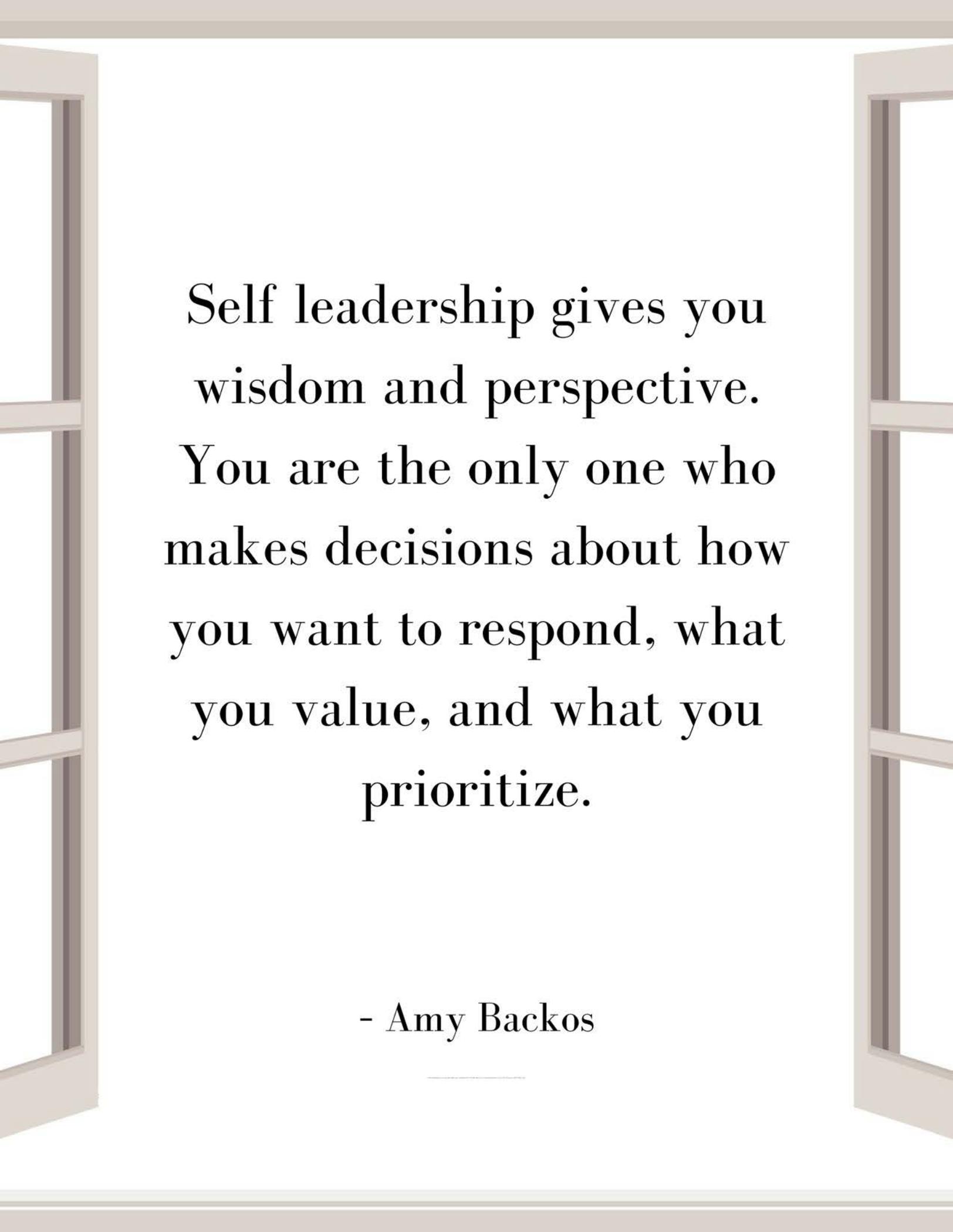




The Modern Creative  
Woman Publishing Co.



The Modern Creative Woman  
**Self Leadership**



Self leadership gives you  
wisdom and perspective.  
You are the only one who  
makes decisions about how  
you want to respond, what  
you value, and what you  
prioritize.

- Amy Backos

---

## *Presence*



- Make full contact with the present moment.
- See yourself as the 'context' for all your life experiences.
- Get out of your mind and get into your life.

