

# CLEAR VISION

A monthly publication of the Center for Christian Life Enrichment

## Never Give Up | Thoughts on Writing my Book



It was approximately six years ago when I was first challenged to write a book. To-

day, I am making final edits on my soon to be released book, *Grappling with God: The Battle for Authentic Faith*. This journey began with a challenge from Bob Wright to become a transformational leader in the Christian community. My mission was to take the principles I had been learning through my work with the Wright Institute and introduce them to the Christian world.

I embraced my BHAG of becoming a nationally recognized therapist, author, and thought leader in the Christian community. It has been my aim to inspire others to have more truth and authenticity in their relationships with God and with each other. I also have intended to promote a new and more adult understanding of faith and spiritual maturity.



*Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.*  
1 Corinthians 9:24

Along the way, I have had a host of different MKO's (More Knowledgeable Others) supporting me. Bob Wright acted as my head coach, holding my vision for becoming my most Christ-like self. Bob faithfully oversaw my book as well as my life project. He introduced me to team of mentors who would serve and support me beautifully. My first was Patricia Crisafulli, a professional writer, who served as my writing coach. Tricia grew to care deeply about my book and me. She grew to be more than a writer—she became my partner and the book became part of her mission as well as my own. I then drew upon the expertise of Larry Kirshbaum, a highly regarded literary agent in NYC, who mentored me in the world of professional writing and publishing. Working with Larry gave me a taste of what it was

like playing against me in rugby—benevolently brutal!

Another steady source of support came from Mike Zwell, the chancellor of the Wright Graduate Institute. Mike was the one who graded each of my graduate papers and demanded that I write with excellence. He seemed to raise the bar with each paper I wrote. Often, I would get the dreaded email from Mike, returning one of my papers, asking me to rework and resubmit it. I can't tell you how many times I had to assuage my urge to drive over to Mike's house and do damage to his person and property.

The race to write my book was on. I had an amazing team behind me and I had no idea how challenging this trial would become. Initially, I imagined the

[Continued on page 2]

## Never Give Up | Thoughts on Writing my Book

project would be analogous to running a half marathon. Very quickly, however, I went from a half-marathon to a whole marathon and soon after realized I was actually competing in an ironman triathlon.

There were a series of cycles I observed myself go through. It would begin with getting a vision for the book I wanted to write, and then furiously striving to complete two chapters and a proposal. I would send the book proposal out to a number of different publishers and then wait for their responses. Eventually I would hear that the book was very well written; however, they were not confident that the book would sell.

I would then *feel hurt, angry and sad*. I was unaccustomed to failure; having carefully limited the risks I had taken in life in order to assure I would not have to face the pain of disappointment. When I was younger, I had the confi-

dence to risk failure in sports; however, there was no area in my life I was more insecure in than the world of academics. One of my most carefully guarded secrets was that I didn't think I was very intelligent. I attributed any success I had had academically to having worked harder than others.

After each rejection of my book proposal, of which there were many, I would withdraw to lick my wounds. I would go underground and several months would pass by. Eventually, with the support of Bob Wright and the men in my leadership group, I would get the encouragement I needed to resume writing yet another version of my book.

Over the past six years, I estimate that I must have written at least four to five books. However, what appeared to be a rejection was actually an injection of personal growth hormone. With each rejection I was deepening the

roots of my self and strengthening my core. I was no longer a squash hiding out and playing safe. I was evolving into an oak tree, which was slowing consolidating and strengthening my core. Along the way, a more mature and integrated sense of self was emerging. I was finding my voice and refining my skills as an effective writer. I was unearthing my message, discovering through each sentence, paragraph, and chapter what I believed and what I wanted and needed to say.

I was learning to live from what Carol Dweck refers to as a growth mindset—making learning and growing the real game and reframing failure as the measure of my willingness to risk enough to actually learn something. I learned from my studies with the Wright Graduate Institute how to think, write and communicate critically.

