

## Readers Guide

### *Becoming Visible to Myself: An Unexpected Memoir*

Kathryn Kaplan's new book touches on many themes. These questions are to inspire the reader and book club members to explore their relevance to their own lives. You may wish to select from the themes that most resonate to your experience.

**QUOTES:** What does this quote in Kathryn's chapter eight on *Living Fully* by Florida Scott-Maxwell mean to you? "You need only claim the events of your life to make yourself yours. When you truly possess all you have been and done, which may take some time, you are fierce with reality." Have you attempted such a claiming? What are your favorite quotes in the book and how do they touch you?

**VALUES:** Why is "vulnerability as a strength" so counter-culture in organizations and even families? Do you believe it is safe to be vulnerable? How is courage necessary to hold your own when others dismiss you?

**AUDIENCE:** Who do you think can most benefit from this book? What level of student, what age of reader, gender, and level of self-development?

**JOURNALING:** If you journal, what is your approach? How is journaling helpful to you? If you haven't tried it or continued it, do any of the guidelines suggested in Chapter Nine, How to Begin Journaling, ignite your curiosity?

**CREATIVITY:** Kathryn included over 100 journal entries to show how her notes and narrative interact to demonstrate different styles of thinking. What kind of permission and inspiration do these images provide for your own journal process? How do you express your creativity?

**JOURNAL COLLECTION:** If you have a large collection of journals, what parts of Kathryn's qualitative research method, detailed in seven steps in Chapter Ten, Advanced Journal Review, do you think would help you find meaning in your collection?

**GRIEVING:** What is your experience with grief? Kathryn had to learn how to do it in her own life, even as she was able to help others with their grief. How have you learned to grieve? What is the benefit? Why is it hard? How does it heal?

**SELF-DEVELOPMENT:** What has been your experience with personal self-development? Have you been in therapy? Have you tried alternative approaches, such as body work? What about coaching for professional development? What methods have been most helpful to you?

**TIMING:** Do you get impatient with how long self-development can take? Can you surrender as Kathryn did, saying “it takes as long as it takes”?

**NARCISSISM:** What made the difference in Kathryn’s life was learning about the roots of narcissism in her original family. Can you relate to how this understanding was a revelation? How do you understand the relationship between narcissism and codependence?

**FINDING YOUR VOICE:** The subtitle of the book is “An Unexpected Memoir.” What made it unexpected for Kathryn? What would it take for *you* to own and write *your* story? How have you found, and expressed, your voice?

**SEARCHING:** Kathryn was always searching for “IT” and wanting to be “THERE.” What do you endlessly search for and struggle with? What would you say is the nub of your seeking, such as Kathryn’s conclusion about self-hate? How do you “authorize yourself” as Kathryn finally learned to do?

**INTEGRATION:** Integration of disparate parts of the self has been a primary goal of Kathryn’s self-exploration and discovery. What does integration mean to you? How have you tried to name and understand the various aspects of yourself?

**VISIBILITY:** Usually people learn their strengths and weaknesses by getting mirrored by adults in their lives—at home, school, and work. How have you learned about your strengths and weaknesses? Kathryn’s work-around is to see what she resonates with. What is your go-to method? Do you feel “visible to yourself?”






**LEADERSHIP:** Kathryn learned to accept her tentativeness as a leader, even as she wished she had more certitude. Is there any trait you wish you didn’t have? How have you transformed that trait to be effective when it shows up?

**LEGACY:** Do you concern yourself with what may be your legacy? How would you like to be remembered?

**CHANGE:** Were you surprised by Kathryn's epilogue? What types of unexpected, and unwanted, events have changed the course of your life?

**RESOURCES:** Kathryn has generously distilled her best recommendations for self-help books and resources. What are your favorites and why?

My Wise + Wonderful  
BLACK  
BOOK  
SERIES  
Kathryn  
Kaplan XXXII



From  
7/26/17

To  
10/12/19