

Color Your Dreams Podcast - EP65

Elaine Lou Cartas: Legacy leaders. It is December 3rd, but I'm recording this podcast episode two days after my birthday. And my client's already asking me, Elaine, how do I plan for the year? So I'm like, okay, if my clients are asking, I figured you, my podcast listener. You're probably asking too. So even prior to hitting record on this podcast, I actually finished editing a planning document and videos for both my business and career coaching clients.

Elaine Lou Cartas: It's the same planning document I've done every year for my clients and for myself. I actually do this process for myself and I realized, okay, yeah, I should create a podcast episode about this and in all transparency, I am recording this episode at 1130 PM. I am doing it late because we just had a blackout for four hours today.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I was supposed to record this earlier. So you're just going to have like basically a midnight chat with me or more like midnight listening to me. This is how, I'm tired, but I don't know. I'm just also in this reflective mode right now. Just let a candle and. I'm excited to share with you what you can do to start planning for the new year.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So this episode is very tactical and practical on how to start planning for the new year. And there's two main parts to do when it comes to planning for the new year. So often we think, okay, I have this goal. I'm going to go complete it. Wait, hold up. Before you even do the goal, did you take time to reflect?

Elaine Lou Cartas: So that is the first part. Reflect. Before you plan anything you want to do for the new year, I want you to reflect on this past year. What's been working? What has not been working? Because how are we supposed to plan if we don't look at past history, past data? And I know this is going to feel icky because I'm just warning you, I'm probably going to ask you some questions that's going to make you feel uncomfortable that you have to reflect on, but there's a beauty and reflecting on the past so that hopefully the intention is you don't repeat on it again.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Also. Warning, you will get so much value from this podcast episode, since it's so tactical and practical. So you might want to take notes if you are driving clearly do not take notes while you're driving, but if you are driving, I suggest, feel free to listen to it while you're driving, but.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Listen to it again and have a pen and paper because I will be asking some powerful questions that will be helpful for you as you're planning for the year ahead and to my clients are listening to this podcast episode. Don't worry. We are going to do our call together as a group and when to when this month, but you're getting it.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And it's more in depth, obviously. So this is a great little teaser to do the deeper things when we're on our call together. So here are some questions to reflect and consider before planning for 2024, or, this is a podcast, so whatever new year it will be, maybe hopefully it is like 3024. I'm just saying that's how long I would want this podcast to be.

Elaine Lou Cartas: People are going to listen to it in the future. Anyways, first question, what has brought you joy this past year, both personally and professionally? So for me personally, I've been able to go on a trip once a month that brought me joy December my last vacation or trip. I wouldn't really consider it a vacation so much, but I do have some personal time is going to Santa Barbara.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'll be filming my 5th course with made craft. and it's about doing curse switches and I'm so excited for that. I'll be having downtime being at the beach, being by myself. So it'll be a fun solo trip as well. And then what has brought me joy this past year, professionally creating boundaries for myself, making sure I'm not responding to clients at the weekends and doing, putting boundaries to go do Muay Thai.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I know that's more of a personal goal, but putting that has actually brought so much more energy in my life. So the. Just so you know, I'm also going to be answering questions here. So you have an idea of how to answer these questions. So going back to that first question, what has brought you joy this past year, both personally and professionally?

Elaine Lou Cartas: The second question is opposite of that. What has not brought you joy this past year, personally and professionally? Sorry. Word vomit for me personally, it was actually saying yes to a lot of personal commitments. There was, I want to say probably when I came back from Tanzania, after that beautiful two week trip, I don't know.