I have been deepening my understanding of what I know and be-

### Stay connected with CLE online!

Check out our [Calendar of Events](#) | Download past issues of [CLEAR Vision](#)

Like us on [Facebook](#) | Visit us at [www.cle.us.com](http://www.cle.us.com)



[outoftheblueblog.us](http://outoftheblueblog.us)



[askmerce.com](http://askmerce.com)



[johnnynoto.com](http://johnnynoto.com)



[cle.us.com/blog](http://cle.us.com/blog)

## Never Give Up | Thoughts on Writing my Book

lieve as I study the works of the great thinkers that have gone before me. I am appreciating their works more as I am striving to express my own thoughts and beliefs. My foundations are strengthening and I feel prepared to step into battle, knowing that I will get hurt and be wounded. It is no longer if I get hurt, but when. My understanding of getting wounded in battle has changed dramatically as I look back and realize how my transformation has been fueled by the process of getting hurt, healing and getting back up. The victory goes to those with the courage to risk failure and keep persevering.

Previously, I would have been terrified by the thought of being asked to appear on a radio or TV show to discuss my book. Now, I am excited and consider it an opportunity to engage others to think more deeply about themselves, authentic faith, and genuine spiritual maturity. I used to be more con-

cerned about being liked and now I am more concerned about being effective. I have a message to proclaim and I am excited to get the word out.

I used to see myself as a sprinter—risking in short bursts. Now, I am seeing myself growing into an endurance athlete. I have both a [mission](#) and a message and it is my responsibility to preach the good news. If I am not getting hurt and failing, then I am not living courageously. It is my aim to be a lifelong learner. I am a transformational leader inviting others to join me in the journey of maximizing our potential and fulfilling our mission and life purpose.

*You can read more about my journey from Therapist to Author on my blog at [www.outoftheblueblog.us](http://www.outoftheblueblog.us)*



## Upcoming Events

There are so many exciting upcoming [events](#) and opportunities at the Center for Christian Life Enrichment, it is difficult to imagine putting them all in once place. As many of you know, in addition to providing top-notch individual and group therapy, CLE offers numerous opportunities for growth through online broadcasts, [videos](#), seminars and workshops. As the practice continues to grow and expand, we are seeing the need for **new groups** to accommodate the growing and changing needs of our clients. In early October Andrew and Gabriela will be expanding our [Assignment Group](#) program to Thursday nights with the introduction of Thursday 5:45! Additionally, Andrew and Jon will be beginning a [men's group](#) in late September to empower and equip the next generation's leaders with the tools and support they need to live an authentic manhood. Check out [www.cle.us.com](http://www.cle.us.com) for more information.

As always we will be hosting the annual CLE **Fall Retreat** November 4-6th. Register before Wednesday September 28th for the best pricing, as this retreat will fill up fast! And trust me, you don't want to miss this powerful time of learning, growing, and transformation as descend upon Racine, WI by storm and absorb all that is possible as Rich expands upon the concepts and principles outlined in his upcoming book *Grappling with God: the Battle for Authentic Faith*.

To take full advantage of the upcoming book release and to get a sneak preview of the first chapter sign up on [www.grapplingwithgod.com](http://www.grapplingwithgod.com) for the pre-release toolkit. This toolkit is packed with exclusive resources only available online. To receive your copy simply enter your email address and the kit will be sent to your email inbox~ its that simple!

# Christian Life Enrichment Staff Directory



**Richard Blue**  
M.A., LCPC, NCC  
Clinical Director  
rich.blue@cle.us.com  
(847) 272-3684, ext. 14  
www.outoftheblueblog.us



**Andrew Mercer**  
M.A., LPC  
andrew.mercer@cle.us.com  
(847) 272-3684, ext. 17  
www.askmerce.com



**Nancy Rollins**  
M.S., LCPC, NCC  
nancy.rollins@cle.us.com  
(847) 272-3684, ext. 13



**Jon Noto**  
M.A., LPC  
jonathan.noto@cle.us.com  
(847) 272-3684, ext. 11  
www.johnynoto.com



**Gabriela Caballero Cantú**  
M.A., LPC  
gabriela.cantu@cle.us.com  
(847) 272-3684, ext. 15



3100 Dundee Rd. Ste 102, Northbrook, IL 60062  
(847) 272-3684 | [www.cle.us.com](http://www.cle.us.com)

You can now sign up to receive the CLEar Vision monthly newsletter when you visit our website [www.cle.us.com](http://www.cle.us.com)

You can also read and download back issues of the newsletter or find out other information about the Center for Christian Life Enrichment from our site.