## *Mindset*

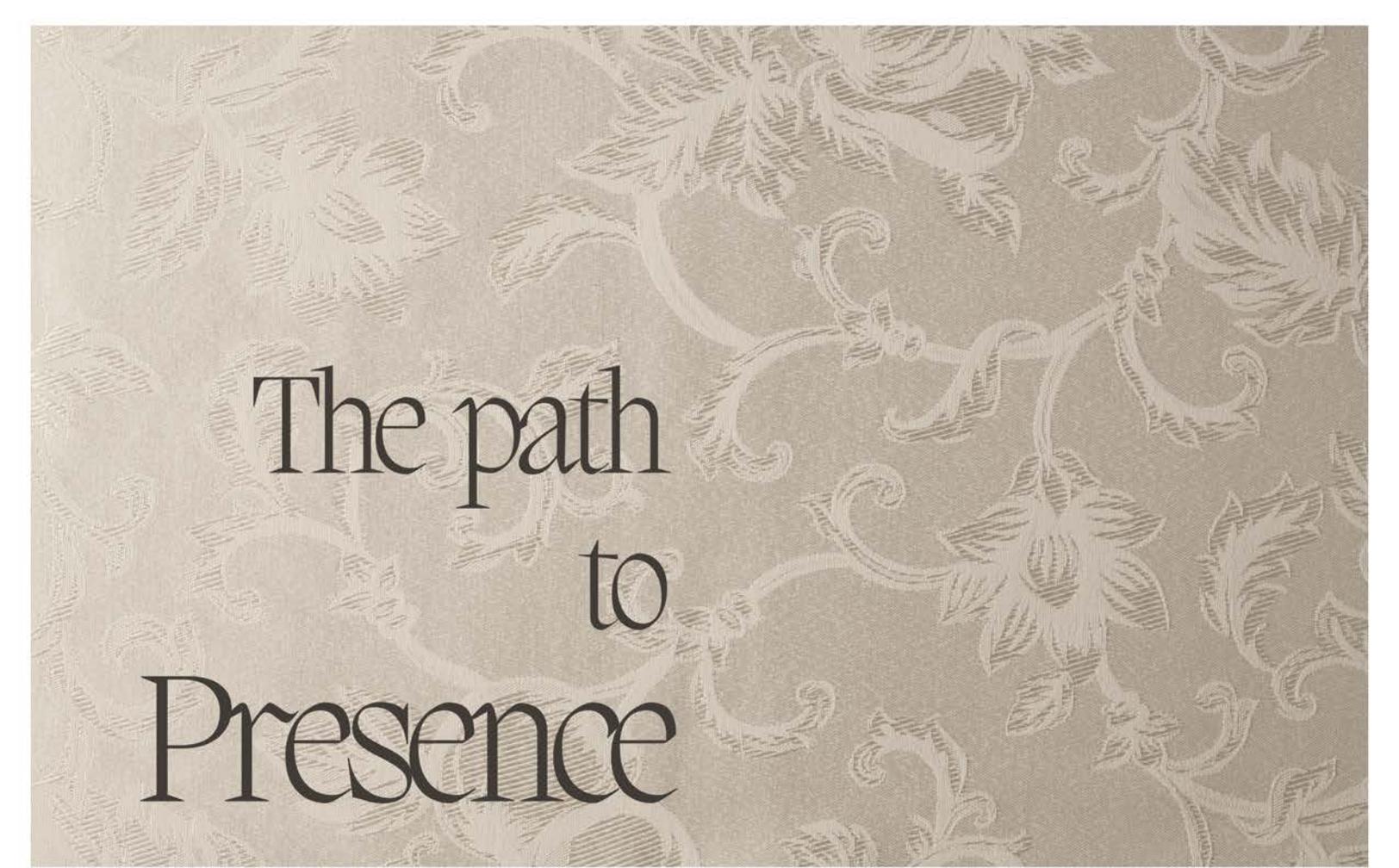


- Acceptance of your thoughts, feelings, and circumstances as they are, rather than what you think they should be.
- Forging a new working relationship with your thoughts.
- Practicing conscious & creative thinking.

## *Purpose*



- Your personal values about what is most important to you.
- Daily movement towards your values
- Committed actions in alignment with your values and Modern Creative Why.



# The path to Presence

Presence - your ability to make contact with the present moment, separate from your thoughts and feelings about it. This means observing what is happening outside of you as well as observing your thoughts and feelings in the present moment.

Self as Context - Seeing yourself as the context for your life means you are the anchor. Whatever happens inside of you (thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations) as well as whatever happens outside of you (people, places, circumstances) is separate from your experience as a human being. You might think of your "context" as your spirit, your core self, your essence. In other words, you as the context is the view of yourself as the person experiencing your life. For example: you are the journal on which your story is written. Rather than being the story itself, you are able to truthfully see yourself as the journal on which the story is written. Another example: You are the canvas on which you create the painting of your life. Instead of being the paint, you accurately see yourself as the canvas.

Remember, your presence includes getting out of your mind and getting into your life, making contact with the present moment and seeing yourself as the context for your life experiences. Your internal presence can be whatever you decide it to be in each moment of your life.

# INTENTION

Imagine you are the powerful self leader you always wanted to be. You are guiding yourself in the direction you want to go.

