


Life Visioning

Come Home: Brave + Beautiful






The bad news is,
what was shattered
may never be possible to rebuild.

The good news is,
what you make in its place
will be better than what was destroyed.

»» *Nikita Gill, Where Hope Comes From*



Don't rush who you're becoming.

»» *Lalah Delia*



Disclaimer + Welcome

Please remember to gather in your support system. My [Brave + Beautiful Community](#) may become one important part of your support system. It is one beautiful way to “find your people” or build safe and brave community with other growth-minded humans willing to say yes to showing up fully to life in every season. I love this community and witness all the positive growth that happens here – and sometimes we need many different types of support.

I practice what I preach and invest ample energy and finances into gathering support from varied practitioners and professionals to care for myself mind-body-soul. Some clients and community members take the work they do with me into therapy or to their doctors. It can work together in a beautiful way as long as we're clear on the boundaries.

[I am a coach and educator](#), not a mental health therapist, a grief counselor, or a medical professional. None of my work is offered as a replacement for medical advice and support. It is not offered to treat, heal, cure, or diagnose for any condition. If you are in crisis, dealing with a newly diagnosed physical or mental health condition, if you are struggling hard with your mental health, or you've recently lost a loved to suicide, for example, I urge you to reach out to get 1:1 professional support to help keep you safe and steady. You matter!

Many of my clients and community members have experience of trauma, grief, mental illness or mental health struggles, and other hard life challenges. Life is messy. You are welcome to show up real, to come as you are. We are open in this group about our lived experiences – they are part of our story (though not the fullness of it). But only do what feels safe to you.


You're responsible for your path forward, but I offer my study, story, and lived experience to help you open up to a new joyful possibility. To build new habits, practices, beliefs, and ways of being, seeing, and moving through life that will help you live whole, brave, curious, and on purpose. I hold space, encourage, challenge at times, coach, and model. And I can help you witness your strength, gifting, and courage as you do the vulnerable and life-giving work to befriend yourself, re-envision your life, and remember your way to freedom.

Engage with the work in a way that feels good and safe to you. You may journal or mind map your responses, write out ideas point form, diagram, hash things out with a good friend, reflect as you move your body, bring it to therapy, paint or write or dance as you allow new ideas to percolate and new beliefs to take root in your body and life. Get creative, stay curious, remain flexible (an important part of resilience) as you practice listening inward and responding with compassion to what arises in your body, emotions, and thoughts. You have permission in this space to experiment, play, and practice imperfectly on purpose.

Krista xo



“On the road of life - you gorgeous human being - are the car, your strengths are the engine, your values are the steering wheel, and your vision is your destination.”

 Tammy Faulds

Whether or not you love being likened to a car, vision matters. Or, it matters if you want to live an intentional life aligned with your values, priorities, and strengths. If YOU want to be the boss of your own life rather than chasing shiny things, external approval, or trying to measure up and keep up to arbitrary, joy and soul-destroying standards and expectations that do not serve you.

A clear and compelling Life Vision kept me anchored after my parents died, through severe chronic pain and anxiety, after a traumatic car accident, after my son died, through PTSD and deep grief, and through Covid. It has walked with me through seasons of darkness, pain, and hibernation, and seasons of stretching, fun, and hopeful creating. It lights my path when sifting through challenging choices I need to make, and delightful ones, and when I need help remembering the truth of who I am and how I choose to show up to this “wild and precious life” of mine (Mary Oliver reference).

We’re all knit together differently which means that not everyone enjoys this type of work or comes by it naturally (yet it’s important for all of us). The good news is, there’s no one-right-way to do this work, or any work. Give yourself permission to lean into your strengths, to honor your wiring, the ways you learn and engage best with new ideas. Take your time, ask for encouragement or help applying new ideas to your life, and avoid rushing the process.

This work is not about getting to some final destination but about befriending the truth of who you are and what you want and need, remembering your power of choice or agency, and living fully awake and present in every single day you get rather than deferring joy for an elusive “someday” way off in an imaginary future. So as much as possible, shake off pressure to “fix” yourself or your life and try to release judgment in favor of curiosity as you dive into the work. Just be here.