Elaine Lou Cartas: There's just so much personal, like seeing friends, seeing families, there was so much get togethers because I guess it was like also the summer. Also, this is the time when both my boyfriend and I were looking at homes, but I was saying yes to everything where I did. Ended up feeling so resentful and just wiped out and exhausted and tire.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I did not have strong boundaries to just say, no, I can't make it. Shout out to my boyfriend has incredible strong boundaries where. He even tells me when there's a commitment that both of us are invited to, he'll just say, I can't make it. I'm wiped out. I'm tired. Like he has such strong boundaries. That has not brought me joy professionally. What has not brought me joy, but it was also a good thing too, is I, I'm actually very grateful. I invested in this. I invested in a friend of mine Amber Duggar, who has a profit for keeps program that does cash management. And I wanted to get better in my cash management.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I'm working with one of our coaches one on one and I'm pretty good at my money, but I wanted to understand my money even better and more and just realizing, hey, I'm not charging and I'm not just saying me, charging my worth, but also charging enough for my team's worth. Additionally, also realizing I want to work less with clients, have a cap so that my clients also get a higher quality experience and.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I had to see all the numbers in terms of how much I'm spending one to the time that myself and my team is creating. And then also three, Oh my gosh, the value my clients get compared to other people who do similar services in terms of my high touch experience. Like it's a very white glove, high touch.

Elaine Lou Cartas: People actually get to know me as opposed to just get to know my other coaches, but they get to know me as well. I get to know my clients personally and support them individually. That was very uncomfortable, but I needed that to happen. So what hasn't brought you joy this past year, personally and professionally also to my clients are listening to this right now.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Don't worry. I always provide legacy pricing with current clients, which means I honor the pricing that. You originally had with me as we renew, but for those who want to work with me and my team in 2024, just giving you a warning. Now, my pricing is increasing next year. if you do

want to work with me with 2023 pricing, then you could schedule a call at Elaine Lou dot com forward slash call.

Elaine Lou Cartas: even saying that, I talk about. Numbers all the time, even with my own clients, but in a vulnerable way, I'm even sharing like that was even uncomfortable for me sharing that, but I had to look at all those numbers and data. So shout out to Amber. And I'm so glad I invested in that program. So a third question to consider, it's actually from a tool that I got from Paul J.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Meyer called the life balance wheel. It's basically writing down different parts of your life. That's important. So write down 10, it doesn't have to be 10, but let me give you examples of topics that may be important to you. One could be partner in love, two is personal growth, three spirituality, four money, five career, health and fitness.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Fun and recreation, environment, community, family, and friends. It doesn't have to be all of that. Change it. There might be things that are not as important to you. And then from a scale of 0 to 10, 10 being the highest, like it's amazing. 0 being the worst. Doing self assessment of where you're at from each parts of your life.

Elaine Lou Cartas: 0 to 10, 10 being the highest. And what's important as you're doing that, I also want to give a caveat. The goal is not to be a 10 in all of the different aspects of your life. We are human. We do not have time to be a 10 for everything. The goal is not to be perfect. The goal here is to be self aware and also understand your stage and chapter and season of your life at this very moment.

Elaine Lou Cartas: for example, Maybe have an aging parent and they need more support from you. So maybe family is going to be something that's important for you to focus on in this next year, or maybe this actually happened to me at the end of last year, you go to the doctor and you realize, oh, my gosh, I need to work on my health and maybe your health is more of a priority.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I want you to reflect what were high, Eight plus that you self assessed. And why was that? And then what were low? And then in this next year, what do you want to focus on to improve on? Like I said, the goal is not about being a 10, but what areas of your life do you want to focus on in this next year?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Yes, I am a business and career coach. We talk about that, but I am also a coach holistically. I want my clients to have. a sustainable and happy life in different parts of their life. So this is important to see your whole picture of your life. So look at that. And then the 4th question is, we start going professionally.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And like I said, these are a couple of questions I put that I, do with my clients as we are reflecting and planning for the next year. I just want to get the main big ones. the 4th question to ask is what, work and projects did you actually enjoy doing? This past year in your work, whether you're a career leader, a business owner, what did you enjoy doing?

Elaine Lou Cartas: So this past year, I did more of it. I enjoyed working with organizations. I enjoyed working with made craft where I. I've done courses with them, I'm doing my 5th course with them and made craft partners with learning providers, like LinkedIn learning, Google, Meta, Microsoft and Adobe. That's fine because I get to work with a director producer.

Elaine Lou Cartas: There is a makeup artist. I just feel like I am an actress, but by no means I'm a real actress and then. What did you actually try? What did you not enjoy? What work and projects did you not enjoy? And I know I said, I enjoyed working with organizations this past year, um, but there was 1 organization. I did not enjoy working with and to be transparent.