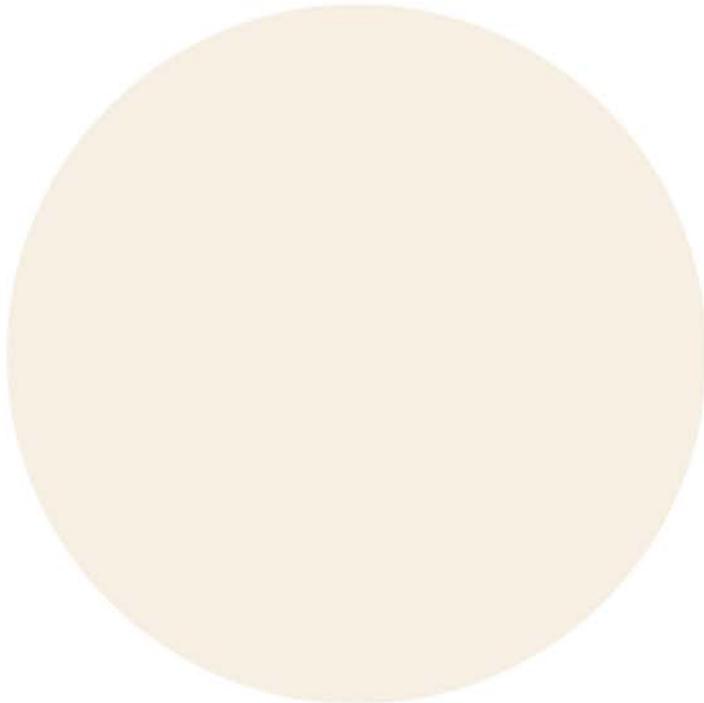
What small things would you be doing on a daily basis? What big bold leaps would you be taking?  
What would be most important to you?

What small goal would you like to accomplish this month to move you in the direction of self leadership? Make it something small and actionable that you can add to your routine or take a step on this month.

# Self Leadership

Who are your role models or mentors, and what lessons have you learned from them about leadership?

Create an image inside the circle below to reflect what self leadership looks like to you. You can find an image on Pinterest or draw using lines, shapes, and colors. Be sure to give title and write three words or phrases to describe your art. However you do it will be great.