Maybe you’ve done this type of work before and feel quite confident about your Life Vision; stay open and make space for your intuition and curiosity to draw you deeper. I suspect we’re going to have many thought-provoking and juicy conversations along the way!

On the other hand, perhaps you feel incredibly intimidated and have never even considered how to walk out your values before. If this is you, just take one small step and then another and remind yourself gently that this is how we learn to feel safe and at home in our bodies and our lives. One purposeful step, one brave choice, one deep breath at a time.

Where something is underlined in the workbook, this means there is an accompanying resource to support you in the work. If you have a question, reach out at alifeinprogress@outlook.com.



Craft your *Life Vision*

Why I make the choices I do
» overarching life direction

Your 5 core values (use the [My Core Values Handout](#) to get started):

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Your core beliefs/belief statement:

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Your big rocks (optional/similar to values):

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Purpose/impact/legacy or mission statement (write in present tense and affirmative):

How you'll know you've lived well:



What I want and need and what I believe about myself and my place in the world

>> emotional and/or life season I'm in or 5-10-20 years

What life and/or emotional season are you in (use the winter, spring, summer, autumn overviews to help you figure this out)? For example, are you in a full and hectic summer season of mothering little people, are you in an autumn season of empty nest and (peri)menopause with more space for yourself and burgeoning creativity, are you transitioning between midlife into a winter season of grappling with your mortality, are you in a late winter/early spring season of remothering your maiden/inner child and learning to befriend your whole self?

Each season comes with both gifts and challenges and naming the season we're in helps us live more consciously and with self-compassion. Reflect on the season(s) you're in and truth-tell about the limitations, opportunities/freedom, your emotional experience and capacity, and so on, that are part of being in these seasons. There's more room to journal on p.8.





Create a Vision Board or Hope Map of what you want your life to look/sound/feel like. You could create a Pinterest board, an old school vision board/collage on a corkboard or poster board, mind map it out, etc.

Consider: How do you spend your days, what do you eat, do you live by trees or water, what kind of work (paid or unpaid) do you do, how do you feel in your body, what phrases or quotes speak to how you want to show up to life? This isn't about a fairytale version of life but I do encourage permission to get curious, dream, play, explore, and imagine without judgment and see what comes up for you.

In some cases you may find yourself a lot closer to your ideal life than you've realized or you may be able to infuse your current life with the essence of some of your dreams as you take action to bring them fully to life. For example, if you long to travel abroad but don't yet have the finances or Covid is derailing your plans, jump in the car for smaller day or weekend trips around your region. Plan a friend's weekend in a new city. Book a weekend in a lovely hotel just for you.



Complete a Wheel of Life exercise. Draw a big circle (I've left space for you here though you'll likely want more room) and divide it into 8 sections like Home/Environment; Core Relationships; Relationship with Myself; Finances; Work/Vocation/Contribution/Purpose; Mind-Body Health; Personal Growth/Becoming; and anything else that feels meaningful.

Now, brainstorm what you want and need in each area of your life. Allow yourself to do this unfiltered and judgment-free. Just notice what comes up for you. Next, rate your wellbeing or satisfaction from 1-10 in each area (10 being completely fulfilled and satisfied). Which 1-2 areas of your life will you give some extra love to in this season?



There are seasons of transition, some we choose and others we're thrust into, that involve deconstruction, disorienting, dismantling, dissolution, decluttering, and deep cleaning of one kind or another. This can feel unmooring/destabilizing (so gather in your support team) and it's hard emotional, spiritual, and sometimes physical labor. But on the side usually lives greater freedom and authenticity as we take off our masks, shed old skins, and get ready to write a new story.

What type of decluttering or deconstruction is needed in your life? Perhaps your home and stuff needs paring down, or a belief system needs tearing down, unhealthy relationships, habits and old stories or versions of yourself that no longer serve or reflect the truth of who you are need to be released. Journal or map out your thoughts and feelings below about what/who no longer deserves your time and energy or space in your heart, mind, body, or home.