Elaine Lou Cartas: It was because I felt like the work I was doing with them. Wasn't making a big difference with the clients. I was serving through them and. That I was paying underpaid compared to how much other organizations and even how much I charge myself within my own business. I had to come into terms and to alignment with that and reflection to that.

Elaine Lou Cartas: As I'm saying that it reminded me of when. About 2 years ago, when I changed my business model where I used to do free events, it was prior to this podcast. This podcast is this love project of giving back. But when I did events, I felt so resentful because I was giving so much time and energy away to people.

Elaine Lou Cartas: and I would say this to myself. I feel bad for saying Oh, I'm doing these free events. Why are these clients not converting? I can't think of it that way. I had to change it. And. Yeah. I realized it just was not an energetic balance that I no longer enjoyed in comparison to now with podcasting, I get to be myself and just hold space with myself.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'm very empathetic. So when I host events, um, I could feel different people's energies. So I went from having monthly events to. Thank goodness I only do 2 retreats every year. I still need it in person, but I do 2 retreats a year. That's my energetic capacity right now. And in relation to what happened 2 years ago, this past year with this organization, it was that same energy.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I just energetically didn't feel aligned in terms of how much I was getting paid and seeing the difference that the clients were making. So that's what I did not enjoy. I know that's an uncomfortable question. Because when answering that question, sometimes you realize there are things you need to change and shift.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Maybe as a career leader, if you're working a full time job, you're realizing, I really hate my job, or I really don't like this industry. And I know that's probably really hard to comprehend, but at least you have that self awareness. And I know sometimes you think, oh, why can't it go back to what it was before?

Elaine Lou Cartas: Just know you were different before you were a different individual. Maybe you're doing different things. Maybe there are things that are different with the organization, but at least you're aware of that. So we'll get to what our next steps that you can do, but being aware of what you don't enjoy. Maybe you're a business owner and you realize that the way you've been getting clients has been working, but the past year it stopped.

Elaine Lou Cartas: What does that mean? What do you have to do to change or shift? Maybe because there's inflation, which there is right now. Maybe your clients are just not hanging out that same platform where you used to get clients. And I know that sucks to admit, but at least you're self aware that something needs to shift and change.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I told you I was going to make you feel uncomfortable, but this is good. Like I'm not here to be a bully. I am just here to help serve, support, and guide you and making sure as you

plan for the new year to reflect on the past year first of both the good and the challenging. So what else? I think we're in number six, the sixth question.

Elaine Lou Cartas: What has been working well? Maybe you really enjoy the work environment, the coworkers you work with, or the team that you've created. And then seventh, what has not been working? maybe, like I said earlier, as a business owner, you realize how you've been getting clients has changed. It's not working anymore.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Maybe you realize things need to shift as a career leader. Maybe your company is going through budget cuts, but you're doing more and you're being underpaid or you just simply hate the work culture that you're in. And now that we've done all that reflection, and mind you, I know that was a lot.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So if you need to hit pause, go back to the questions, or maybe you need to rewind it and play or take some time to take notes. Do that. I would also suggest as you are answering these questions to. To do it in a place where you're not limited in time, but to be intentional, take your time to fill to answer these questions.

Elaine Lou Cartas: maybe you need to listen to this podcast episode again after this is done, but light a candle, play some music in the background. Maybe do this at a coffee shop at a park. Don't do it in a place where you're constantly working because it stresses you out, but give yourself some space and time. To answer these questions, maybe not at one sitting, maybe you answer it one sitting and then you visit it twice, two times or three times.

Elaine Lou Cartas: By the way, you are not doing these questions for me. You're doing this for you. So this is all for you. So the second part of how to plan for the new year is planning. This is the planning part with a margin of magic. So our brains work in three, think of phone numbers, think of three, two, one, red, yellow, green.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I know, right? You're like, Oh my gosh, I didn't realize everything was in three. Our brains just memorize things and three. So what are your three main goals for the year? And what are activities you need to do for each of those goals? A tip, and I learned this from my former mentors from accountability works is from those three goals.