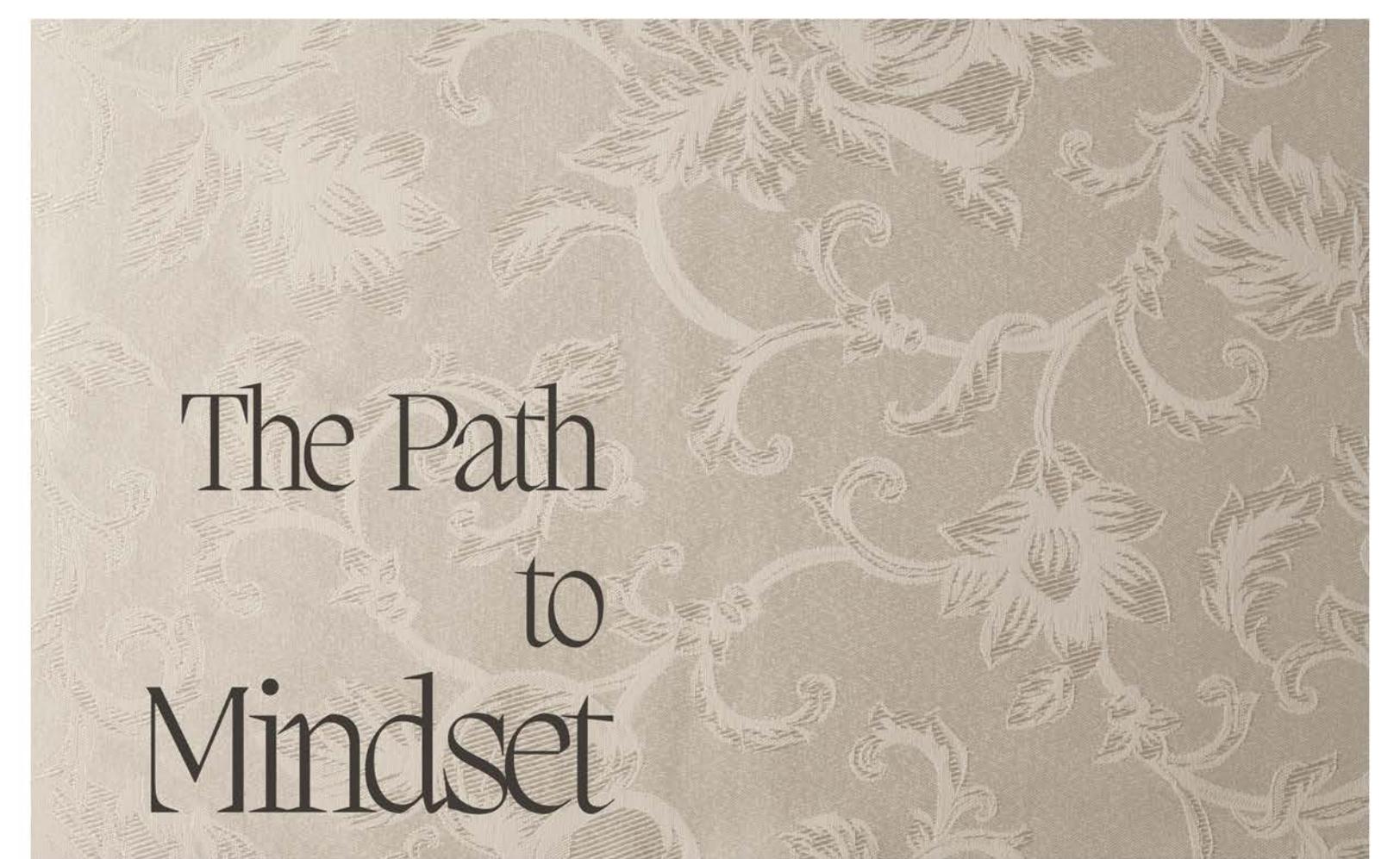
# CEO Actions

CEO is the Chief Executive Officer. Imagine a woman who embodies the role of CEO of her life. With whom does she spend her time? What are her habits? What actions does she take? What does she wear? What are her thoughts when she first wakes up? How thoughts does she think at the end of the day? How does she feel about being the CEO of her life?

# REFLECTION

Reflect on your week focused on self leadership. What came up for you? How comfortable are you with self leadership? Whatever comes up is ok. Let go of judgement about how you think the present moment “should” be, and just let it be.



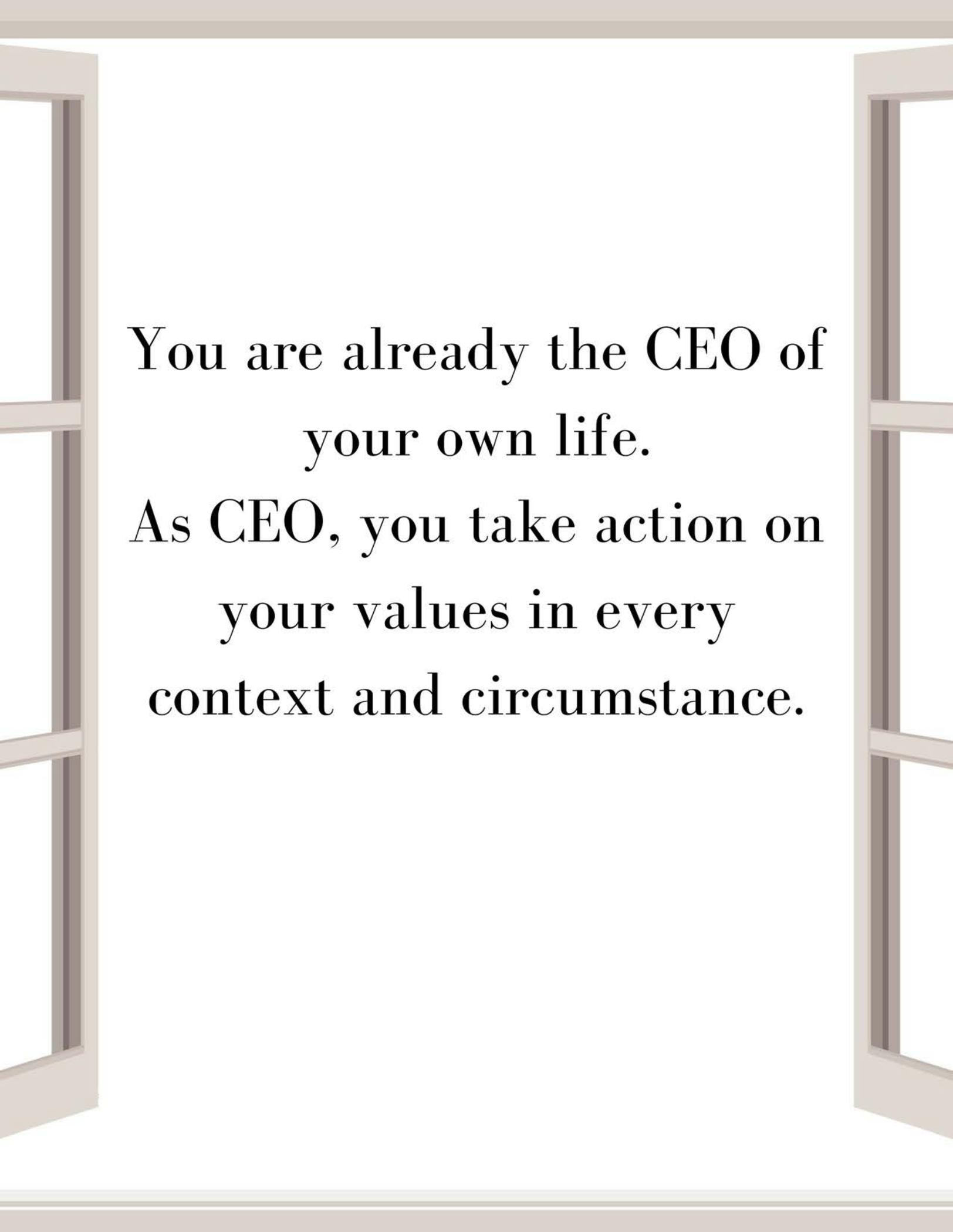


# The Path to Mindset

Acceptance -Acceptance is your ability to see things for what they are. You understand your thoughts as "just thoughts" instead of perceiving your thoughts as "true" or facts. Acceptance is a core concept in changing your self-talk and beliefs about yourself. If you have a negative thought about yourself, it is only a thought. You might be able to find piles of evidence to support your thought, yet a thought is just a thought. It is your brain firing - that is all. Acceptance also helps us be at ease in relationships by not taking things personally. Acceptance means we avoid distorting comments into something negative or personal. This one change in your life can completely transform your relationship with yourself and others.