If you've been going through significant deconstruction, be awake to the common temptation to jump from one thing right into the next (into a new set of rules/expectations and gatekeepers) to reestablish a sense of security in our bodies or lives. Others may also pressure you due to their own conscious or unconscious motivations.



Therapist, trauma specialist, and author of *My Grandmother's Hands*, Resmaa Menakem, writes that "Trauma decontextualized in a person looks like personality. Trauma decontextualized in a family looks like family traits. Trauma in a people looks like culture."

Trauma is anything that happens "too much, too fast, too soon" teaches Dr. Gabor Maté, trauma, addiction, stress and childhood development expert. Even without lived experience of "big T trauma," we've all experienced hard stuff and some of it gets lodged in our bodies in somatic memory. It can be hard to unearth our truest selves underneath our pain, conditioning, and self-protective patterns (remember, you are not your personality - that's how you learned to feel safe and get your needs met). But as we build self-awareness and practice self-compassion including befriending our nervous system, we come back home to ourselves.

Can you see the truth that sometimes unhealed pain gets labeled as a family trait? Are there family patterns or cycles you're working to break for your own life or institutionalized or intergenerational trauma that impact you? (Have you addressed this in therapy?)

Most of us have layers of hard stuff in our lives and the good news is, we do not have to deal with it all at once. If our behavior is causing harm, then this merits our immediate attention but not everything is urgent. Some things took a lifetime or generations to be built and won't be torn down overnight. I often remind myself that I have a lifetime to grieve the loss of my child. I have permission to take it slow which is also the wisest course because as Trauma survivor and therapist, Linda Thai says, "we heal at the speed of safety."

What does Coming Home mean to you? What does "becoming" mean to you? Do you tend to feel urgency around creating change or growing into yourself? Do you feel like you have to "fix" yourself or like you're a problem to be fixed? Are there any labels you've been handed that you want to shake off (for example, maybe you were labeled a drama queen or the difficult child) or some that you want to claim (for example, owning your autism or high sensitivity can feel empowering)? There's extra room for you to write on the next page.





Sense of self or true self is not the same as identity. Sense of self/essence/soul child is non-egoic and not dependent upon external bias and ideology. It's more like who you were before you learned to hide, mask, shame, or self-protect. Identity is externally formed by personality traits, family of origin and cultural expectations. Sifting through all of this can take years - this may be the first time you've ever heard of this or you may be well into your journey.

I invite you to explore this gently. What helps you feel more like yourself? What helps you experience flow, ease, or feel free? Have you ever been going through life and all of a sudden you caught a glimpse of your true self? It might have been fleeting or you may have heard some truth that you quickly captured in a notebook. Pull out the [roots of identity worksheet](#) and notice how these different factors formed your identity but may or may not represent the truest most honest version of you who lives underneath all of that.

Tell a story of who you are (or who you choose to be) today. Keep your core values and mission/purpose in mind. In doing the exercise, you may notice that the values you've chosen are part of your identity in the world but not your "true self." You might write this out like an actual story, mind map it, or simply imagine.



Before we shift into focusing on looking forward and taking imperfect action, I invite you to look back for a little bit. Look at how far you've come. You may feel battered and weary but you're here and you can be proud of yourself. Can you witness your courage, your resilience, all the hard work you've done to arrive here at this place and time?

Describe the you of yesteryear. What did she think like, feel like, what did she believe about herself or the world? Is there anything you'd like to tell her now, from your current vantage point? Are you the same person today or have you, as Joan Didion wrote in *On Keeping a Notebook*, "already lost touch with a couple of people (you) used to be"? You may experience this as freedom and exhale or as death/deconstruction of your identity.

Map out your story arc (get as detailed as you want). This could take an hour or two or it could take weeks. Include the highs and lows, key lessons you learned along the way, those places where you sustained significant wounds, and the pit stops where you rested and healed. Who journeyed with you or lifted you up along the way? I've left space on the next page.





Receiving, reclaiming, re-orienting, restoration, and renewal are equally important and common experiences that come in transitional seasons if we're living awake and aware, trusting what we want and need, doing the hard work to first let go and make space.

