

CLEAR VISION

A monthly publication of the Center for Christian Life Enrichment

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Celebrating the Courage to Run | thoughts from a daughter of the CLE family



This speech was written by the daughter of one of our CLE families. She is a senior at a local high school and was delivering this speech to her teammates, parents and coaches at their end of season banquet. I hope you are inspired by her initiative, courage, dedication and leadership. Her parents have paved the way for her to truly excel and flourish in life.

Four years, 196 practices, 36 races. For the four-year seniors here, that is what we have completed. It feels like forever, and has flown by at the same time. It has been an unforgettable experience that has done so much to shape me into who I am today.

That is why, after crossing the finish line for the last time at the conference race, I burst into tears. I had just had the best race of my life. At every turn there were my coaches, my teammates and my parents cheering for me. Ari my running buddy, was by my side, like always, silently rooting me on. I consciously refused to let fear enter my thoughts during a race for the first time I can remember. In-

stead I focused on how strong I felt, how strong the past four years had made me. And now it's over.

This is the end of something great. I can only hope that in the future each of us can find something that we can once again love so fiercely, dedicate ourselves to so completely and can push us so hard and let us grow so much. And can most importantly, give us the gift of an amazing community, full of people who lift each other up to reach their individual goals.

This is what Cross country has done for me. It turned me from a shy, out of shape freshman who could barely run a half-mile on

my first day, into a competitive runner and a captain who is surrounded by a massive group of girls whom I love. These girls have celebrated with me in my accomplishments, consoled me in my frustrations and pushed me to do things I never thought I could.

I had the time of my life with all of you and will always treasure the memories we made. But the Cross Country era will never end. While the season may, the spirit of the team will live on within each of us.

Thank you for an incredible four years that will live on forever.

Hope Deferred Makes the Heart Sick | Rich Blue

“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”
Matthew 7:7-8

My adventure of writing my first book was nearing the finish line. I had an editor with a prestigious publishing house presenting *Grappling with God* to his editorial committee. I could taste it. He told me that on Monday they would discuss my proposal and get back to me right away. I was so excited and hopeful. I began allowing myself to anticipate success. I felt like a kid on the days leading up to Christmas.

Monday came and went. I noticed how I was making up all kinds of stories to explain why my editor hadn't gotten back to me. “The meeting ran late and there was no time to call me,” or “They needed more time to draw up the contract.” Tuesday passed and I started feeling a low-grade concern. I started wondering whether I had misunderstood the date or that possibly they had had to postpone the meeting. I was afraid to call and find out. I didn't want to come off too pushy, too needy, or too excited. I didn't want to upset or offend him. I didn't want to know.

I was getting more and more restless. I started searching the social media sites to see if I could find out where he was and what he was doing. Sure

enough, I discovered he was in Germany at the Frankfurt Book Fair. I experienced some relief knowing that he was out of the country. I fantasized that he was pitching my book at the world's largest and most prestigious book fair? Maybe, he wasn't able to be at the committee meeting and they were not able to discuss *Grappling with God*?

It was now ten days later. I couldn't rationalize waiting and hiding out any longer. I carefully crafted an email and sent it to him. A short time later I received his email apologizing for not getting back to me sooner and explaining that the committee had decided not to publish my book. I was so disappointed and in a state of shock.

It was as if I was playing football and someone had just knocked the wind out of me. I found myself feeling embarrassed, looking around to see if anyone knew that I had been rejected again. I told myself that I had to pick myself up and act as if nothing had happened. I immediately threw myself into plan B, sending an email to a highly regarded literary agent who had agreed to represent me if this publishing company rejected my book. I was determined to not let this get me down.

Underneath my can-do attitude I was really hurting. I felt all the painful feelings at once, as if I was tasting an emotional fruit smoothie. It was several hours

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later, as I was driving to work that I realized I was angry. I found myself building a case against the editor for how unprofessional and unkind it was to not have contacted me when he knew ten days earlier.

I am happy to say that I was conscious of my reactivity and aware of the grieving process I was going through. I knew I was experiencing the loss of my book being rejected again. As I found myself building a case against the editor and making him bad, I knew that he was not the problem—I was hurt and disappointed. It was no one's fault. I was having a hard time admitting to myself that I was hurt. I wanted to blame instead of feel. I wanted to try and regain a sense of being in control.

The next morning, I was in my CLE pastors group and sharing with the pastors my disappointment. One of them interrupted my story and asked me why I never called the acquisition editor on Monday. It was as if the scales fell from my eyes. I suddenly grasped that I had authored my suffering. I was not a victim. In that moment, I understood that on the surface I didn't call him sooner because I was afraid to appear too excited or too pushy and risk offending him. The deeper truth was that I was afraid to find out what the decision was. I

was more comfortable waiting and magically hoping that they would choose my book.

I saw how I was operating as a child. Fearing I was too much, as a young kid I learned how to muffle and mute my hunger and enthusiasm. I learned how to manage others and make every effort to please them. I lost myself and was hiding out behind a mask of inauthenticity. For years I had been hiding my hurt and mastering the art of covering up my genuine thoughts and feelings.

The truth had set me free. Writing the book was tough—trying to get it published was an even more threatening challenge. Naturally, I wanted it to be easy. I wanted to be chosen. I wanted to feel special. God wanted to wrestle with me—to use this opportunity to revitalize our relationship and teach me what it means to live by faith. The abundant life offered by God is lived authentically and courageously in the here and now.

You can read more about my journey from Therapist to Author on my blog at www.outoftheblueblog.us



Upcoming Events

Holiday Presence Christmas Party

Thursday December 8th, 7:00pm

CLE Running Club Presents-

1st Annual Fresh Start 5k

Saturday December 31st, 8:00am

Get a Sneak Peak at the *First Chapter* of Rich's much anticipated book *Grappling with God: Renew your Relationship and Deepen your Faith-*

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