Relationship to Your Thoughts - Changing your relationship to thoughts frees you from negative self-talk and low self-esteem. Then you can transform your behaviors for health, recovery, and happiness. Your thoughts stem from your brain - not from your essence, spirit or core self. Thoughts are merely a product of your brain. Make your thoughts work for you instead of being swayed by negative thoughts. Start by observing: say "That is just a thought" each time you notice a thought.

Remember, your mindset includes acceptance of what you are currently thinking and feeling as well as the circumstances you are facing. Acceptance is necessary before attempting to make any changes. Mindset also includes forging a new working relationship with your thoughts and practicing conscious & creative thinking.



You are already the CEO of  
your own life.

As CEO, you take action on  
your values in every  
context and circumstance.

# MY CEO CHOICES

Describe yourself as  
the CEO of your life.



Doodle Space

The CEO Purpose

CEO Power Outfit

My Favorite CEO  
Affirmation

Feelings I Choose to  
Create

My Morning Routine

The CEO Always  
Make Time for

Things the CEO  
most desires

My CEO Mood

\_\_\_\_\_, **CEO**

(YOUR NAME)

CEO alter ego /  
nick name

The CEO  
Environment

CEO Values

CEO's favorite way  
to sooth herself

CEO's Favorite way  
to Express Herself

The CEO Mindset is

The CEO's Health is

CEO Friendships

CEO Evening  
Routine

# Introduce Yourself as the CEO

Using the questions you answered above, write a statement of introduction as the CEO of your life. Add whatever details you like and use your imagination to tell a story of you as the CEO of your life.

# What is your CEO doing?

How closely aligned is your current life to the CEO version of your life? You may be close or far away from this version of you. We are always in the space between where we want to be and where we are. This is a good thing! YOU imagined the CEO version you, and so YOU can create this version of you in real life as well.

What is the CEO version of you doing that you are not currently doing today? Remember, avoid judgments!

What is one thing you can take action on today to demonstrate the CEO version of you? Devise a little experiment to try it out and see how you feel.

# 10 CEO Habits

- 1. Mindful Morning Rituals:** Start your day with intention: journaling, meditation, stretching, reading, art, or a just a mindful cup of coffee. Set aside time each morning to ground yourself and align with yourself.
- 2. Creative Exploration:** Dedicate regular time to explore new creative outlets. Some ideas: visit an art museum, read a book about a favorite author, take an art class, try a new creative modality (painting, pottery, or poetry, dance). Allow yourself the freedom to play and discover new facets of your creativity.
- 3. Mindful Movement:** Incorporate movement into your day mindfully. Movement be a form of meditation that nurtures both your body and your creativity. Try a walking meditation each time you get up and walk around the house or your workplace. Stand up tall each time you walk into the kitchen, stretch your arms above your head before you sit back down. These mindful movements take no extra time and pack a lot of mental value into your day.
- 4. Vivid Vision:** Create a visual representation of your goals and dreams. Gather images, words, and symbols that resonate with you, and use them to craft a vision board that inspires and motivates you towards self-leadership.
- 5. Daily Reflection:** Take time each day to reflect on your experiences and lessons learned. Journaling or simply quiet contemplation can help you cultivate self-awareness and deepen your understanding of yourself as a creative leader. The Modern Creative Woman gratitude journal offers you an easy way to reflect on what is going well in your life.
- 6. Setting Boundaries:** Practice saying no to activities or commitments that drain your energy or detract from your creative pursuits. Setting boundaries is an act of self-leadership that honors your time and priorities. Think of "no" as your personal security guard who protects your time and energy. Saying yes to too many things is a fast track away from your values.
- 7. Collaborative Creativity:** Seek out opportunities to collaborate with other creatives. Whether it's a brainstorming session or a collaborative project, working with others can spark new ideas and expand your creative horizons. See where you can infuse group projects with creativity by asking yourself how things might be done more creatively or what else might be possible.
- 8. Reframe Failure:** Shift your perspective on failure as an opportunity for growth. Examine the lessons learned from setbacks and view them as stepping stones on your creative journey towards self-leadership. For example, If you did not meet a goal by a certain timeframe, you could see it at just needing more time instead of a failure.
- 9. Mindful Time Management:** Practice mindful time management to prioritize tasks that align with your values and goals. Block off time each week dedicated time for creative pursuits and honor your creative process with patience and presence. Avoid thinking you will squeeze in what is most important after you finish your to-do list.
- 10. Self-Compassion:** Cultivate self-compassion as an essential aspect of self-leadership. Treat yourself with kindness and understanding, especially during times of self-doubt or creative blocks. Remember, you are worthy of your own love and care on this creative journey.