Take some time to engage with these "R" words and the images, sensations, and emotions they bring to the surface. What are your limits and boundaries around receiving? What is your relationship to receiving? What is it that you're ready to reclaim? Your voice? Your agency or sovereignty? Your freedom? Parts of you that you laid down for a season and now want to pick up again or parts of you that were rejected, neglected, or underdeveloped?

(Optional) If it feels good, you could explore the 4 feminine archetypes of maiden, wild woman, mother (not about having children), and wise woman and how if you didn't get to fully experience a phase it may be showing up as the shadow of that archetype in your current life and need remothering so that you can truly come home to yourself. Alternatively, your culture may offer story and history about the strength and power of the feminine and your place in the world that could help you reclaim your true self and your voice. I've left extra space for you on the following page.





Identify any anchoring traditions that remind you of the truth of who you are and that help you live rooted and resilient when the storms of life come. These might include spiritual, cultural, or family traditions, or any that you've created for yourself. Which traditions will you carry into your next season of life? Which will you leave behind?



Listen inward. What's calling for your attention? Where does your passion/curiosity/delight want to take you? Have you been having interesting and compelling dreams in the night that are drawing you into further exploration? What are you interested in learning about or diving deeper into? Don't focus on *how* you can make this happen, just listen.



List out 10 gifts or strengths that you bring to the world (ask for help from people you trust if this feels hard to do on your own). These could be acquired through education and life experience, or they may be woven into the fabric of who you are. There are many ways to explore personality and the strengths knit into the fabric of who you are. One fun option could be to explore your unique elemental alchemy from Chinese Medicine, earth, metal, water, wood, or fire, and the gifts inherent in your type (*5 Element Alchemy* by Ashley Abbs is one possible starting point).



You may be ready to close a chapter of your life, to close a door on what was. Is there anything left to do/release/resolve before you can truly be here in this moment in peace?



We're all a messy tangle of strength and struggle. Human in a messy world. Learning to own our places of struggle or wounding without shame or judgment is important if we want to live whole, bravely, and on purpose. Remember that in order to heal, grow, or become our nervous system must feel safe. And compassion is the number one thing needed to create the felt sense of safety that we require.

Are there any struggles in particular that need attention in this season? For instance, you might notice that you're ready to do a lot of boundary work, you're ready to address trauma in EMDR/with your therapist, you're ready to stand on your own if your partner will not do their own emotional work, or you recognize that you've never dealt with your grief and now it's exploding all over your relationships. Big or small, what have you been noticing lately, bubbling to the surface, asking to be heard?



We need a clear sense of direction to guide us so we don't easily get distracted or pulled off course. After the work you've done to imagine and vision your life so far, identify up to 10 medium to long-term goals that will help you feel safe and at home in your body and your life, and that align with or flow out of your core values and overarching sense of purpose.

These goals should reflect a holistic view of your full life and can be broken down later into smaller, more measurable goals or intentions for each year. For example, a long-term goal might be to pay off your mortgage early and be debt free. A short-term goal might be to make a principal-only-payment of \$200 to your mortgage every month.



How I bring my vision to life while living in integrity

>> the next 6-12 months

My mantra, focus, or intention for the year that speaks to who and how I choose to be:

Word of the year:

Select 3-5 Mind-Body-Spirit Intentions for the year. Language is personal and words can mean different things to different people. Choose up to 5 words (not phrases) that help create a vivid mental picture of who and how you choose to be in the world. Write these in your phone, in your agenda, and/or on a sticky note and put this on your mirror as a daily reminder of your power of choice or agency.

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Identify a handful of Seasonal Living practices to help you honor your wiring and capacity (ex. sustainable rhythms, routines, habits, practices or methods of tracking like cycle tracking or habit tracking). Pull out the [7 Elements Worksheet](#) for ideas.

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What type of energy do you want to bring to your life in the coming 6-12 months? You may be familiar with the idea of yin (being and receiving) and yang (doing and giving), the feminine and masculine. Many of us show up with different energy in different relationships and contexts whether conscious of it or not. One is not better than the other - we need both for equilibrium.