Elaine Lou Cartas: One of them has to be personal. All of them can't just be career focused. One of them has to be personal. Maybe it's working on your health. Maybe you want to get better and understanding your finances. It doesn't even have to be how their finances. I'm just giving you some examples. So I've been hearing a lot lately, just hearing trends from what my clients need support.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And if you are a career leader and you want to change careers and need support, listen to episode 63. It's one of my recent episodes before this episode on how to change careers with Ava and my client. And I share how she's been able to change careers within two months and in completely different industry.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And also talking about just the mental chaos of what happens, the anxiety of that. And lately with a lot of business owners, leaders, I have been hearing how a lot of you want to be less dependent on social media, which is how I've created my business in the past two years. I just really did not want to be on.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I realized. When I kept being on, I kept thinking about, wow, this be great content, even when I was on vacation and I wasn't fully present on my vacations and fully present with the people I love from my partner to my family and friends. So listen to episode 38 on how to be less dependent on social media with Monica shock.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So those are two episodes you want to check out. And when you are. Being intentional of what your 3 goals are, what are small, what are specific small activities need to do? And more importantly, what is the 1st action item you can do within those goals? maybe 1 of your goals is. I, need to change careers.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So what I need to listen to episode 63, what I share with you about how to change careers or think of friends that you know, of that have been able to change careers, even if it's a different industry for me, but you know what they did to go about it. And then maybe. Another goal, if you're thinking about an action item for that or a small 1st step, you can do if you are a business leader that you want to be less dependent on social media.

Elaine Lou Cartas: Like I said, listen to episode 38, but maybe it's also. For the people that you fall in terms of their email list, maybe they have great emails like, okay, let me read more of their content. What makes me attracted to their emails that I'm opening as opposed to other people. And a last question I like asking my clients when they are planning for the new year.

Elaine Lou Cartas: What are things you need to delegate or delete both personally and professionally? One of my clients who's a mom, she hires someone to fold her clothes for her once a week and that has helped her. Mind you, she has three kids, so that has helped a lot for me. I get a cleaner once a quarter, so I don't do that every week or once a month.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I get one once a quarter and. Maybe there are things you also need to delete, like I have a client who realized that they're giving so much energy being a board member for a nonprofit that she needed to not do that anymore. two steps, two parts when planning for the new year. One is reflect. If you're like, Elaine, what were those questions again?

Elaine Lou Cartas: What's great about a podcast is you could replay it. So go replay this episode. Second step planning with a margin of magic. So here is my most important reflective question for you in this podcast episode, as you are planning for the new year, I want to make sure. As you're doing this whole process of answering these questions, creating goals for yourself, this question is the most important.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So I want you to pay attention. What do you really want next year? Not what your partner wants for you, not what your friends, not what your family, not what society wants for you. What do you want? So I really want to emphasize the you part because this is your year. This is your life. So you get to plan for the new year.

Elaine Lou Cartas: And my action for you is to pause, slow down, and reflect. It is so easy for us to feel like we need information overload, where we will Google. We will listen to a podcast, you'll read books on how to plan and goal set. And look, it's great. If you loved my questions, that's great. If you didn't, if you want to edit those reflective questions, I had.

Elaine Lou Cartas: That's great too. But take time to pause and reflect and answer those questions of what was an alignment and brought you joy and what was not an alignment and brought you joy. And be okay if the things that worked before and brought you joy no longer do anymore. Because we are human, we evolve, we change, our priorities shift, and there's sometimes there's things out of our control.

Elaine Lou Cartas: So going back to that main reflective question, what do you really want next year, but I'm excited for you to plan for the new year. And if you want to go deeper and to planning for the new year, and you want to work with me and my team, do schedule a call to see for a good fit together. And in that call, I'll give you 3 action items and.

Elaine Lou Cartas: I'll make sure you fill out a form so I get to best prepare and serve you during the call. And by the end of the call, if it's a great fit, great. We can talk about how it looks like to work together. If it's not a great fit, great. I'll refer you to other people and resources. So it's a win, win for you. So to schedule that call, go to elainelue.com.

Elaine Lou Cartas: [com forward slash call](http://elainelue.com). That's E L A I N E l o u . [com forward slash call](http://elainelue.com).