that question. And I use it for my clients and for myself all of the time. Because I want to make sure that my life and your life for all of you that are listening, I want to make sure your life reflects your actual priorities.

And so if you're doing a bunch of stuff that doesn't align with your priorities, how can we simplify your life? But at that time in my life, when I asked myself this question, had I answered it, I would not be answering it honestly, because I wasn't coming from a clean space. Okay, so what does it mean to have a clean space, having a clean space means that your mind is clean from bias, okay, so your mind is clean from bias as much as humanly possible. And I intentionally say humanly possible, because as humans, we can never be 100% bias-free. Even the most objective person out there that you see will have biases, that's how the human brain works. And to say that I have no biases to say that that's a huge thought error that should be a red flag for anybody because humans will always have biases. So why are biases why does it matter to know this, it matters because these emotions not coming from a clean space, these biases are going to cause you to answer questions in a way that might not be honest, might not be in integrity to who you are. And the emotions that tend to get in the way are usually emotions that can be considered sort of negative emotions like sadness, anger, guilt, for me, for example, that in my example I gave it was overwhelming and stress.

And for many extroverts, also, emotions, like excitement can bias you because it can bias you towards making an impulsive decision without thinking it through. Alright, so let's talk a little bit more about using this Clean Space because this model you can use when you're making really difficult decisions that you have to make in life, like changing jobs, leaving a relationship, moving cities, for example. It can also be used if somebody is asking for your opinion. So if you have kids, for example, and they want your opinion on something, you want to be able to come from a clean space when you're giving them feedback. So I use this for myself all of the time, when I'm making decisions. But also in my coaching when I'm working with clients. If you've worked with me before one on one, you know that I do my best to come from a clean space because the feedback I gave you, I want it to be feedback that serves you not feedback based on my own emotions. Okay, let's keep going here.

So why is it important to come from a clean space again, number one, you want your decisions to be really well thought out. Number two, you want your decisions to not be influenced by these other negative emotions, because when they are, there's usually an underlying unexamined thought error. So in my example, earlier, my thought error was that I had too much to do and my life would be so much easier if I just quit something that was my thought error. But I also hear often my life would be I would be so much happier if I just got a divorce, I'd be so much happier if I just change jobs. Or I also hear often, I'm not good enough to apply for that, I don't have enough experience, all of those things are thought errors, okay? So the thing with a thought error is that if you try to change the circumstance, for example, you just try to change jobs or change relationships without examining your underlying thought error.

First, all you're doing is taking these thoughts with you these thought errors with you to the next circumstance. For example, let's say you're currently in a city and you don't love the city, you know, you haven't found your people, maybe your thought is I haven't found my people, I feel lonely. And you're

feeling lonely, because you're thinking, I haven't found my people. And you think that moving to a new city is going to solve that. But underlying all of that is your fear of putting yourself out there to meet new people, you don't like going to big group events, you don't like doing those types of things. So if you don't like that, and you move to a new city, moving to a new city is not going to solve your problem. And it's the same thing in relationships. So if you are currently in a relationship with someone and you're unhappy, and you think ending the relationship, getting a divorce, or breaking up is going to solve a problem. But really, the problem is that you have trouble being intimate, or you have trouble being vulnerable with your partner, going to a new marriage is not going to solve that underlying problem. Same thing, if you're in a job that you don't like, if you're complaining because you think that they're being unfair, or your boss doesn't like you, or whatever it is, there are underlying thought errors that are getting in the way that you will likely take with you to your next job.

And I say this often, but how we do one thing is how we do everything. So if you have these underlying thought errors in this one space, it's likely showing up in other spaces of your life. Okay, so it's important to examine these thought errors, because once you examine the thought errors, what becomes really clean for you. And what becomes obvious for you is that, wow, maybe all I need to do is change these thoughts or examine these thoughts, and my circumstance changes. And that happens a lot. For example, if you're in a relationship, and you're thinking about divorce, and then you go see a coach, your marriage coach or therapist, and you start uncovering that it's really just a problem with vulnerability or intimacy, and you work on vulnerability and intimacy, all of a sudden, your marriage doesn't seem so bad, and you're happy again. Same thing, if you're in a city and you don't love your job, and you start working on yourself, and okay, maybe I'll put myself out there, I'll work on courage, having courage to put myself out there, all of a sudden, you make new friends, and the thought of moving doesn't seem as appealing anymore. So that's why it's so important to examine these underlying thought errors, because you want to make sure that you're cleaning up those thoughts, and you're cleaning up your mental model before you make a decision to move or to change anything big.