It's natural and healthy to lean into a more masculine energy in part of the month or some seasons of life, and then tilt more into our feminine energy at other times. What becomes problematic is when we're stuck in one or the other, we can't access the other, or when we deem one part of who we are as less than or bad so we suppress it.

Take a look at the [More and Less Effective Yin and Yang Handouts](#) I've provided from the book *Lunar Abundance* by Ezzie Spencer. This will offer examples of what yin and yang might look like in your life. Now take a look at the handout called [Find The Balance](#) which describes some characteristics of masculine energy and feminine energy. Do you see yourself more developed/underdeveloped in one? Or can see how you cycle through both or lean into them depending on context, time in the lunar cycle, or season of the calendar year?



Breathing room and rest are essential for a creative, sustainable, and joyful life. Get super practical and honest about your current life and lifestyle. What is your relationship to rest? Are you getting enough rest? What emotions or stories come up for you when you try to rest? Are you an HSP who regularly feels depleted or even panicky?

Rest comes in many shapes and sizes. Take a look at the [7 Types of Rest Handout](#) to think about which forms of rest you sorely need in this season.

Think about ways to build more rest and breathing room into your day, week, month, and year. Pull out a [year at a glance calendar](#) and mark out rest times, holidays, birthdays and death dates, when your college aged kids move home and disrupt the normal flow of things, etc., to reflect the truth that You need flexibility and room to breathe in order to feel whole and show up as your most honest and integrated self.



Busy is not the same as being productive. And productive doesn't mean we're focused on what truly matters. What is your "deep work" for the year (Hint: it could be related to what's been calling for your attention, p.19)? This could be related to vocation or purpose (ex. complete your graduate degree or finish your manuscript) but it could also be related to home life or your health (ex. rebuild strength after trauma and loss or joyfully homeschool your kids in a way that affirms and builds safety and connection).

Name your deep work. Now you'll need to break this down into bit sized pieces that you can take action on, and build space for this into your life (for instance, get it onto your short-term goals worksheet and your weekly rhythm).

What do you need to make this happen? For instance, I'm aiming to finish my manuscript this year. To make this happen and fight my deeply rooted procrastination tendency, in addition to time blocks on my weekly rhythm that I'll guard carefully, I'll buy a program to help organize my writing, I'll create a new writing timeline and submit it to my publisher, I'll read inspiring books but avoid those that spark comparison, and I'll create a simple and enjoyable ritual to help me build the habit of sitting my butt in the chair again.



The Pareto Principle can help us quiet the noise of life. We can use it in every area of life to identify the choices/behaviors/habits that have the biggest ripple effect or impact in our lives. The Pareto Principle, or the 80/20 rule (or 90/10), states that for many phenomena 80% of the result comes from 20% of the effort. A few examples: it's likely that you wear 20% of your clothes 80% of the time. 20% of the people in your community do 80% of the volunteer work. 20% of your work tasks lead to 80% of the results.

This principle can be incredibly helpful in identifying wasted time, excess, all the things we worry about that don't make that much of an impact on our life. It helps us pare down, refine, focus, and home in on the MOST important practices or choices we can build consistency around or even tweak/improve to bring our dreams to fruition or to handcraft a life that feels like home. We don't need all the things or to do all the things, we just need to take a breath, pause, and get intentional about how we live our days.

I invite you to play with this idea: look around your life and come up with some "equations" of your own and notice where you may have been expending unnecessary energy and those 20% of tasks/habits that deserve your attention.



It's not uncommon for us to have competing tensions and desires or to notice that a couple of our values are "bumping up against each other." Not everything is for this season.

First, let's create more bandwidth by clearing mental space. Create a page in your journal or life management binder for a someday list or a bucket list; you can dump all your shiny ideas here in a safe palace where you can find them later while clearing your mind to focus on your priorities for this season. You might also enjoy doing a brain dump to get everything out of your head and heart and onto paper so you can triage what truly merits your energy right now.