# CEO Actions

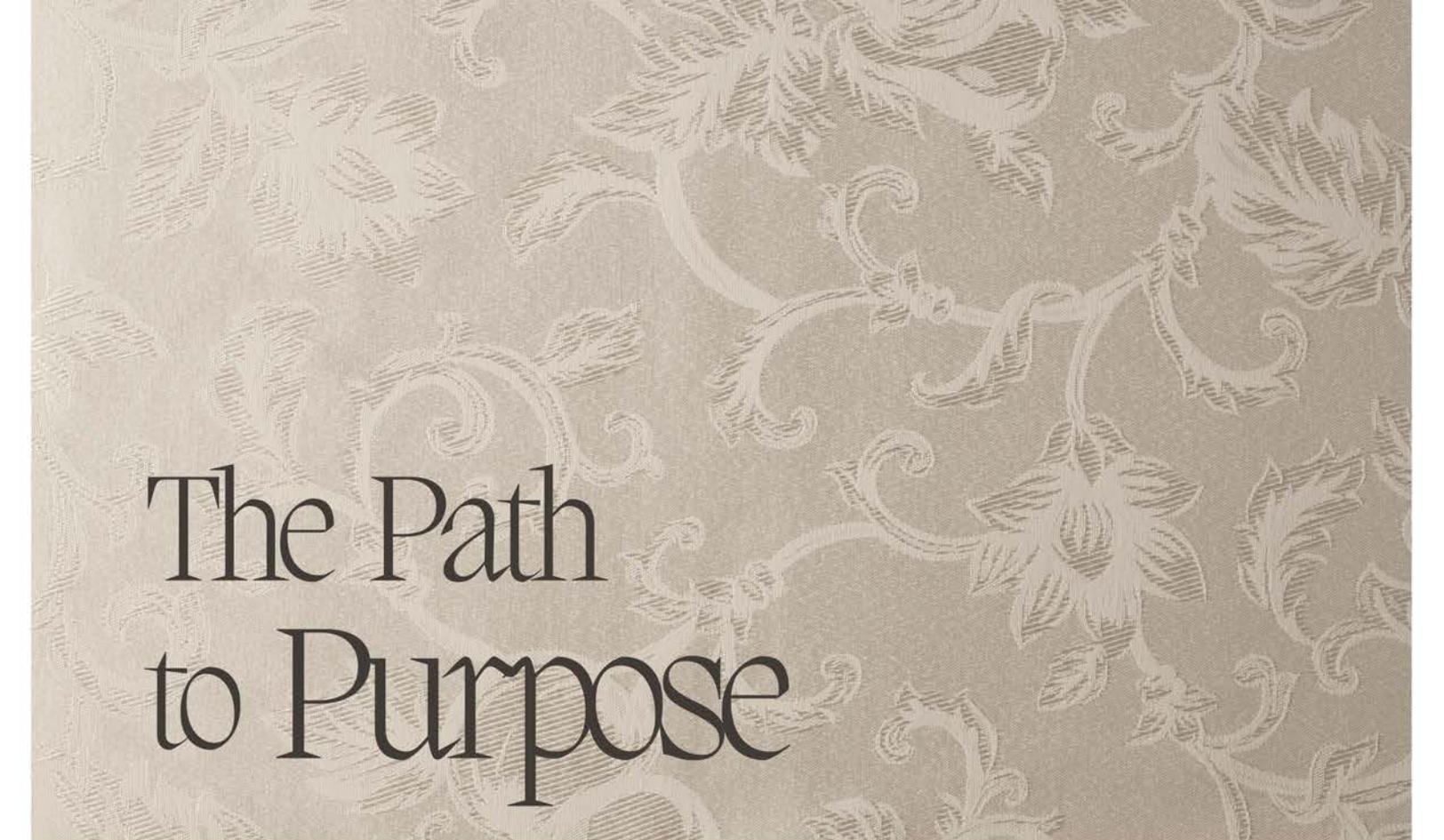
Reflect on times in your life when you were taking CEO action. It can be any actions that you felt proud of or that showed your true CEO colors. For example: actions of self care, health, making tough decisions, taking action on your values, leading yourself or leading others, doing what needed to be done with compassion or toughness, saying no, setting limits, choosing a resilient mindset, persisting when things got difficult or quitting when it was time to leave.

Write a few examples and how you were able to take CEO actions. What thoughts helped you? What values guided you? How did you feel taking these actions and afterwards?

# REFLECTION

Reflect on your self leadership. Does it excite you or pique your curiosity? Perhaps it brings up fears and anxiety? Reflect on your mindset - what is your reaction to meaning making thus far? Avoid self judgments or criticism about the past and focus on how you want to take CEO actions in the future.



