

To: NEK Collaborative Members & Participants

From: Mark Levine, Retreat Facilitator

Re: Preparation for October 24 Retreat “Story of Self” Activity

Date: October 9, 2014

I’m looking forward to meeting each of you and to the work we will do on October 24. The information in this memo will help you prepare for one of the activities at the retreat, the “Stories of Self”. This is an activity I have led with a number of groups, always with great results. The activity responds to one of the outcomes for the retreat, “Strengthen Cohesion among NEK Members”.

Please begin by reviewing a reading from the Achieving Excellence Program (in which Merten Bangemann-Johnson participated, and in which I have served as an Executive Coach) The reading is “Creating Shared Story”, by one of the Achieving Excellence Harvard Kennedy School faculty, Marshall Ganz.

Next, think about and prepare to tell a brief (2 minute) “Story of Self” on the morning of the Retreat. The idea is to tell a story, about yourself, or about a person who was influential for you, that illustrates an important value or values and connects to the question of “why do you choose to do the work that you do”

In preparing your story, keep in mind that any great story has 4 “story elements”:

1. A central character, or “hero”
2. A challenge faced by the hero
3. The choice the hero makes in the face of the challenge
4. The outcome of the story as a result of the choice, and the moral or lesson that the story illustrates

Add as many details as you can to “make the story come alive” and to help the listeners see and feel the situation described in the story. Remember this is not about “describing a story”, or “telling about a story”, it is about actually telling the story.

Finally, also attached to this message is an audio file with a brief “sample story” which I recorded. I hope you enjoy listening to it.

I’m confident you will find this to be a valuable and enjoyable activity. See you on October 24!