Now, think about any areas of your life causing low-grade anxiety, tension, or urgency, for example. Is it possible that this thing, whatever it is, is problematic because two of your core values are coming into conflict with each other? Or, two of your desires/goals are competing for limited resources?

Here's an example: let's say two of your values are creativity and safety. You've been offered a new amazing position at work that is well aligned with your strengths and passion and it pays well, but you feel super anxious about it. You wonder if you're missing something important—maybe you should say no and stay with the status quo. But then you realize that this new job is exciting but also creates a lot of uncertainty. It activates your nervous system because it will destabilize current routines and comfort. It's bumping up against your value of safety and security. Which value gets priority? What would you need in order to feel safe enough to be able to say yes to this fabulous opportunity? There's extra space to write on the next page.





Way back on page 11 you took note of things or relationships or commitments that you're ready to declutter, deconstruct, or dismantle. It's time to take action. You may have identified many areas of life that need decluttering. For now, choose ONE thing to take action on in the next week and map out a list of concrete, micro, next steps. Maybe you can't see too far ahead. That's ok - even if all you can see is the one step in front of you, take that.

Here's an example: If you choose to leave behind an organization that you've been part of for years but which is no longer healthy for you, your next steps could look like 1) craft a letter to explain why you're leaving 2) ask someone you trust to read over the letter and offer feedback as needed (for instance, in case you don't want to come across as angry) 3) email the letter and also email any important relationships from that organization that you'd prefer to maintain so they find out from you and not from gossip that you're leaving 4) make a therapy appointment for some emotional processing - this is hard work! 5) celebrate your bravery in a small but meaningful way.



Self-compassion and self-trust go hand-in-hand. If you're mean to yourself all the time, you're not going to feel very safe in your body. Think about building a friendship with yourself. Lasting, deep friendships take time, vulnerability, brave conversations, a willingness to forgive and also speak up if a boundary has been crossed. A good friendship means having fun together, believing the best about the other person, cheering them onward.

Deepening self-trust necessitates learning to hear and recognize our own voice. We all experience this, our voice or inner guidance system, differently. For me, I "hear" things loud and clear inside of me. Sometimes images accompany the voice/thoughts. Have you ever felt a nudge to say or do something but you distrusted it and then based on the outcome realized you heard right after all?

Wherever you're at on this journey or dance, you can practice building trust with yourself. You can listen and respond when you're thirsty or tired or need to pee without ignoring your needs. You can give yourself permission to feel without shaming or judging your experience. You can pick yourself up quickly and dust yourself off with kindness when you fall - you're human, after all. You can write down the things you "hear" or feel drawn to so you have a record of it later on.

Reflect on how you're practicing self-trust or distrust. If you've had experience hearing your inner guidance, what did that sound and feel like? Also consider if you have enough quiet in your life to be able to hear yourself or if you're always busy filling the space with other people's words, thoughts and opinions. Would you like to quiet some noise so you can build a deeper friendship with yourself?



How have perfectionism, comparison, and fear been surfacing in your life lately? What emotions or stories come up for you when experiencing these? How does this show up in your body, behavior, and thought life? Write down specific examples. Can you identify a more honest and hopeful story to quiet the noise or do you want to ask for support to find more freedom in your life?



Take a look at the [cognitive distortions handout](#) provided. Do you see yourself in any of these? If so, do they relate to your struggles with perfectionism, comparison, and fear? Can you see how believing this story/thought is hindering your self-trust or your ability to stay rooted in self-compassion? We can't change what we don't first acknowledge.



In the Western world we're taught that healthy attachment is primarily between mother and child. A decolonized approach to attachment acknowledges that we don't need to look for one human to fill us up. We look for the perfect partner to meet all of our needs and help us feel seen, heard, and known. We buy into fairytale ideals about life and friendship and family and then feel shame and profound loneliness because we think we're doing it all wrong.

We can access a far broader range of support and resources. People, community, pets, plants, hobbies, nature, traditions, routines... Anything that keeps us safe, secure, and rooted can be part of building healthy attachment and resourcing. Realizing this helps us expand our identity, expand our sense of belonging. This helps us move forward or "become more fully ourselves" with more openness, flexibility, and security.

