



Unchartered Waters: Coping Strategies to Stay on Track with your Goals and Aspirations

Guest Speaker: Kristine Steinberg of Kismet Consulting

Q: How do we set goals and aspiration during a time like this?

A:

1. Get yourself to a calm state: take deep breaths, do yoga, exercise, meditate, etc. This helps combat many potential stressors.
2. Access your clarity by being calm and present.
3. Determine what you can control during this time and move forward from there.
4. Be forgiving with ourselves. Acknowledge that setting goals is a future focused activity and that right now the future is uncertain for all of us.

Q: How do we make the most out of “endurance” mode during this quarantine in order to come out stronger on the other side ?

A:

1. Acknowledge that you’ve already made it through the initial “survival mode” of this crisis. If you’re still feeling healthy and your immediate needs (food, shelter, toilet paper etc.) are met, you can start to pivot your mindset and think about how to endure the remainder of the crisis.
2. The challenge of the endurance phase of this crisis is that we don’t know how long it will last. That said, we can use this time to develop ourselves through making new connections, learning about new topics and through helping others. Showing up for webinars like this one is a great example.
3. Take time to reflect about what’s going on. Journal about what you’re learning on a daily or weekly basis.
4. Ideally, at the end of this crisis you can look back and see that it was a character building experience.

Q: With all of the various stressors occurring right now, what should our expectations be in terms of our mental well-being during a time of radical change? How do we balance our stress and still move forward with our aspirations?

A: The short answer - get grounded. Start to understand what makes us feel grounded, calm, and in command. Then, start to know how you can get there.

1. Get grounded. Keep a focus on the present moment, not what could be or what has already happened. There’s a lot of uncertainty right now but staying grounded in the present helps keep us calm.

2. How do I get there? (self-care)
3. Ask yourself: Who is my community? How do I build relationships during this time in order to be of service?"

Q: Do you see this as a time that it's okay for people to be stepping back, or should people be stepping up?

A: This is a time for you to stay in control of yourself – make decisions at the beginning of each week about how YOU are going to step up. If that gets altered throughout the week, that's okay, just give it your best effort.

1. Make a decision that you are going to be fully present to the best of your ability that day.
2. Try not to get frustrated with people who are not necessarily "showing up" every day to the best of their ability; that can be a draining mindset to live in. Staying engaged and present can inspire others to do the same.
3. Address behavior or dynamics that could be having a negative impact on the team. However, lead with empathy and compassion. You don't always know what other factors could be impacting a teammate's behavior.

Q: With work life and personal life merging, how do I manage the expectations of colleagues? Any tips on best practices?

A: Emphasize boundaries! Determine when you want to be working and when you don't want to be working. This will vary from day-to-day, but have a general plan for your schedule each week.

It's important to have control over what's happening in your calendar: begin to prioritize your responsibilities by rescheduling meetings that are NOT relevant. Ask yourself what you are bringing to the table and what you will get out of something before committing to something.

Do "productive work" vs. "busy work": be more thoughtful and prepared for your priorities that week.

"Busy Work Mode"

- Being overly available
- Over-extending yourself for all projects and meetings
- Being involved in things when you aren't prepared or necessarily relevant for that specific task item

"Productive Work Mode"

- Thoughtful about how you're spending your time
- Clear about your meetings and workload that day
- Understand the role that you playing in each project or meeting

Q: We are currently missing human connection, which is a huge part of self-care; how do we build community in an online environment?

A: We have many opportunities to "interact" with people via online, but it's NOT the same as a human connection. You should ask yourself how you are feeling disconnected?

Then ask yourself, "What makes me feel connected to others?"

Make an effort to make time outside of work to connect with others on a personal level: listen and ask questions, be curious.

You may also want to think about hobbies and areas of interest and tap into that right now. This is a way to connect with a new community right now. Don't overdo it! Don't be busy simply for the sake of being busy.

Q: If you're a current student who is about to enter the workforce, how should you maximize your time right now?

A: A better way to consider this question (whether you're a student or not) is "how should I maximize my energy right now?"

Time vs. Energy

- How do we increase our energy? Determine what we can do on a daily basis to replenish our energy. What are we passionate about? What do we enjoy doing?
- Time is finite but energy can be replenished

Q: What steps should I follow in order to find long-term job security? Should I be looking into industries that are considered "essential" or currently hiring?

A: You will succeed further down the road if you:

1. Tap into your strengths and talents
2. Find your purpose and values
3. Do everything that you can to maximize your strengths and passions -> Find out how you can bring those talents to the current day.

Determine your "vocation" -> A sense of your larger purpose and where you can add value

Follow your vocation and look for creative opportunities for yourself. You'll go further pursuing a passion rather than finding a "safe" job. As you pursue your passion you'll replenish your sense of energy.