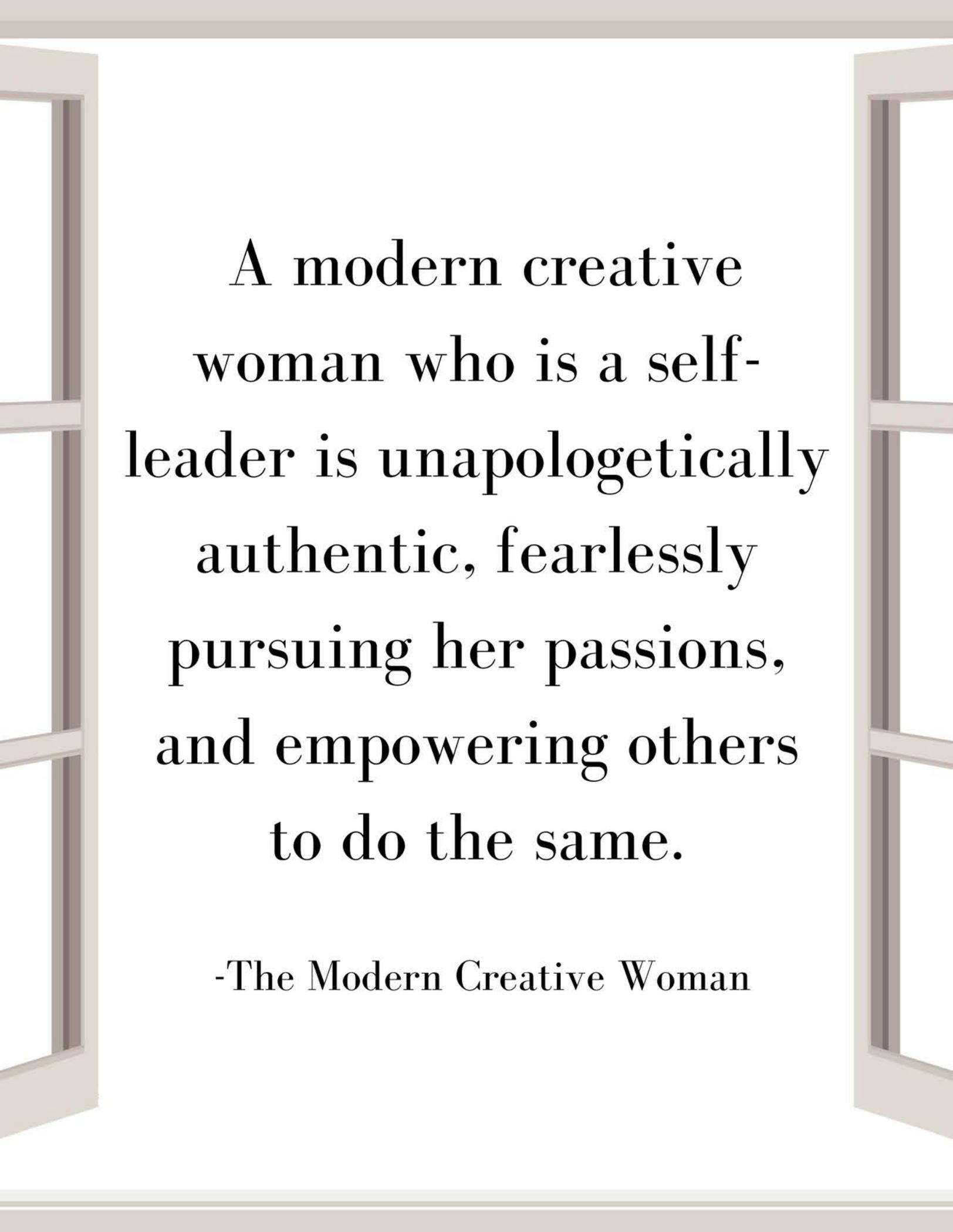


# The Path to Purpose

Your purpose includes both your personal values and the action steps you take in alignment with your values. It is through your purpose that you engage with your life, choose what is most important, and make committed actions to demonstrate your values to yourself and others. Your purpose is something you decide based on what you enjoy, have an interest in pursuing, and have an ability/aptitude for doing.

Values - what you decide is most important to you. You have values such as, health, intimate partner relationship, education, family, friendship, parenting, sports, spirituality, work/vocation, community, creativity, service, school, personal development, hobbies, etc. Your values are what YOU want to bring to each area and has nothing to do with what others are doing or even if they like what you are doing. The goal is to make your decisions and actions based on values instead of feelings or reactions to situations or others.

Committed Actions - how you demonstrate your values through your actions. Your actions directly reflect your values. Committed action is how you show your values to yourself and the world. Notice this is action, not thoughts or beliefs. If you live your values, they will show in your behavior. For example, if you truly believe in your health, then your behavior will show it through healthy food choices, exercise, managing your mind, learning what you need to know, practicing body care, and investing time and money in your health. If you only think or talk about your health, then it is a wish, instead of a value and committed action.