So with this in mind, I invite you to mind-map your support system. Are there any holes or missing pieces? How can you think creatively about meeting this need, stretching beyond your conditioned ideas about belonging, community, or resourcing?



What are your top 5-10 stress anchors, those practices or routines that keep you steady and rooted?



Fill out the [Happy-Stress Worksheet](#); you may want to keep this handy and add to it over the next couple of weeks. Circle the things on the stress side that are in your control. Do you want to take action on any of them? Do any of them merit space on your short-term goal list? Now circle a few things on your happy list that you can easily sprinkle into your days to boost your overall well being or JOY ([learn about expanding your capacity for JOY in my Workshop](#)).



Harvard Medical School psychologist and author of *Emotional Agility* writes that you can “catch” some behaviors from people you’ve never even come into contact with! For example, not only are your chances of getting divorced higher if other couples in your peer group are splitting up, but also when friends of their friends are divorcing. Or, when flying, you’re 30% more likely to make an in-seat purchase if your seatmate does.

We default to living on autopilot (where there’s no space between impulse and response), or going with the flow, following the crowd, unless we’re deliberate about living a conscious life aligned with our own values.

Life is weird. We can’t control everything but we *can* cultivate a wise, brave, and healthy inner circle of people who are committed to their own emotional growth work. We can create some energetic or emotional distance between us and people who we don’t want to cut out of our lives entirely, or can’t. We can end relationships in which we have to mask or conform for belonging, or in which we do not feel safe. And, as much as possible, we can choose healthy environments and remove ourselves from unhealthy environments.

Loneliness and solitude or aloneness are not the same thing. Our needs for connection can vary wildly depending on sensitivity levels or introversion/extroversion. Negotiating this in relationships can take work but the people who merit space in your inner circle will respect your needs and boundaries. Social connection comes in different shapes and sizes and it helps to stay open and creative about building connection into our lives. Maybe you don’t have a good local friend but you form an online friendship with someone. Maybe you are estranged from your family so you choose your own family. Maybe one beautiful friendship is worth more to you than 10 surface relationships. Maybe your marriage looks quite different from the romcoms but you love and respect each other. We get to write the script of our lives and we get to decide what “enough” or “abundance” or “success” looks, sounds, and feels like for us.

I invite you to think about all the people who have access to you up close and personal or several degrees back. What is and isn’t working? This can be a vulnerable conversation so take your time and if you feel up for it, tell the truth about the quality of your relationships, the way you feel with the people in your life, and your longing or desire for change. I’ve left more room for you to write on the following page.





Boundaries are necessary for all relationships - work, kids, friends, *and* with ourselves. Building and Honoring Brave Boundaries is also an important part of reclaiming our voice. (You can take my [Build Brave Boundaries Workshop!](#)) I'd like us to focus here on boundaries with self.

There are many types of boundaries including but not limited to physical, emotional, mental, time, and communication boundaries. The goal is to maintain flexible boundaries... not rigid and not porous, but flexible. Adaptive. Therapist Nedra Glover Tawwab, in her *Set Boundaries Workbook*, writes "boundaries aren't just about telling other people what to do but are also about holding yourself accountable for creating your life." I love this!

Boundaries with myself can look like deciding that I have enough books or clothing so if I buy something new then something else must leave in turn. It could look like determining that before my beloved morning French Press, I must drink 16 oz of water. A self-imposed boundary could look like setting a cap on how many outside the home commitments you say yes to, attending weekly Alanon meetings, or establishing a no-bullying rule for how to speak to and treat yourself.

Boundaries with self are not always about raising the bar or demanding more or better from ourselves. For instance, as someone with perfectionist tendencies I often need to cut myself some slack by doing less work, or leaving some things undone so I can practice rest.

Do you have any leaky boundaries that you'd like to shore up? As you create a compelling vision for your life, do you see room for some new self-imposed boundaries that will support you in showing up fully to life? Notice what happens in your body when a decision you've made is in conflict with a core value or there's incongruence in your life. I've included some extra room for you to reflect on the next page.