Okay, so what I'm going to do right now is I'm going to give you a few questions that I want you to ask yourself, whenever you are in a situation where you have to make a big decision. And before I do that, let me just go back to my example and tell you how it ended. So I had that thought error I have too much to do. And my life would be just simpler if I quit one of my roles. So as soon as I started thinking that I was like, whoa, wait a second. Okay, clearly, I'm not coming from a clean space. And so I did some self coaching. And I went out and spoke to my coach. And I got coached myself, and I decided that I was not going to make any big decisions in the middle of a launch, because I wouldn't be coming from a clean space. I know that as much as I try to clean up my thoughts. I have some underlying thoughts about launch, during my launch that I'm probably not examining, and I don't want to spend time trying to dig up all of those thoughts in the middle of my launch. So I'm not going to make any big decision in the middle of my launch. And when I decided that, then my I asked my brain, okay, if I'm not making any changes, and this is how my life is going to be for the next, you know, three weeks. How can I make my life simple right now, without changing anything big, How can I make my life simple right now. And then when I got out of my victim mode, my life is so hard, I have so much to do and took full ownership over the decisions I'm making. My brain went to work for me and I was able to problem solve.

And so what I decided to do is okay, well for the last two weeks of this month while I'm in the middle of the launch, anything else that's not pressing gets to wait until after my launch till April or I'm sorry until the month after or the month after that. And so I started scheduling things out anything that wasn't pressing God scheduled out and I had a fear, another thought error that maybe I would disappoint somebody, or maybe I wouldn't show up in excellence if I was pushing things out. And when I really examined that thought I realized wait Second, nobody here is no one has fires, everything is okay, it's safe to schedule out a few weeks out, nothing is going to go wrong if I schedule out. And so I did that. And all of a sudden, I cleaned up a ton of space on my calendar. And I had free time again to do the things that I loved while I was in the middle of a launch. And so that's what's available to all of you, you can also simplify your life like that. And when you're in the middle of something hectic without making big decisions.

Okay, so let me just give you a few questions that I want you to ask yourself. If you are currently in a circumstance where you might feel unhappy, maybe it's a job, maybe it's a relationship, maybe it's a specific situation like I had. So I want you to ask yourself these questions. Number one, what am I thinking that's making me unhappy? What am I thinking that's making me unhappy? Okay, and I want you to write down all of your thoughts. Is it that you have too much to do? Is it that your boss doesn't like you, is it that you would be so much happier with somebody else that you've tried everything with this person, and it's still not working? Write them all down? Okay. And now, the next question I want you to answer is, how can I take full responsibility for my current circumstance? How can I take full responsibility for my current circumstance?

So that question may ruffle some of your feathers. Because once you start taking full responsibility, you know, it's easier for us to abdicate that responsibility outward towards other people, my marriage doesn't work because of my partner, my job stinks because of my co worker, or whatever it is. But once you start taking full responsibility for all of the results in your life, for your current circumstance, and everything around it, it puts you back in the driver's seat. So for me, for my example, once I said, I'm not changing anything, I did this to myself, like I made all these choices, I'm here. So what can I do now that I'm here to change this? And that's what's available to you, and you start taking full responsibility over your circumstances. Okay, so then, what I want you to ask yourself is how can I take full responsibility? How are you showing up? Are you having a problem being intimate? Are you having a problem not being vulnerable? Okay, and then the next question is, what can I change right now? What can I change right now, to make my circumstance better?

That's it, what can I change right now to make my circumstance better? And the reason why you want to answer these three questions is because ideally, before you make any big decision in life, even smaller decisions, you want to feel neutral, you want to come from a clean space, a clean space is a space of neutrality. And you know, if you could, you could even love the space that you're in before you make a big decision. Because again, if you don't, if you're feeling negative, if you're feeling biased by all these negative things, you're going to take all of that stuff with you to your next circumstance. And so you want to make sure you're cleaned all of that up before you make a big decision to go. And, you know, so this does a few things for you. Number one, it helps you learn so much it helps you evaluate so much of all the decisions you've made, that got you to where you are now, it helps you take full ownership over all of your circumstances, the good stuff, and the not so good stuff. And it puts you back

in the driver's seat. When you do this, you're back in the driver's seat. So once you feel neutral again, then you can make a way more impactful way more powerful decision, then you get your brain to work for you, as opposed to working against you.

Okay, so again, we talked about coming from a clean space, we talked about the three reasons why we want to do this. Number one, you want your decisions to be really well thought out. Number two, you don't want your decisions to be influenced by negative emotions and the biases that those bring. And number three, you want to make sure you're examining all the underlying thought errors that are causing you to feel your negative feelings. Because sometimes just by cleaning those things up, you already change your current circumstance. And the other thing I want to remind you is you can use this for yourself when you are making big decisions for yourself and you can use this when people are requesting your feedback or your support if you have kids, for example. And the three questions again that I mentioned are what am I thinking that's making me unhappy right now? How can I take full responsibility for my current circumstance? And what can I change right now to make the situation better? Alright cuties, Hasta La Proxima, adios!

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