A modern creative  
woman who is a self-  
leader is unapologetically  
authentic, fearlessly  
pursuing her passions,  
and empowering others  
to do the same.

-The Modern Creative Woman

# Self Leadership and Your Values

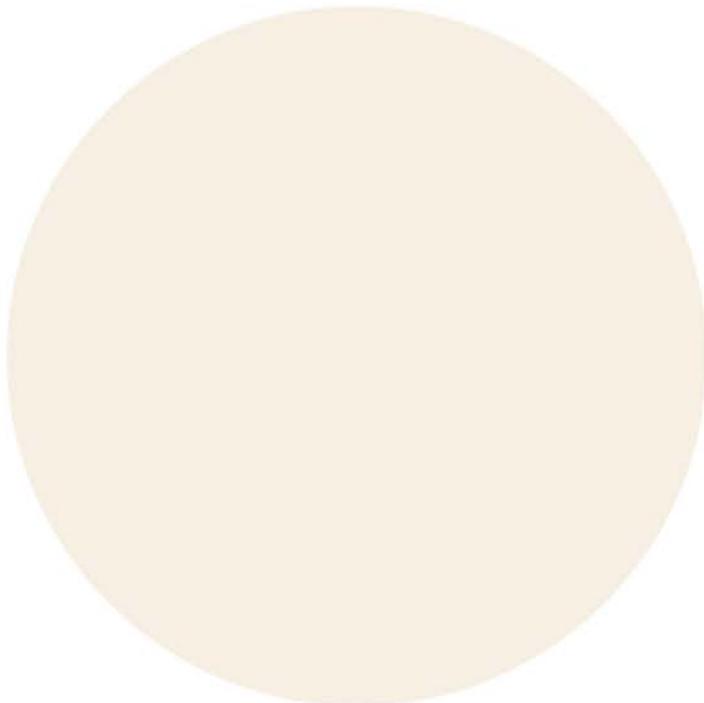
Take a few deep breaths and think about your Modern Creative Why. Your “Why” is what you value the most, why you do what you do, and what inspires you.

We are happier when we act on our values based on our “Why.” Taking committed actions towards our “Why” gives us a sense of satisfaction, pride, accomplishment and ease. Committed actions help us feel good about ourselves even when things don’t go our way. They allow us to evaluate ourselves on things we can control (committed actions) instead of evaluating ourselves based on things that are often outside of our control (what others do, specific outcomes, etc.).

How does your Modern Creative Why line up with your current actions?

Where do you want to make change in your behavior?

Create a simple design inside the circle to reflect on your embodied “Why”. Be spontaneous. Write down three words to describe your design and give it a title.



# CEO Mind Map

Write your name in the middle circle and create a mind map of your CEO leadership qualities.

Include four areas where you are already a self leader and four areas where you would like to increase your self leadership. Visualizing where you are already a self leader is a reminder not to overly focus on your areas of personal growth and to think broadly about your life and your current success.



# REFLECTION

What was it like to make contact with self leadership and your inner CEO? Getting to know your CEO and regularly tapping into this part of yourself can serve you well in times of stress, fear, and uncertainty. What do you like best about self leadership? Summarize what you learned from the exercises this month.





**YOUR CREATIVE  
INTEGRATION**

# Self Leadership

You have completed a month focused on self leadership. These exercises hopefully opened you to new ways of focusing on and attending to your life.

I am delighted you joined this community of Modern Creative Women who are living more compassionately and making the world a better place. Living your values and passions is part of creating a better world. Imagine if everyone lived in the moment!

If you are excited about continuing this work, I would love to support you. Reach out to The Modern Creative Woman for a list of programs, workshops and retreats. For the ultimate creative glow-up, consider a custom-designed VIP package in San Francisco, Paris or online.

It is my pleasure to share the evidence-based information which has helped people all around the world. I look forward to hearing from you about what you learned in this workbook. Please send me a testimonial that I may share with others so they know the benefits of being a Modern Creative Woman.



Amy Backos, PhD, ATR-BC



# *Celebrate Yourself!*



**How I  
increased my  
presence this  
month...**



**How I changed  
my mindset this  
month...**



**How I moved  
towards my  
purpose this  
month...**

*How I will celebrate myself:*

# Resources



## Personal Development

- **Coaching:** Creativity is everything! Focus on developing your creative thinking to excel in your work, love and presence in the world.
- Creativity Intensives online, in San Francisco and Paris.
- Complementary consultations.



## Stay in Touch!

- Instagram @dramybackos
- Join me each Friday at noon PST while I gently guide you to strategies to live a creative and joyful life.
- DM me with questions or topics you want to see covered!



## Learn more!

- **Podcast:** The Modern Creative Woman.
- **Book:** ACT Art Therapy by Dr. Amy Backos
- **Book:** PTSD and Art Therapy by Dr. Amy Backos.
- **Book:** Emerging Perspectives in Art Therapy by Drs. Amy Backos & Richard Carolan