After all the sifting and exploring you've done to get clear on who you choose to be and how you choose to show up to life, I invite you to clarify your short-term goals (or intentions - use the language that feels best) for the next 6-12 months. Use the [Short-Term Goals Worksheets](#) that I've provided. Before we set any goals or intentions, we want to be clear on our values and our mantra for the year. Knowing our motivation for a goal increases the likelihood of achieving it.

Some people like to set SMART goals: specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound. Goals can be either achievement oriented (finish my manuscript by this date, run the Boston Marathon this date) or habit oriented (move my body joyfully three times/week, drink 2 liters of water each day).

Some goals or intentions you set for the year will need to be broken down into micro steps. If I want to complete my manuscript by the end of the year or get ready to run a marathon, for example, I'll need to break that goal down into quarterly or monthly objectives and then break that down even further into weekly achievement goals. Even further, I find it helpful to check-in each morning and identify my top 3 priorities for that day. In other cases, it's enough to name our goals or intentions on our Short-Term Goal Worksheet and check-in with them regularly to keep them top of mind/heart.



I'm a big believer in leaning into our strengths vs focusing on our perceived weaknesses. On page 20 you identified some of your core strengths. Think about how you can use your strengths, or lean into your strengths, to walk out your values and goals this year.

For example: let's say one of your core values is compassion. There are a multitude of ways to sprinkle compassion into this thirsty world. But if you don't set some clear boundaries around this you might say yes to way too many things and end up scattered, exhausted, depleted. You can't meet *all* the needs. But let's say one of your strengths and passions is cooking or food. How could you walk out your value of compassion while using this gift that's knit into who you are? Perhaps you volunteer for an elderly meal delivery program or at a soup kitchen. Maybe you start a side-gig doing meal prep for busy families using local food producers and at the same time make some extra cash to support another of your goals. Or perhaps, you set the intention to mindfully and lovingly prepare colorful and tasty meals for your favorite people each evening (rather than resenting the task).

Brainstorm ideas (stay curious and flexible, nothing is set in stone) for how you can walk out your values this year while leaning into your strengths.



As James Clear says, “You don’t rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems.” Use the [weekly rhythm worksheet](#) to create an honest ideal weekly rhythm with time blocks for deep work, connection, self care, breathing room, etc. or that otherwise reflects your core values and priorities. Be sure to leave enough padding for transitioning between activities (a common issue).

This is absolutely not about creating a rigid schedule or being a servant to your calendar. It’s more about creating a gentle structure that honors your desires and needs. It’s there to serve you! As much as possible, you want to work with, not against, your natural energy/focus ebb and flow throughout the day and week and honor your wiring and life vision.

For example, in my life vision I putter and move slowly in the mornings, walking through my morning routine, alone with my thoughts or listening to a podcast but not engaging outwardly (unless with my cat). Since I run my own business from home, I build this into my weekly rhythm. In addition, as a Highly Sensitive Person, I need to be careful about energy depletion so my outward facing activities are grouped into 2.5 days of the week so that I have some days to go into my deeper work or be with my thoughts.

I like to think of my ideal weekly rhythm as a compassionate boundary in which I have plenty of freedom and flexibility to ebb and flow as needed, listening inward and responding. You may need a few iterations to find your flow and I encourage you to revisit your weekly rhythm with every seasonal shift.



“To accomplish our goals, we must distill our dreams into daily actions,” writes author and experienced entrepreneur, Michael Hyatt. Use one of the two Habit Trackers provided to help you build up to 5 new habits or daily actions at a time (we progress in what we track!).

A few thoughts about habit formation from James Clear, author of *Atomic Habits*: to build a new habit we need 3 things: a reminder (or trigger), a routine (the action you take), and a reward (the benefit you gain). To break a bad habit, you must remove the triggers and routine and replace it with a new habit that provides a reward.

Small, incremental changes over time lead to sustainable results. On average, it takes 60 days to form a new habit (not 21 days like some people claim) and perfection is *not* required for successful habit formation. The most important thing is... don't quit. If you stumble, you're human, not bad, wrong, or broken. Pick yourself up and continue onward.

